



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 December 2013


December 31, 2013




[Check here for important information about S. 1486 and the monopoly-protected U.S. Postal Service](#)


 [BlueTrain Mobile](#): In case you did not know already how important addressing mobile website users has become, you may want to check out these projections from a study by Sweden's Ericsson AB showing that by 2019: Smartphones will triple to 5.6 billion Smartphones are projected to grow to 60% of cellphones Mobile subscriptions are projected to grow to 9.3 billion. If you are not addressing both smartphone and tablet mobile website users, your audience is quite literally moving away from you. ***[EdNote: But the Postal Service IS addressing mobile users. It just raised rates for posted, print-on-ink media by three times the rate of inflation.]***

 [From the Federal Register](#): **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES New Postal Products**, 79710–79711 [2013–31284] [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]

 [Wall Street Journal](#): The past year may go down not only as the least productive ever in Washington but as one of the worst for the republic. In both the executive branch and Congress, Americans witnessed an unwinding of the country's founding principles and of their government's most basic responsibilities. The rule of law gave way to the rule of rulers. And the rule of reality—in which politicians are entitled to their own opinions but not their own facts, as Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan liked to say—gave way to some politicians' belief that they were entitled to both their own opinions and their own facts. It's no wonder the institutions of government barely function. ***[EdNote: He's right. And I very much hope he reviews [the facts about the Postal Service and S. 1486](#) before moving forward with postal reform. As the Good Book puts it: Before you remove the splinter from your brother's eye, be sure to remove the beam from your own.]***


 [Media Daily News](#): Magazine publishers and direct mail marketers got a lump of coal in their stockings over the holidays, with the Postal Regulatory Commission's decision to approve an "exigent rate increase" on postage for First Class Mail and Standard Mail, which includes magazines, catalogues, and direct mailings. For its part, the USPS board of directors have long countered that the economic downturn constitutes just such an unforeseen condition, justifying the exigent increase. The USPS has also pointed out that other attempts to cut costs and raise

revenues --- for example, by temporarily waiving contributions to a future health care fund, closing smaller post offices, or allowing the delivery of alcohol through the postal system -- have all been stymied by Congress.

 **Wales Online:** A future Labour Government should reverse Royal Mail privatisation by turning the postal service into a not-for-dividends company, according to former Welsh Secretary Peter Hain. Mr Hain, who before becoming MP for Neath in 1991 was head of research for the Communication Workers' Union, makes the case for a Welsh Water-style body in an article for the Institute of Welsh Affairs' journal The Welsh Agenda.




Office of the Inspector General: "Can the Postal Service Deliver the Goods?" The 2013 holiday season turned out to be a particularly eventful one for e-tailers and the shippers that deliver all those packages to your door. Factors like fewer than average shopping days between Thanksgiving and Christmas and an increasing comfort level with online buying helped push holiday e-commerce up significantly. In fact, demand exceeded expectations and stressed shippers' capacity, causing some late deliveries of their goods.

 **Reuters:** New York City has sued FedEx Corp, accusing the package delivery company of illegally delivering millions of contraband cigarettes to people's homes, violating a 2006 settlement. Monday's lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court in Manhattan and seeks \$52 million of civil fines and unpaid taxes from FedEx, which is based in Memphis, Tennessee.



American Postal Workers Union: The failure of United Parcel Service to deliver holiday packages by Christmas demonstrates the importance of the U.S. Postal Service to the people of the country, says APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "The United Parcel Service fiasco underscores why the Postal Service must continue to be a public service," he said. "We must ensure that hiring decisions and other policy issues governing the nation's mail service are not guided by the bottom line and private profit."

 **Bloomberg Businessweek:** There was a lot of post-Christmas discussion about how UPS (UPS) fumbled its last-minute holiday deliveries, and FedEx (FDX) apologized for some late-arriving packages, too. What went largely unmentioned, however, was that the stellar performance of the U.S. Postal Service. The government-run competitor was swamped with parcels just like UPS and FedEx were, with holiday package volume 19 percent higher than the same period late year. But there were no widespread complaints about tardy deliveries by USPS.



At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


- **ACR2013 Order No. 1935** - Notice of Postal Service's Filing of Annual Compliance Report and Request for Public Comments
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88800/Order%20No.%201935.doc>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88800/Order No. 1935.pdf>
- **N2014-1 Order No. 1932** - Notice and Order on Request for an Advisory Opinion on Changes in the Nature of Postal Services
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88780/Order%20No.%201932.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88780/Order No. 1932.pdf>


Procedural Schedule for Docket No. N2014-1 (December 30, 2013)

- Notices of intervention- January 21, 2014
- Close of discovery on Postal Service direct case -January 30, 2014
- Notice of intent to conduct oral cross-examination- February 3, 2014
- Hearing on the Postal Service's direct case (if requested) (9:00 AM in the Commission's hearing room)- February 11, 2014
- Notice of intent to file rebuttal testimony- February 11, 2014
- Rebuttal Testimony (if requested)- February 18, 2014
- Filing of Briefs (if no rebuttal testimony) -February 20, 2014

- Filing of Reply Briefs (if no rebuttal testimony)- February 27, 2014


December 30, 2013


 [Vestnik Kavkaza](#): From January 1 until March 31, 2014 the Russian postal service will be checking parcels sent to the Krasnodar Territory and the Republic of Adygea by EMS and first class. Postal offices will not accept unchecked, packaged postal items. These requirements are necessary to ensure safety during the Olympic Games in Sochi, the postal service believes.


 [New York Times](#): Time Inc., the largest magazine publisher in the United States, with properties like People, Sports Illustrated and Fortune, is preparing for one of the most pivotal periods in its 91-year history. Within the next six months, its parent, the media conglomerate Time Warner, hopes to spin off Time Inc. into a separate public company. But if the plan succeeds, Time Inc. will become independent at a difficult moment. Not only do the magazine industry's fortunes continue to sag, but Time Inc. has also shown signs of instability. It has churned through three chief executives in the last three years, and lost a star editor, its former editor in chief Martha Nelson. To combat these negative forces, Time Inc. will abandon the traditional separation between its newsroom and business sides, a move that has caused angst among its journalists. Now, the newsroom staffs at Time Inc.'s magazines will report to the business executives. Such a structure, once verboten at journalistic institutions, is seen as necessary to create revenue opportunities and stem the tide of declining subscription and advertising sales.

 [PBS](#): "Is the postal service going the way of the pony express?"


You've heard of "trust but verify." Well the hell with that. As far as postal is concerned, it should be "challenge and verify."

 [Jacksonville Daily News](#): The Postal Service says it's in a desperate situation because of congressional inaction on proposals such as ending Saturday mail delivery and reducing payments on retiree health benefits. A bill passed in 2006, with bipartisan congressional support, required it to pre-fund those benefits for the next 75 years through regular payments of \$5.5 billion to the U.S. Treasury over 10 years. *[EdNote: If that's the case, then why has the Postal Service insisted on making mailers pay for a problem they didn't create?]*

 [Politico](#): If this was a dud year in Washington, get ready for 2014 — the year to “go small.” Lawmakers are reluctant to rely on the federal government to get anything done — a guilt-by-association consequence of Obamacare's botched rollout. Republicans have called it an indictment of more than a website, but of Big Government itself. While Democrats argue the problem is obstructionism — not ideology — the result will be the same: As Washington laments the end of a do-nothing year, lawmakers are fully prepared to do as little — or even less — in the new year. *[EdNote: Good. Mailers have been screwed enough. Take Section 301 of S. 1486 and stuff it.]*

 [YLE](#): 2014 charges for letters and postcards are being raised significantly by the Finnish postal service Itella. In contrast, the large volume of business generated by internet purchases mean that only moderate increases in parcel post charges will be seen. Itella says that the rising prices are the result of a continuing fall in the volume of letters and postcards that it handles. At the same time, however, the volume of packages is up by 3% to 7% a month over 2012 levels depending on the season.

December 29, 2013


 [Muscat Daily](#): Oman Post, in collaboration with Tamimah Telecom, has introduced SMS services for postal services and important dates. The first one sends an SMS to a subscriber about parcels or registered post received in his post box. The other, more of a dates and events organiser, alerts the subscriber on important dates like birthdays, anniversaries, festivals, appointments etc.

 *From the Federal Register:*

Postal Regulatory Commission	
NOTICES	
New Postal Products ,	
79509 [2013–31103]	[TEXT] [PDF]
79508–79509 [2013–31104]	[TEXT] [PDF]


December 28, 2013


*When you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always gotten.
Soooo -- what did you just get? And what are you going to do about it?
It's time to wake up! If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.*


 [Beaumont Enterprise](#): The U.S. Postal Service isn't the most popular government entity, and sometimes it doesn't help its own cause. For example, the price of a first-class postage stamp will increase from 46 cents to 49 cents on Jan. 26. This is unfortunate for several reasons. First, the price increase is supposedly "temporary" and will last no more than two years. But as taxpayers know all too well, temporary increases like this often become permanent. Secondly, the increase is designed to bring in more revenue since the Postal Service lost \$5 billion in the last fiscal year. Yet it will probably never break even as mail volume continues to decline. When cell phones became popular, no price increase could have made pay phones profitable. At some point, Congress should accept these realities and focus on mail service. It should still end Saturday home delivery but **stop chasing illusory profits through ever-higher stamp prices.**

 [HeraldNet](#): Amazon.com and United Parcel Service said Thursday that they would offer refunds to customers who did not receive their Christmas orders on time, after a last-minute surge in online shopping caught the shipping giant off guard. Customers who failed to get their deliveries by Christmas Day will get \$20 gift cards and refunds on shipping charges, Amazon said. UPS also offered refunds on shipping costs. FedEx did not promise refunds but said it would work with people affected.

There are those who make things happen, and those who want others to shoulder the burden for trying to make things happen. There should be no place in this industry for the do-nothings. Is your company a do-nothing?

 [Marketwatch](#): Employees responsible for sorting packages — already deep into a 100-hour week — were furiously getting them ready to be sent on to their destinations at airports around the country. But dozens of other workers responsible for loading those packages into planes to be shipped out were left standing around idle, because the unexpected glut of packages from last-minute shoppers had swamped the company's air fleet.


 [Seeking Alpha](#): The word "guarantee" was thrown around too loosely this holiday season by retailers, writes The Dallas Mornings News' Maria Halkias. While UPS blames bad weather for falling short with some deliveries this year, the company only hired the same number of temporary workers as last year despite forecasts for booming online sales. FedEx and the USPS also had their own glitches. The spottier-than-normal delivery record this year falls on the shoulders of the retail sector not shippers. What to watch: Online retail tracking firm StellaService reports that sellers such as Zappos, Amazon, Wal-Mart, Best Buy, and Victoria's Secret scored well in meeting aggressive deadlines, although the cost may be high. Many of the firms upgraded late-ordering customers to express shipping to avoid a customer service backlash. Next year, deadlines may be earlier and holiday margins higher.


 [RushLane](#): Clearette Electronic Cigarette Company announced their deal with UPS (United Parcel Service) for volume pricing on shipments in Us and overseas. Through Air Delivery & Freight Services industry, UPS is able to reach all of United States and abroad, and operates in 220 countries and territories using 101,000 package cars, vans, tractors, and motorcycles.




At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-1 - FY 2013 Public Cost and Revenue Analysis (PCRA) Report
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88658/USPS-FY13-1.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88658/USPS-FY13-1.Public.CRA.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-2 - FY 2013 Public Cost Segments and Components Report
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88659/USPS-FY13-2.Preface.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88659/USPS-FY13-2.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-3 - FY 2013 Discounts and Passthroughs of Workshare Items
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88660/USPS-FY13-3.Preface.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88660/USPS-FY13-3.Workshare.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-4 - FY 2013 Market Dominant Billing Determinants
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88662/USPS-FY13-4.Preface.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88662/FY13-4.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-10 - FY 2013 Special Cost Studies Workpapers - Letter Cost Models (First and Standard)
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88670/USPS-FY13-10.Preface.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88670/USPS-FY13-10.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-6 - General Classification of Accounts (Formerly Handbook F-8)
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88665/USPS-FY13-6.F8.ANCM.zip>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88665/USPS-FY13-6.Preface.pdf>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-7 - Cost Segment 3 Cost Pools & Other Related Information (Public Portion)
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88667/USPS-FY13-7.Preface.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88667/USPS-FY13-7.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-8 - Equipment and Facility Related Costs
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88668/USPS-FY13-8.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88668/USPS-FY13-8.zip>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-9 - FY 2013 ACR Roadmap Document
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88669/FY13.Roadmap.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88669/Preface.USPS-FY13-9.pdf>
- ACR2013 USPS-FY13-5 - Cost Segment and Components Reconciliation to Financial Statements and Account Reallocations (Reallocated Trial Balances)
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88664/RealTB13.USPS-FY13-5.Redacted.xlsx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88664/USPS-FY13-5.Preface.pdf>

 **Handelsblatt:** The post office delivers letters and parcels. But how profitable actually work in Europe postal company? A study by the European Commission shows that private firms are far more profitable than state-owned enterprises.

 **Save the Post Office:** The delivery of a large portion of Standard Mail is about to slow down. Today the Postal Service submitted a request for an advisory opinion to the Postal Regulatory Commission concerning a change in service standards for DSCF Standard Mail. Under current standards, this mail is delivered within three days. The Postal Service wants to level the load and more evenly distribute the DSCF mail throughout the week. Standard mail entered on Friday would be delivered on Tuesday instead of Monday, and mail entered on Saturday would be delivered on Wednesday instead of Tuesday. Judging by a chart provided by the Postal Service, it appears that **about forty percent of DSCF Standard Mail would be impacted by the proposed changes. That means delivery for about 25 percent of Standard mail would slow down by a day.** [EdNote: Hey. Not bad. Higher than inflation postal rates and now slower mail service. Folks, it's time to call for competition in the mail delivery business. It's time the Postal Service's monopolies over the carriage of mail and the deposit of mail in letterboxes were rescinded. **If the Postal Service can't satisfy the market's need for a reliable, cost-efficient, reasonably priced mail service then conditions should be set to see if others are able to better satisfy that basic infrastructure need.**]

 [Highland Community News](#): The Postal Regulatory Commission handed everyone who uses the mail a lump of coal on Christmas Eve: approval of the U.S. Postal Service's proposal to raise postage rates by more than triple today's inflation.

December 27, 2013




At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- [ACR2013 United States Postal Service FY 2013 Annual Compliance Report](#)
- [Docket No. N2014-1](#) DSCF "**Standard Mail Load Leveling** "

The United States Postal Service (Postal Service) intends to change the manner in which it processes and dispatches Standard Mail that qualifies for a Destination Sectional Center Facility (DSCF) discounted rate. This operational change will arguably result in a nationwide change in the nature of postal services within the meaning of 39 U.S.C. § 3661(b). Therefore, as a precautionary measure, the Postal Service files this request for an advisory opinion from the Postal Regulatory Commission (Commission) regarding whether such a change would conform to applicable policies in Title 39, United States Code.¹ Because of the relationship between mail entry patterns for DSCF Standard Mail and the applicable 3-day service standard, the Postal Service delivers a disproportionate amount of DSCF Standard Mail on Mondays.² This Request addresses the Postal Service's plan to more evenly distribute the volume of DSCF Standard Mail pieces delivered by carriers throughout the week (Load Leveling Plan). By changing the service standard for DSCF Standard Mail, the Postal Service can adjust operations in a manner that will level the load of the DSCF Standard Mail that it delivers throughout the week, thereby removing the disproportionate burden associated with Monday Standard Mail delivery that is currently placed on the Postal Service network. **The earliest that the Postal Service intends to make the changes discussed in this Request is March 27, 2014—90 days after the date of this filing.**

- **N2014-1** Notice of United States Postal Service of Filing Library References
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88766/Notice.LR.1.2.FINAL.pdf>
- **N2014-1** Direct Testimony of Mark H. Anderson on Behalf of the United States Postal Service (USPS-T-2)
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88765/Anderson.Final.pdf>
- **N2014-1** Direct Testimony of Linda M. Malone on Behalf of the United States Postal Service (USPS-T-1)
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88764/Malone.FINAL.pdf>
- **N2014-1** USPS-LR-N2014-1/2 - Results of the South Jersey Destination SCF Standard Mail Load Leveling Operations Test
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88770/LR.2.Load.Leveling.Spreadsheet.Terms.FINAL.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88770/LR-2%20-%20SJ%20F1%20Results-FINAL.xls>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88770/LR-2%20-%20SJ%20F2%20Results-FINAL.xls>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88770/LR-2.Preface-FINAL.pdf>
- **N2014-1** USPS-LR-N2014-1/1 - Standard Operating Procedures: South Jersey District Destination SCF Standard Mail Load Leveling Operations Test <http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88769/LR-1-FINAL.pdf>

 [Newshounds.us](#): The entire panel of Forbes on Fox came out in favor of privatizing the U.S. Postal Service recently. The only dissent was that we're not "ready quite yet." On December 14, 2013, host David Asman kicked off the discussion by saying there are "new calls" to privatize the Postal Service after it posted a \$5 billion loss this year. Steve Forbes wholeheartedly endorsed privatization. Mike Ozanian thought the interests of rural America paled in comparison to gutting the workers' union. Elizabeth MacDonald was on board, too. She said, "Get the government out of the way of the US Post Office. ... They are privatizing in Europe, Canada, Asia, New Zealand, Japan. It seems like a worldwide phenomenon." **[EdNote: The Postal Service doesn't need to be privatized. It should be required, however, to give up its monopoly protections if it wants to gain regulatory freedom.]**

INDUSTRY ALERT


Today [the Postal Service requested an advisory opinion from the Postal Regulatory Commission](#) concerning its plan to level out the delivery volume of advertising mail throughout the week. Under the current service standards, a disproportionate amount of that mail is delivered on Mondays, and that imbalance often results in late delivery of mail on Monday, inconvenience to mail recipients, and increased costs to the Postal Service. The Postal Service is proposing to revise the service standards for a limited segment of Standard Mail (pieces that qualify for a DSCF rate and are accepted before the day zero CET at the proper DSCF on Friday or Saturday), to encourage a more balanced distribution of Standard Mail volume across all of our delivery days. For those Standard Mail pieces entered on Friday or Saturday at the DSCF rate, the Postal Service is proposing to change the current three-day delivery expectation to a four-day delivery expectation. And for pieces entered at the SCF in San Juan, PR and destined for the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as all DSCF entry pieces destined for American Samoa, the delivery expectation for pieces entered on Friday or Saturday would change from four days to five days. The Postal Service is not proposing any other revisions to its service standards at this time.

To learn more about this proposal, please see the United States Postal Service Request for an Advisory Opinion on Changes in the Nature of Postal Services (<http://prc.gov/prc-pages/library/dockets.aspx?activeview=DocketView&docketType=Single&docketid=N2014-1>) that was filed today with the Postal Regulatory Commission. The Postal Service is also [seeking comments on the proposed change to its current service standards](#), and has submitted the proposed rule to the Federal Register. Comments on the proposed rule may be sent to IndustryFeedback@usps.gov within 30 days of the notice being published. Changes to DSCF Standard Mail service standards would go into effect no earlier than March 28, 2014. The table below summarizes the impact on DSCF Standard Mail with delivery in the continental United States.

DSCF Standard Mail Dropped before 4 pm* on	Delivery Days Meeting Service Standard Current	Delivery Days Meeting Service Standard Proposed
Thursday	Friday, Saturday, Monday	Friday, Saturday, Monday
Friday	Saturday, Monday	Saturday, Monday, Tuesday
Saturday	Monday, Tuesday	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
Sunday	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

*The current Critical Entry Time (CET) for Standard Mail is 4 pm


 [Bloomberg Businessweek](#): The failure of United Parcel Service Inc. and FedEx Corp. to deliver packages in time for Christmas has exposed the perils of retailers promising to get last-minute gifts to customers.


 [Senator Susan Collins](#): United States Senator Susan Collins issued the following statement regarding the U.S. Postal Service's announcement that the Postal Regulatory Commission has approved an exigent rate increase, affecting first-class, standard, periodicals and package mailing. On October 18, 2013, Senator Collins wrote to Postal Regulatory Commission Secretary Shoshanna Grove, explaining that an exigent rate increase to recover losses caused by electronic diversion of communications from mail to internet is not authorized by the Postal Accountability Enhancement Act of 2006, of which Senator Collins authored.


"I am disappointed that the PRC has approved a postal rate increase averaging six percent. My concern is that a rate increase of this magnitude will worsen the Postal Service's crisis by further driving down mail volume, eroding the Postal Service's steadily declining customer base, and leading to a further decline in revenues. The Postal Service should be implementing more initiatives that will increase volume and attract more consumers. Even though temporary, these rate increases may well do just the opposite.

"The rate increase is also contrary to current law which ties price hikes to the inflation rate. Congress intended the authority to increase rates under an exigent case to be used only in extreme and unforeseen instances - such as terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other events that would

cause significant and substantial disruptions in service. The exigent rate provisions were not meant to be used to remedy poor economic performance or to offset an ongoing marketplace trend, such as the increased use of electronic mail."


 **Berkshire Eagle:** The decision of the Independent Postal Regulatory Commission to approve a "temporary" price hike of 3 cents to 49 cents for a first-class stamp to help the Postal Service recover financially from dramatic mail decreases over the past five years will more than likely contribute to more dramatic mail decreases. The larger issue is the future of the Postal Service, buffeted as it is by private competitors and the increasing shift to electronic communications and bill-paying. **No one wants jobs to be cut anywhere in this economy, but the public sector cannot be immune from cuts that have long been the norm in the private sector.**


 **Entrepreneur:** Even though that same focus on logistics was severely tested and questioned this Christmas, it is unlikely the USPS can use the fiasco to get more customers. In short, the Postal Service will miss its chance to take advantage of its greatest competitive opportunity in history. It is a shame, because competition always brings down prices and stronger, more economically free Postal Service could benefit independent businesses and consumers alike. But Congress would have to unshackle the Postal Service, allowing it to truly make its own decisions free from regulatory and political interference, for that to occur. **[EdNote: And for competition to actually exist, the postal monopolies would have to be ended.]**

 **4-Traders:** Mozambique's state Postal company, Correios de Moçambique will next year launch a road transport of people and parcels across the country by March, APA learns here on Friday. The company's Financial Administrator, Valdemar Jessen, says that in the first phase the service would be provided by seven luxury Marcopolo buses with 70 seats each, acquired in neighbouring South Africa while the . The project dubbed 'Post Bus project' is set to cost US\$2 million. Jessen said that the aim is to place two buses on each of the country's main route in order to cover an existing market gap.


 **Attention Postal One! Users:**


- **PostalOne!® Release 37.0.0 Deployment** — will require an extended maintenance window to complete all software updates. **There will be a PostalOne! outage** from 12:00AM(midnight) CT through 9:00AM CT, on Sunday, January 12, 2014. **A mandatory Mail.dat® client download will be available immediately following** the software update. Release notes for PostalOne! Release 37.0.0 can be found on [RIBBS](#) by clicking on Major/Minor Release Schedule/ 2014 Releases in the left-hand navigation bar or by going directly on [RIBBS](#).
- **PostalOne! Release 37.0.0 Deployment to Test Environment for Mailers (TEM)** — will occur on Monday, January 13, 2014, and PostalOne! TEM will be unavailable from 5:30AM CT through 3PM CT. If you have any additional questions please contact the help desk at 800-522-9085.

 **Detroit News:** The budget bill has passed, hiking spending and taxes. Capitol Hill is back to the bipartisan business of mulcting taxpayers. Unfortunately, Washington can't afford to wait for fiscal reform. Noted CBO, the debt-GDP ratio "is higher than at any point in U.S. history except a brief period around World War II, and it is twice the percent at the end of 2007." The agency's most optimistic estimate, the so-called "baseline," is that Uncle Sam will add \$6.3 trillion more in red ink over the next decade. Annual deficits are expected to fall to through 2015, and then begin moving up again. However, more realistic is CBO's "alternative" scenario, given how politicians usually behave like politicians. In this case Uncle Sam would run up \$8.8 trillion more in red ink. These estimates presume good economic times ahead and a minimum of new bail-outs. Unfortunately, that seems over-optimistic.

 **Postalnews Blog:** *From the PMG to his employees --* "I want to especially thank our employees across the country," said PMG Pat Donahoe. "They made this holiday season a special time to remember for our customers. Major customers told me they were pleased with the levels of high service they received from our employees. The dedication and resolve of our employees is commendable and helps to justify the trust our customers have in our ability to deliver."

[EdNote: From the Postal Service to its Customers -- "Thank you for all the business you've made possible to help save our butts from a fiscal collapse. To show our appreciation, we're awarding you an exigent postal rate increase that's more than TWICE the rate of inflation." Folks, this isn't about having skin in the game. This about being flayed.]

 [Wall Street Journal](#): China's securities regulator said Friday that it has stopped reviewing the listing application of China Postal Express & Logistics Co., which had planned to raise 9.98 billion yuan (\$1.6 billion) in an initial public offering. The China Securities Regulatory Commission didn't say why it had terminated its review. Terminating a review doesn't constitute a rejection. The commission terminates its review of an IPO plan if the applicant doesn't respond to questions from the commission within the given time or the applicant voluntarily withdraws its IPO application. The IPO proposal by the Beijing-based logistics company, a unit of state-owned China Post Group, had already gotten the go-ahead from the regulator in 2012. Before going public, it needs a final certification from the regulator. However, a year-long IPO hiatus hindered the company from pushing ahead with the IPO.

 [Cape Breton Post](#): Canada Post says it recorded heavy parcel volumes across the country this holiday season as the amount of letter mail continued its decline. In May, Sydney-Victoria MP Mark Eyking, right, toured the North Sydney Canada Post office on Friday at the invitation of Gordon MacDonald, left, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers-Breton 117, who is upset with changes to the outlet. The Crown corporation delivered 1.2 million parcels on Monday, according to a tweet posted on Christmas Eve by Canada Post spokesperson Anick Losier. It has led to historic volumes of parcel traffic in 2013.



From the Federal Register:

Postal Regulatory Commission	
NOTICES	
New Postal Products ,	
79024–79025 [2013–30956]	[TEXT] [PDF]
79024 [2013–30957]	[TEXT] [PDF]
79023–79024 [2013–30970]	[TEXT] [PDF]
79022–79023 [2013–30971]	[TEXT] [PDF]
79025–79026 [2013–30973]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Postal Service	
RULES	
Deferral of Full-Service Intelligent Mail Barcode Requirement to Qualify for Automation Prices ,	
78720 [2013–30705]	[TEXT] [PDF]
NOTICES	
Meetings; Sunshine Act ,	
79026 [2013–31100]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records ,	
79026–79027 [2013–31105]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Product Changes:	
Priority Mail Express Negotiated Service Agreement ,	
79027 [2013–30954]	[TEXT] [PDF]
79027–79028 [2013–30955]	[TEXT] [PDF]
Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement ,	

[Atlanta Business Chronicle](#): Amazon.com Inc. is offering refunds on shipping charges and \$20 gift cards after Atlanta-based United Parcel Service Inc. said overwhelming volume left it unable to deliver some packages by Christmas. Amazon, the largest online retailer, is telling customers that failures in UPS' transportation network are to blame, and that its own fulfillment centers processed customers' orders in time for holiday delivery. UPS said Christmas Eve that drivers would not work December 25, but that the company's Louisville hub would work Wednesday night to sort packages so that they could be delivered the day after Christmas.

[Businessweek](#): U.S. consumers offered plenty of hints in recent weeks that they were keen to shop from their couches. Store traffic and spending on and around the Thanksgiving holiday was dismal by many measures. But online shopping on "Cyber Monday" surged 21 percent over 2012 levels, according to IBM. Delivery services likely received warnings about the volume of sales from retail partners. Amazon.com, for instance, said on Thursday that it saw a spike in new customers of Amazon Prime, an annual membership that offers unlimited free, two-day shipping on many items. More than 1 million new people signed up for the service in the third week of December, according to Amazon.com. Demand was so high, Amazon said, that the company had to put a temporary hold on Prime registrations to ensure that services for incumbent members weren't adversely affected by the throng of newcomers. Arguably, the giant Web store might have considered hitting the pause button a little more often. Today, Amazon is rushing out \$20 gift cards to shoppers who didn't receive their gifts as early as promised. FedEx, too, felt the shipping storm approaching. According to a conference call with analysts last week, the express delivery service set records for the total number of packages handled in one day on three dates before Christmas week: Dec. 2, Dec. 9, and Dec. 16.


[New York Times](#): UPS scrambled on Thursday to deliver packages that had failed to arrive in time for Christmas as the No. 1 U.S. ground delivery service sought to limit the fallout from the delays. The lag in deliveries - which triggered intense criticism on social media - could encourage eCommerce companies, like online retail giant Amazon, to spread their shipping contracts across more companies to lower risk. "I do think it creates an opportunity for companies other than UPS and FedEx to make some inroads here," said Anthony Gallo, a senior air freight and logistics analyst with Wells Fargo Securities LLC. "There's no downside to the retailers at this point to have more competition on the delivery side."


[Newsday](#): Federal regulators approved Tuesday a two-year temporary price increase for first-class stamps. The charge will go to 49 cents per stamp on Jan. 26 to help the Postal Service recover from losses it says were brought on by the recent recession. But the increase will almost certainly be neither temporary nor a real path to recovery.


[The Gasden Times](#): Doctors don't normally treat ugly lacerations with one of those tiny, circular adhesive bandages, so why is the Postal Regulatory Commission trying that approach with the U.S. Postal Service? The commission on Wednesday, by a 2-1 vote, approved a 6 percent increase in the Postal Service's first-class, bulk mail, periodical and package service rates, effective Jan. 26. That means the cost of first-class stamps will rise from 46 cents to 49 cents. The increase, which is above the rate of inflation (commission approval is required for that), is for no more than two years. Its specific intention is to allow the Postal Service to make up \$2.8 billion in losses between 2008 and 2011 that the commission said can be attributed to the Great Recession. There's one problem. The Postal Service during the period in question lost \$20.2 billion. It lost \$15.9 billion in 2012. The fact that it lost just \$5 billion in 2013 is being treated as good news in some quarters. We're loath to write off \$2.8 billion as small change, but it really is when you're talking about that much red ink.

December 26, 2013

[Fox News](#): A U.S. senator is calling on UPS to refund customers whose Christmas packages got caught up in widespread delays. "In a very real sense, Christmas is on the line," Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., said in a written statement Thursday. "I call on UPS to do the right thing and provide refunds to people whose Christmases were a little less cheery as a result of their late deliveries."

 [Direct Marketing News](#): While mailers can take some solace in PRC's decision to limit the duration of the 4.3% hike by establishing a formula to rescind the increase based on a quarterly evaluation of additional revenue, the ameliorative can also be interpreted as an irritant. The time limitation on the increase ultimately identifies the recession as an exigent circumstance, a quantifiable one-time belly blow to the Postal Service, which to Taub's way of thinking it was not. *[EdNote: How is it that the private sector also suffered greatly from the recession, had to lay off workers and cut costs with a cleaver, were told the recession was over and now had to get on with life as normal, but the Postal Service was not? How is it that the Postal Service's problems stemmed from being overstaffed, too many facilities, lack of planning to accommodate the effects of the digital transformation, yet is held harmless from woes it could have avoided? How is it that mailers -- which provide virtually all the money the Postal Service uses to operate -- are the ones that are expected to shoulder the fiscal burden because of the somnolence of a narrow-sighted, narcissitic, government protected monopoly?]*

 [Wisconsin Public Radio](#): Cutting hours at post offices in rural Wisconsin communities will continue for another year. So far, the postal service says people are grudgingly accepting it.

 [PoliticusUSA](#): If Republicans got their way, and the Postal Service was privatized, the horror stories from UPS and Fed Ex would become the norm for every American 365 days a year.




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


- **The Postal Regulatory Commission has approved the U.S. Postal Service exigent increase of 4.3 percent on top of its recently filed CPI price change. The combined price change will go into effect on January 26, 2014.** The exigent increase will not be permanently “baked-in” for future price increases as the PRC has ordered the Postal Service to submit a plan by May 2014 on how it will remove the “surcharge” or exigent increase. The exigent decision passed by a 2-1 vote. Commissioner Acton has a Separate View and Vice Chairman Taub had a Dissenting Opinion.
- The Postal Service published its unaudited November results with the Postal Regulatory Commission. USPS lost \$159 million in November 2013. The Postal Service’s controllable operating INCOME for the month was \$119 million.
- The U. S. Postal Service (USPS) on December 18, 2013, published in the Federal Register its final rules containing changes in mailing standards in support of the January 2014 pricing changes filed by the USPS on September 26, 2013. The final rules largely mirror the USPS’ proposed rules, with a few changes and clarifications around issues such as the new “metered” price category and First-Class Mail residual pieces, FSS preparation/entry and pricing, and retraction of a few minor proposals.
- The Postal Service has released its final rule for New Standards to Enhance Package Visibility. The USPS is revising the Mailing Standards of the United States Postal Service, Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) to require the use of Intelligent Mail® package barcodes (IMpb) on all commercial parcels, and to require the transmission of supporting electronic documentation including piece-level address or ZIP+4® Code information. Included in these new requirements is a per-piece price adjustment for mailpieces not complying with the IMpb standards. The Postal Service is also adding DMM reference to a future requirement to use a complete destination delivery address or an 11-digit delivery point validated ZIP Code TM in the mailer’s electronic documentation.
- USPS’ response to PRC exigent decision. USPS petitions for review of PRC’s CPI decision. Rampant returns plague e-tailers. Trying to clear a way for postal legislation. Unblocking logical postal reform. PRC approves Alternative Postage Payment. FierceGovernment’s 2013 Fierce 15. USPS announces new Full Service Certification (FSC) program. USPS’ million dollar fortune teller featured in Sen. Coburn’s “Wastebook.”
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- Postal previews.


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





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 [Observer Today](#): U.S. Senator Charles Schumer has recently launched a plan to end the more than 100-year-old law putting the USPS at a disadvantage with FedEx and UPS, which are allowed to ship alcohol. This ban prevents the struggling agency from earning hundreds of millions of dollars in potential revenue and limits growth opportunities for local craft brewers and wine producers, including 22 wineries and breweries in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties. Congress is expected to take up a Postal Reform bill in the near future.


 [Deccan Chronicle](#): With major postal services in the world phasing out door-to-door delivery of mail, the top brass of the postal department has said the future of India Post lay with parcel delivery services.


 [BBC](#): Shipping problems experienced by parcel delivery firms UPS and FedEx have left some US customers without the Christmas presents they were expecting. The two delivery giants said that some of their shipments had been delayed, but did not specify how many, just saying that "a small share" of the overall shipments had been affected. UPS said its network on the East Coast had suffered a breakdown. And FedEx apologised to its customers for possible delays. Online retailer Amazon also sent out an apology to those affected by the breakdown.


 [Fox6Now](#): While many of us are moving at a slower pace on this Christmas Day — relaxing and enjoying the spirit of the holiday with family — some were working at quite a frantic pace on Christmas morning — trying to deliver those last-minute gifts. FOX6 News had the opportunity to shadow one of these “working Santas” on Christmas morning! Charles Houston works for the U.S. Postal Service. On this Christmas morning, his morning meeting was brief. It may have seemed like any other day delivering mail and packages for the U.S. Postal Service during the winter. But on Christmas Day — it was anything but normal — and Houston was working his first Christmas. He was busy Christmas morning loading packages labeled Priority Mail Express. Houston says he volunteered to work on Christmas.


 [Enhancing the Value of Mail -- Discussion Forum](#). Tuesday, January 21, 2014 9 - 11 a.m. EST USPS OIG Headquarters 1735 N. Lynn Street, Rosslyn, VA "The Postal Service OIG completed a project that explored how mail can be enhanced from the perspective of Digital Natives. Specifically, we conducted focus groups with Digital Natives to determine how they currently use and perceive the mail. We also had them reflect on examples of mail features that may enhance the mail's value to them, such as unique designs and digitally interactive printed material. The results of this work may shed light on how the Postal Service and its stakeholders can enhance the value of mail for all recipients."


December 25, 2013


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Many shoppers are blaming online retailers for stealing Christmas. Companies from Amazon.com Inc. to Kohl's Corp. and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. promised to deliver items from headphones to television sets before Christmas, but shipping delays left gift-givers across the country without anything to put under the tree. On Christmas Eve, Brandon Scott was still waiting for a 46-inch Samsung TV and Kate Spade watch he ordered from Amazon on Saturday. "I'm frustrated because these items could have easily been purchased at various retailers in my area, something I would have gladly done had Amazon not 'guaranteed' their arrival before Christmas," said Mr. Scott of Ann Arbor, Mich. An unexpected surge of online orders in the past few weeks appears to have strained the limits of delivery and fulfillment infrastructure at retailers and parcel carriers. While instances of bad weather, Web glitches and late deliveries from manufacturers also played a part, the sheer volume may have been the problem, according to retail analysts. [EdNote: Uh oh. The Obamacare model strikes online retailing. These excuses sound almost as good as "The dog ate your on-time delivery guarantee."]


 [Air Cargo World](#): International parcel carriers tried to beat Santa Claus at his own game, racing to deliver packages around the world – without the aid of flying reindeers. The Great Package Race, a project conducted by students at the Georgia Institute of Technology, challenges parcel carriers to see who can deliver packages to a specific location the fastest. This year, the goal was to get packages to Santa in the North Pole. DHL Express was the winner, beating out its fellow competitors by at least a full day. The other companies participating in the contest were UPS, FedEx and the U.S. Postal Service, according to the Great Package Race website. Under the direction of Professor John Bartholdi, the students loaded up packages containing Georgia-Tech-branded items such as T-shirts (extra large for Santa), baseball hats and coffee mugs, which were sent out on Dec. 13 with the official home of Santa – Rovaniemi, Finland, which is five miles (eight kilometers) north of the Arctic Circle – as the final destination.


 [Marketwatch](#): United Parcel Service Inc. said on Tuesday it won't be able to deliver some packages in time for Christmas because last-minute air shipments proved greater than its network could handle this week. "The volume of air packages in the UPS system did exceed capacity as demand was much greater than our forecast. It is a small percentage of shipments that are delayed and will not be delivered today," said spokeswoman Susan Rosenberg in a statement. It is not the first time the shipper hasn't been able to deliver packages in time for Christmas. But previous delays were caused by weather and other technical glitches, while this year's backlog was triggered by too many packages, she added. UPS had estimated its air network would handle about 7.75 million shipments on Monday, about 3.5 million of which were expected to be sorted at the company's large Louisville, Ky., hub. That site was unable to process all of the packages.

 [NJ.com](#): The Postal Service said the Blue Law wouldn't stop it from delivering packages on Sundays. Mail delivery is considered an essential service, like police, fire or utility services, George Flood, a spokesman for the Postal Service, said. Flood added that the Postal Service has delivered Priority Express Mail on Sundays for years, frequently during the holidays. "The bottom line is, it's nothing new for us to deliver on Sundays," he said. Mitchell T. Horn, one of the leaders of Modernize Bergen County, a grassroots group attempting to repeal the Blue Laws, said the deal gave Amazon an even bigger advantage over local businesses that must close on Sundays. "What this particular agreement does is it highlights to businesses in Bergen County that online sales are going to continue to be a bigger threat to their sustainability in the short term than they actually realize," Horn said.


 [Washington Post](#): The commission's 2 to 1 approval of an emergency or "exigent" rise of 2 cents will give the Postal Service extra revenue for the first time since a 2006 law limited rate increases to the rate of inflation. The decision was a blow to mail-dependent publishing industries, which lobbied against an increase, saying it would add millions of dollars in costs for consumers and depress mail volume. In addition to first-class mail, the higher rates will apply to magazines, newspapers, advertising mail and bills — which together account for most of the 158 billion pieces of mail delivered every year.


 **INDUSTRYALERT** "The Postal Service is disappointed in the Postal Regulatory Commission's split decision to limit the duration of a modest exigent rate increase. We are reviewing the decision in an attempt to determine the basis for the Commission's decision. We will provide additional comments later." *[EdNote: Guess they feel mailers haven't been screwed enough. It's been said that when you have the Postal Service as a business partner...you're operating under a very poor business model.]*


 [Investors Business Daily](#): While Amazon.com got a lot of press this month talking up future delivery by drones — and FedEx makes some fun of that — FedEx and United Parcel Service are trucking ahead with ways to optimize human drivers. Robots figure in at the shippers' sorting facilities, but it's mostly less sexy technology that's powering savings and helping the companies cope with ever-bigger stacks of boxes and envelopes to ship. In their peak holiday-deliveries day, UPS (UPS) and FedEx (FDX) together likely handled a few million more packages than last year's peak day, Cowen & Co. analyst Helane Becker said.

 [Federal Times](#): In voting 2-1 in favor of the temporary hikes, the Postal Regulatory Commission ruled that the Postal Service had made its case to recoup \$2.8 billion worth of mail volume lost between 2008 and 2011 because of the "Great Recession," but judged that the increases should last "just long enough to recover the loss," Ruth Goldway, the commission's chairman, said in a news release. In the ruling released Tuesday, the PRC told postal

officials to report every three months on how much money the increases are generating and to come up with a plan by May for phasing them out once the recession-related losses have been made up. That point should be reached in less than two years, according to the ruling.

 [Postalnews Blog](#): Right wing Senator Tom Coburn of Oklahoma recently released his annual list of “100 examples of wasteful and low-priority spending”- and the US Postal Service’s contract with self-styled futurist “Faith Popcorn” made the list. The Postal Service paid “Futurist” Faith Popcorn for advice on stamps – (USPS) \$566,000. To assess the future of stamps, Faith Popcorn’s Brain Reserve planned to hold several internal “BrainJams” as well as call in outside experts. Ms. Popcorn herself, the “Creative Director,” expected to bill 62.5 hours of work at the rate of \$836/hour. Her firm is also doing other work for the Postal Service: “Innovation: A daily in-home visitation service for the elderly and ill.” In this service, mail carriers would offer to ensure people are taking their prescriptions or need any help. Ms. Popcorn’s firm is also studying whether the mail carriers should offer a “daily personal visit and brief chat” for a fee. Apparently, she has predicted the future of the USPS to be a health care provider. *[EdNote: And for this, mailers are condemned to pay exigency rates. Yes sir. For every postal screw-up, for every element of postal waste and abuse, mailers are expected to pay.]*

 [Associated Press](#): The higher rate will last no more than two years, allowing the Postal Service to recoup \$2.8 billion in losses. By a 2-1 vote, the independent Postal Regulatory Commission rejected a request to make the price hike permanent, though inflation over the next 24 months may make it so. The surcharge “will last just long enough to recover the loss,” Commission Chairman Ruth Y. Goldway said. The regulators Tuesday stopped short of making the price increases permanent, saying the Postal Service had conflated losses it suffered as a result of Internet competition with business lost because of the Great Recession. They ordered the agency to develop a plan to phase out the higher rates once the lost revenue is recouped.

 [Association of Magazine Media](#): Mary G. Berner, President and CEO, MPA – The Association of Magazine Media – today issued the following statement after the Postal Regulatory Commission’s 2-1 vote to approve an “emergency” postage rate increase of approximately 6% – more than triple the rate of inflation: “This is a counterproductive decision by the PRC and it does nothing to fix USPS’s systemic problems. It will drive more customers away from using the Postal Service and will have ripple effects through our economy – hurting consumers, forcing layoffs, and impacting businesses. It doesn’t delay the inevitable but will hasten it. Making this increase a “surcharge” is a small comfort to our members, who will have to start paying in late January. The United States needs a healthy, sustainable Postal Service. We will carefully review the PRC’s decision before deciding whether to appeal it in court.”

December 24, 2013



[Docket No. R2013-11](#) **Rate Adjustment Due to Extraordinary or Exceptional Circumstances**. It is ordered:

- The Commission finds that the Postal Service has justified the recovery of \$2.776 billion in additional contribution by showing an appropriate causal link between the extraordinary or exceptional circumstance of the Great Recession and mail volume losses.
- The rates proposed by the Postal Service in Attachment A to its Request may go into effect on January 26, 2014 as a surcharge.
- The Postal Service shall report incremental and cumulative surcharge revenue to the Commission 30 days after the end of each quarter.
- The Postal Service shall file a report no later than May 1, 2014, providing a proposed plan for removing the surcharge from postage rates with a complete explanation of how the plan will operate.
- The Postal Service may propose alternative collection mechanisms consistent with this Order. There is a Separate Views of Commissioner [Acton](#) and Dissenting Opinion by Vice Chairman Taub.
- **R2013-11 PRC-LR-R2013-11/2 - Calculation of Lost Contribution due to the Great Recession and Surcharge Revenue Limitation Calculation** http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88630/prc%20r2013-11_2.doc
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88630/PRC_LR_R2013_11_2%20Final.xls
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88630/Surcharge%20Revenue%20Limitation%20Calculation.xlsx>

- **R2013-11 PRC-LR-R2013-11/3 - Price Adjustment Calculations for First-Class Mail**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88631/LR%20Preface.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88631/Price%20change%20FCM.xls>
- **R2013-11 PRC-LR-R2013-11/7 - Price Adjustment Calculations for Special Services**
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88639/LR2013-11_7.docx
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88639/PRC-LR-R2013-11_7.xlsx
- **R2013-11 PRC-LR-R2013-11/5 - Price Adjustment Calculations for Periodicals**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88633/PRC-CAPCALC-PER-R2013-11-5.xls>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88633/PRC-R2013-11-LR5%20Preface.docx>
- **R2013-11 PRC-LR-R2013-11/6 - Price Adjustment Calculations for Package Services**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88638/2012%20Media%20and%20Library%20Mail%20MP.xlsx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88638/2012%20BPM%20MP.xlsx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88638/Preface%20to%20R2013-11%20%20Package%20Services%20Library%20Reference.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88638/R2013-11%20Package%20Services%20Price%20Adjustment%20Calculations.xlsx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88638/R2013-11%20Package%20Services%20Worksharing.xlsx>
- **R2013-11 PRC-LR-R2013-11/4 - Price Adjustment Calculations for Standard Mail**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88632/PRC-CAPCALC-SM-R2013-11-4.xls>
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88632/PRC-R2012-3-LR2_Preface.docx



The United States Postal Service [announced](#) that Timothy O'Reilly, Vice President, Controller, will retire effective January 31, 2014.



[Brandon Sun](#): Canada Post CEO Deepak Chopra is eager to discuss the bombshell that has people talking about the future of Amazon's package service -- drone delivery. The chief executive is fascinated by the U.S. online retailer's airborne pilot project that, earlier this month, grabbed headlines around the world. "I don't think anybody was really anticipating a story like that," he said, talking about the new Amazon technology that is hardly off the ground



Audit Report: Internal Controls and Transportation Associated with the Springfield, MA Mail Transport Equipment Service Center. [Report No. NO-AR-14-001](#).

December 23, 2013





[American Postal Workers Union](#): Businesses, customers and APWU members who have complaints about delayed mail should be sure to let the Postal Regulatory Commission know, says Debby Szeredy, the union's executive vice president. "Much of the delayed mail is in areas where plants and post offices have been consolidated or closed or where hours at post offices have been reduced," she said.




At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- Billing Determinants, Quarter 4 of Fiscal Year 2013: Market Dominant Products Billing Determinants and International Market Dominant Products Billing Determinants http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88624/Billing%20Determinants_Q4-FY13.zip
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88624/Letter_BillDeter_Q4-FY13_20131223160206.pdf
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88624/Q413_MKT_DOMINANT_INTL_BD.xls

 **The Guardian:** Welcome to the FTSE 100 index, Royal Mail. Shares in the privatised postal service may have fallen on their first day as a designated blue-chip stock, but the rise since flotation at 330p in mid-October is still 75%. Even the most belligerent investment banker ought to be able now to admit that Royal Mail was woefully underpriced at sale. The key point, as mentioned here in recent weeks, is the dividend. The starting point was set at £200m, or 20p a share. But if, as many analysts think, Royal Mail is capable of advancing its dividend at a rate of about 25% a year for three years, the payout will reach £400m by 2017. During the next year chief executive Moya Greene will be obliged to show her hand on the dividend. If she does indeed opt for an increase of 20%-plus, expect all the arguments to be reopened about an undervaluation at the expense of the public purse. Government ministers knew that Royal Mail, as a semi-utility, would be valued by investors as an income stock. But did they appreciate properly the company's potential to increase dividends?


 **INDUSTRY ALERT** **Flats Sequencing System (FSS) Update.** Upcoming changes with the FSS preparation have generated a lot of interest and the Postal Service wants to provide you the information you need. This webinar is an update to the webinar conducted on November 14th and will provide a panel of experts to answer questions after the presentation, which includes updated information on FSS preparation, mailing statements, entry point options and rates. Instructions for participating in the webinar appear below. **Attendee Information:** U.S./Canada Attendee Dial-in: (888) 890-1547; Conference ID: 27926242; Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?t=a&d=997752186>. If you cannot join using the direct link above, please use the alternate logins:
Alternate URL: <https://usps.webex.com/>; Event Number: 997 752 186


 The U.S. Postal Service has filed a [petition](#) with the US Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit to review the Postal Regulatory Commission Order Number 1890, *Order on Price Adjustments for Market Dominant Products and Related Mail Classification Changes*, in PRC Docket Number R2013019.


The Postal Service is contesting the PRC's Order that certain mail preparation requirements were governed by restrictions on rate increases set forth in 39 U.S.C. 3622(d). *In other words, the USPS does not agree with the PRC's order that Full-Service IMb implementation should be accounted for within the CPI cap.*




Blog: [Season's Greetings.](#) Holiday mailings are as much a part of the American tradition as kids' letters to Santa. We've talked a lot about the growth in packages, including those all-important holiday gifts. But the Postal Service is also doing its bit to make sure Big Red knows who's been naughty and who's been nice. As in years past, families with young "believers" have been taking advantage of the Postal Service offering that ensures letters from Santa have a North Pole postmark (so long as the request was made by December 10). Still others go to greater lengths to get in the spirit of the season. Each December holiday enthusiasts travel to the quiet town of Christmas, FL and visit its local post office, so their Christmas cards will be postmarked from Christmas itself. And for early planners, the Postal Service offers postmarks on letters and cards from other "Christmas-themed" towns, including Santa Claus, IN; Rudolph, OH; Antlers, ND; and any number of places called Bethlehem. Click [here](#) for the full list. Whether you are mailing your holiday greetings and goodies from an exotic locale or putting them on the front stoop for your local carrier to pick up – Pushing the Envelope wishes you a wonderful holiday season and a very healthy and prosperous New Year. We also want to remind you to check back with us on Monday, January 6 when we will post our list of Top 10 Stories of the Year. As always, we welcome your feedback.


 **Wall Street Journal:** Free shipping and lenient return policies have given online retailing a huge boost. Now, chains are mining their order data to get shoppers to keep more purchases. Behind the uptick in e-commerce is a little known secret: As much as a third of all Internet sales gets returned, according to retail consultancy Kurt Salmon. And the tide of goods flowing back to retailers is rising. Shipper United Parcel Service Inc. expects returns to jump 15% this season from last year, making them a significant and growing cost for retailers. The stakes get even higher during the holidays, when return volume peaks. So this year, chains are digging through past transactions to weed out chronic returners, train shoppers to make better decisions or stem buyer's remorse.


 [Reuters](#): Belgian postal group bpost said its Chief Executive Johnny Thijs stepped down as head of the company but would stay on until a successor was found. In a statement on Monday, the company said that Thijs had asked not to renew his contract, which expires on January 6.


 [Warsaw Business Journal](#): Postal services firm InPost may debut on the Warsaw Stock Exchange in the second half of 2014, Rafał Brzoska, the CEO of the firm's owner Integer.pl told Dziennik Gazeta Prawna. "A partial exit from the firm seems very attractive," he said. Mr Brzoska added that the company wants to be an active participant in the consolidation of the Polish market for postal deliveries.


December 22, 2013

 [Save the Post Office](#): During the hearings, the Commissioners seemed very skeptical about the Postal Service's basic claim that most of the losses in mail volumes were due to the Great Recession, both during the official period of the recession in 2008 and 2009 and in the years after. They seemed to feel that technological changes like smartphones, tablets, Facebook, Twitter, and the Cloud were having a much larger effect than the Postal Service was acknowledging. A recurring phrase during the hearings was "the new normal," the implication being that while the Great Recession may have been an "extraordinary" and "exceptional" circumstance justifying a rate increase, things can't go on being extraordinary forever. The Postal Service must adjust to lower mail volumes and not expect its customers to pay a permanent rate increase to help cover losses that occurred during a limited period of time. If the Commission were to grant the request in full, the case could end up in court. If the Commission rejects the request as it did the first time around, the Postal Service may decide to go back to court. One compromise that's easy to imagine is giving the Postal Service a smaller increase than requested and putting a time limit on it. Many of the comments submitted by the mailers seemed headed in this direction. The Commission might grant an increase of one or two percent rather than 4.3 percent requested, and it might rescind the increase after two years.

 [Arutz Sheva](#): The government is hoping to get rid of some 2,000 workers in the Israel Post Office, as part of a major fat-cutting operation. The purpose, according to officials in the Communications and Finance Ministries, is to prepare the Post Office for possible privatization - if not of the entire department, then at least significant departments in it.

 [The Guardian](#): There's a great tradition in North American music of mixing protest and song, and some local Canada Post employees are looking to carry on that tradition. A group of employees of the Crown corporation are planning on going door to door in Summerside this weekend, singing Christmas carols and asking folks to sign a petition to save urban mail delivery.

 [Livemint](#): India Post is going ahead with the rollout of a nationwide network of automated teller machines (ATMs) and bringing all its branches on a single technology platform, notwithstanding the reservations of the finance ministry and the Planning Commission over its proposal to venture into commercial banking. The state-run postal service is among the 25 applicants that have sought a banking licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). A four-member panel, headed by former RBI governor Bimal Jalan, will scrutinize the applications to pave the way for the entry of a third set of private banks into India's Rs.81 trillion banking sector in two decades.

 [The Hill](#): The chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Committee says he wants to clear postal legislation out of his panel in January, after delaying a markup three times in recent weeks. Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.) says he and the panel's top Republican, Sen. Tom Coburn (Okla.), have used the delays to shore up their bipartisan postal proposal. Carper said that he wants to meet with committee members on the legislation next month, and then schedule a fourth markup - one he's more confident the committee will be able to follow through on. "People who support the mailers don't want to raise prices. People who support the unions don't want to cut costs," Coburn said. "You can't solve it unless you solve it - which means everybody's got to take some pain." Democrats on the Homeland Security Committee - mostly from rural, red states - have already raised a host of concerns about the bill crafted by Carper and Coburn, which would open the door to slower delivery standards. More liberal Democrats, in fact, complained from the moment that Coburn and Carper dropped the bill in August that the measure wasn't as strong as the postal legislation the Senate passed in 2012. One postal observer off Capitol Hill said the Senate bill still has a ways to go before making it through the Homeland Security panel. "There remains deep concerns about


Saturday, rates and governance, service standards and more,” the observer said. “It may be time to consider a more streamlined approach to the bill.”

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


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


- **The ENTIRE cost of providing the nation a universal mail delivery system is underwritten by the postage dollars that MAILERS (not management and not labor) pay. We already have substantial skin in the game.**
- **When management screws up or when labor decides to "grieve" every damn thing, the cost for all that waste and inefficiency is borne by MAILERS, not management or labor. We REALLY have skin in the game.**
- **When management compensates the wrong people for doing other than the right thing, or when labor "wins" pay, benefits, and work rules that do little to enhance the Postal Service's fiscal viability, the costs for all those snafus are paid for by MAILERS -- not management or labor.**


Mailers are out of skin. Congress should leave our muscle and sinew alone!

 [Macomb Daily](#): More Americans are deciding to shop online this holiday season instead of heading to crowded stores. But that alone won't save what is turning out to be a ho-hum Christmas for department stores and clothing chains. It's estimated that for every \$9 shoppers spend in physical stores during the two-month season that ends on New Year's Eve, they'll only spend \$1 online, according to research firm comScore.


December 21, 2013

 [Global Times](#): Canada isn't the first nation to make painful postal service cuts. To get taxpayers off the hook for cash-leaking mail operations, nations across Europe and Asia are in the midst of bold shake-ups that many would have once viewed as unthinkable. Canada's dramatic actions will no doubt lend further credibility to a trend that's already underway. With any luck, other countries will draw inspiration from its example and push forward similarly bold policies aimed at reinventing their own floundering postal operations.


 [NewsOK](#): Congress, special interests and bureaucrats continue finding “creative” ways to subsidize the U.S. Postal Service. Senate Bill 1486 hides the subsidy in health insurance provisions. These sections of the bill grant the postmaster authority to create a new insurance plan for postal employees with taxpayer dollars — a Medicare and taxpayer-funded scheme that subsidizes the postal service. This proposal cherry picks the healthiest postal employees (those still working) and relegates retirees not yet eligible for Medicare to existing plans. This means at least 150,000 postal retirees — roughly 20 percent of the total — get left behind. If 20 percent of a population drives 80 percent of the costs, then the 20 percent offloaded by this shell game will adversely alter the risk pool for all other federal health plans. For some, this could lead to more than a 30 percent increase in insurance costs, a burden borne by taxpayers.


 [Post & Parcel](#): Polish Post has lost its bid for an important public sector mail contract, providing services for Poland's courts and prosecutors' offices. The contract has been won by private sector rival Polska Grupa Poczta (PGP), with the National Board of Appeal upholding the Treasury's contract decision this week, dismissing an appeal by state-owned Polish Post and confirming that PGP met the criteria for the work. The two-year contract begins in January 2014, and will be worth about PLN 500m (EUR 120.2m), involving more than 100m shipments –


more than 4m letters, parcels and courier deliveries each month, including domestic and international items. PGP said its bid for the contract was more than PLN 84m (EUR 20.2m) cheaper than the bid from Polish Post.

 [Financial Times](#): Britain is the biggest online shopping market in Europe but despite bold initiatives by retailers and postal operators to tackle the problem of failed parcel deliveries, none has come up with a better alternative to deliveries to the office. “The truth is the eRetailing network is rather undeveloped and rests on ad hoc solutions that don’t work very well,” says Mr Cullen. “Stunts like drones are one thing, but the whole sector lacks workable solutions for real problems.” While companies are currently bearing the cost of hiring extra post room staff to process the seasonal deluge, Mr Cullen believes this is “much cheaper” than the costs couriers and postal operators have to bear with repeat deliveries. Whilst PwC forecasts that the UK parcels market will grow by 3 per cent a year until 2018, experts predict that more office buildings will ban internet deliveries.


 [From the Federal Register](#): **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** New Postal Products , 77508–77509 [2013–30412] [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]


 [The Mail](#): Royal Mail revealed share bonuses for its top directors worth up to £4.2million at the time they were awarded, as its transition to a public company saw cash incentives replaced with stock. Some 15 senior staff will get the shares in 2016, if they meet performance targets, with boss Moya Greene eligible for up to 92,232 shares, worth £488,000 at the £5.29 price when they were awarded.

 [Newsmax](#): More than \$13 million was awarded to a U.S. Postal Service contractor's two companies after he paid "cash and noncash bribes" to vehicle maintenance facility workers, according a probe by the Inspector General, The Washington Free Beacon reported Friday. The report cited a total of 11 instances of workers accepting bribes, kickbacks, or steering contracts to family members. USPS officials said the bribes were a result of the lack of clearly defined oversight responsibilities.

 [Investors Business Daily](#): The money-losing Postal Service is the poster-child for how public-sector unions damage our economy. Given their rejection of common-sense reforms that could save jobs, why don't postal workers get rid of them? Public-sector unions like to pretend they protect workers from the cold and uncaring bureaucrats who run our local, state and federal governments, while ensuring quality service to taxpayers. In fact, they merely make the bureaucracies that increasingly run our lives less efficient, less responsive and more wasteful of taxpayer money. Thanks to its generous benefits and pensions, the Postal Service gushes red ink.

December 20, 2013

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Oracle Corp. agreed to buy Responsys Inc. for about \$1.5 billion as the software giant continues to push deeper into cloud-based marketing technology. Oracle plans to pay \$27 in cash for each Responsys share, a 38% premium over Thursday's closing price. Responsys' Interact Suite provides on-demand software that allows marketers to promote a company through email, the Web and social-network platforms.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): The U.S. economy grew at a healthy 4.1% annual rate in the third quarter, revised figures showed Friday, boosting hopes that the recovery is shifting into higher gear after years of sluggishness. Friday's new estimate showed gross domestic product, the broadest measure of all goods and services produced in the economy, expanding at the fastest pace since the fourth quarter of 2011 and the second-fastest since the recovery began in mid-2009. [EdNote: Hey, did anyone ever tell the USPS that "the recovery began in mid-2009?" Maybe they forgot that when they filed for exigent rate increases before the PRC.]


 [LA Weekly](#): Reader, beware: If you put the wrong the ZIP code on a package, that simple mistake could land you in post office hell.




[At thePostal RegulatoryCommission](#):

- **R2014-1 Order No. 1917** - Order Granting Classification and Price Changes for Alternate Postage Payment
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88600/Order%20No.%201917.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88600/Order No. 1917.pdf>


"On November 5, 2013, the Postal Service filed a notice, pursuant to 39 U.S.C. § 3622 and 39 C.F.R. part 3010, proposing to add Alternate Postage Payment, currently an experimental product, as a new, permanent price category under First-Class Mail, Single-Piece Letters/Postcards. The classification and price adjustment will permit producers of First-Class Mail, Single-Piece Letters/Postcards to prepay postage without the need for affixing a stamp. The price adjustment is scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2014. The Commission approves the proposal."


 [Financial Times](#): "Why there's no Postwoman Patricia"

 [Fierce Government](#): FierceGovernment is proud to announce our second annual Fierce 15--a recognition of 15 federal employees and teams who have done particularly innovative things. *Among them....*

David Williams, Inspector General, Postal Service. Most federal inspectors general don't look beyond their mandate to detect and report fraud, waste and abuse within agencies, but Williams realizes his role as the Postal Service inspector general is a little different. While Williams and the USPS OIG do the normal auditor's work of uncovering the waste and abuse, Williams also aggressively delves into policy issues that affect the agency and comes up with possible solutions to the 21st century challenges the Postal Service faces. Williams has come to see his role as not just to keep the agency in check, but also to find ways it can again become solvent and relevant in the digital age. In one report, Williams urged USPS officials to cater to those who grew up in the digital age by encouraging digitally interactive mail pieces. Williams also first pushed the idea of creating more public-private partnerships. He also called out the agency for underutilizing part time workers, which, he said, could save the Postal Service hundreds of millions in overtime pay. Williams hasn't by any means found the solution to USPS woes--but there's likely no single solution anyway. He has looked for innovative and creative ways forward, making him a highly unusual inspector general.





 [UNI Global Union](#): For UNI Global Union and our regional and sector global unions, 2013 was another Breaking Through year. The number of challenges facing our movement is growing as quickly as the global economic divide. Governments are building the wall higher between the top one per cent and working families. For every member of the one per cent there are millions more denied a living wage, and unable to plan for their families' future or a secure retirement. The coin is dropping that the neo-liberal charge to deregulate labour markets and dismantle collective bargaining is leading to growing economic inequality and holding back growth.


 [The Baltic Course](#): "The status, conditions, and efficiency of majority post offices are incompatible with present-day standards. Through renewal of old post offices, we are making every effort to have comfortable, warm, and pleasant environment both for our customers and staff," Directress of Postal Network Division of Lithuania Post Inga Dunduliene said, informed BC post.lt. The post offices under renewal have been equipped with new heating and ventilation systems, old windows replaced by new ones. Also, customer service area and premises for the staff have been renewed in an up-to-date and modern manner. According to Mrs Dunduliene, when old post offices are renewed, or they are moved to other premises, the bills for utility services decrease considerably. This enables the company to save more than one thousand litas.

 [Business Wire](#): Research and Markets (http://www.researchandmarkets.com/research/4g85g8/post_office) has announced the addition of the "Post Office Financial Services: Developed Markets" report to their offering. The


financial services sector represents a significant opportunity for much-needed additional revenue for postal operators, either directly or through alliances with financial institutions. Many postal operators are also being urged to offer basic financial services such as payments, savings and microfinance to combat social and financial exclusion, particularly in poorer countries, or to better serve more remote geographical areas and isolated social groups. There is a significant potential for partnerships between postal operators and financial institutions, even in markets where postal operators and postal banks already offer a range of financial services.

 [The Register-Guard](#): Obituaries for the U.S. Postal Service have been written so often that the pallbearers, including members of Congress and the service's leadership, are growing impatient, and continue to press for measures that would hasten the nation's mail delivery network to the grave. But the Postal Service is showing some color in its cheeks. It would recover fully if it were no longer forced to submit to harmful remedies. Harmful remedies, however, continue to be prescribed. Weakening this network by closing mail processing centers and curtailing deliveries would reduce its revenue-generating potential. Taking such steps just when the Postal Service is turning the corner to profitability would be doubly short-sighted. Yet the service's leaders continue to press forward with plans to cut their way to solvency, while many in Congress applaud. No wonder people are angry enough to be arrested at protests.


 [Washington Post](#): A proposed compromise toward ending Saturday U.S. mail delivery is falling flat with unions while getting the support of a Senate committee chairman leading a push to advance stalled postal legislation. Discussions have involved letting the U.S. Postal Service end Saturday mail delivery if mail volume or revenue drops below a specified level. The idea is meeting resistance from postal unions, which want to keep Saturday delivery and the jobs that go with it. Legislation that would relieve the money-losing service of billions of dollars in annual health-care and pension obligations and allow other changes is stalled in both chambers of Congress. The Senate needs to take the lead if any postal measure is to become law, Carper said. "I'm not sure Darrell Issa can do a bill in the House" because of opposition from rural Republican lawmakers who aren't interested in cutting postal services, he said.


 [Yahoo! News](#): A small rural town's newsagent has taken on Royal Mail - by delivering letters by hand for half the price of a first class stamp.


 [From the Federal Register](#): **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** New Postal Products , 77172–77173 [2013–30335] [[TEXT](#)] [[PDF](#)]


 [New York Post](#): Magazine publishers along with mailers everywhere are anxiously awaiting the outcome of the exigency rate hike request that the ailing United States Postal Service filed in a bid to raise up to \$2 billion in new revenue. A broad range of postage hikes takes effect in January. A ruling could come Friday or Monday.

December 19, 2013

 [National Association of Major Mail Users](#): The National Association of Major Mail Users (NAMMU) said in a statement released after the Transport Committee Meeting in Ottawa today, that Canada Post and its shareholder, the Government of Canada, need to go back to the drawing board on the "Five Point Plan." "The perspectives shared in the Committee session about that plan show how far apart customers and Canada Post are in their views on the important components of pricing and home delivery," said Kathleen Rowe, NAMMU President. She reiterated that the NAMMU business constituency understands very well the difficult choices facing Canada Post but "pricing themselves out of the business market will rapidly de-stabilize revenues the Corporation needs to support other initiatives."

 [CNN Money](#): For many Americans, all the good news in the larger economy isn't translating over to everyday life. Only 24% of the public believe economic conditions are improving, while nearly four-in-ten say the nation's economy is actually getting worse, according to a recent CNN poll. Meanwhile, the Consumer Confidence Index declined two months in a row. The economy still feels depressing because for many people, it is, said Elise Gould, a labor economist at the liberal-leaning Economic Policy Institute. "Those at the very top have bounced back, but we have not seen that for people at the middle or at the bottom," she said.


 **Wall Street Journal:** A year ago, fresh off the rocky Facebook IPO, much of the tech industry worried about the future of online advertising. At the time, the Web was undergoing a profound shift, with all of us spending more time browsing on our phones, and less on our rickety old desktops. It remained an open question, though, whether Web companies would be able to make money in a mobile world. Would people rebel—as a lot of us promised we would—against a bombardment of ads on our phones? If we did, how would services like Google Inc., Facebook Inc. and Twitter Inc. make the billions that investors expected of them? A year later, we have an answer. And it is pretty definitive: We, the phone-addled people of the Web, are big fat liars. It turns out we don't hate mobile ads. Surprisingly, we mostly tolerate them. We may find them annoying—or more accurately, we may say that we find them annoying—but apparently they're not annoying enough to prompt us to flee Google, Facebook and other ad-supported Web services. This news sparks several questions. First, how did it happen? How did Web companies get us to live with ads on our phones? Second, how long can this last? Is there a breaking point, some ad format or number of ads that will, eventually, cause us to tune out?


 **International Post Corporation** [International Postal Corporation:](#) The overall postal industry revenue reached €422.6bn in 2012, up from €415.9bn in 2010. Mail revenue fell by €1.59bn while combined revenue from parcels and express, financial services and logistics and freight increased by €8.4bn. Revenue growth was strongest in BRICS and Asia Pacific while average revenue declined in Europe and North America. These are some of the insights published today in International Post Corporation (IPC)'s new publicly available executive summary of the IPC Global Postal Industry Report. Herbert-Michael Zapf, President and CEO, IPC said: “Despite falling mail volumes, global postal operators have experienced overall revenue growth. This is a result of rapid growth in domestic and international e-Commerce, but also of increased diversification and process optimisation.”



[Office of the Inspector General](#)


- [Towards A Postal Service Intellectual Property Strategy](#) (Report Number RARC-WP-14-003) The U.S. Postal Service needs a formal, organization-wide strategy for managing its substantial intellectual property assets. That's the subject of a new Postal Service Office of Inspector General white paper, which explains how such a strategy could benefit all Postal Service stakeholders and also outlines different types of effective IP strategies and how to develop them.
- [The Value of Ideas](#) Let's talk intellectual property and the U.S. Postal Service for a moment. IP, as it's commonly called, refers to intangible assets involving creativity and invention. Things like movies, books, computer software, engine design, and even the ZIP Code.
- [Rural Delivery Operations – Mail Count and Timekeeping Processes](#) Report Number DR-AR-14-001
- [Procurement-Related Ethical Violations at Vehicle Maintenance Facilities](#) Report Number: SM-MA-14-002 [Full Report](#) | [Highlights](#)


 **Politico:** Sen. Tom Coburn (R-Okla.) on Wednesday pointed the finger squarely at Congress for runaway government spending and accused members of failing to do their jobs. “It’s Congress. Congress doesn’t want to do the hard work of overseeing these agencies, of doing the hearings that are required to get the information to holding the agencies accountable,” Coburn told CNN’s Jake Tapper. “Accountability is key in any type of management structure and when the members of Congress won’t exercise that constitutional duty of holding the agencies accountable, you’re going to have this continuing.” In addition to discussing the most recent edition of his annual “Wastebook” — which was released on Tuesday — Coburn also stressed that the budget deal struck between Rep. Paul Ryan and Sen. Patty Murray fails to address wasteful spending in favor of a quick, no-fireworks negotiation.


 **Business In Cameroon:** According to sources at Cameroon Postal Services (CAMPOST), the public operator of the Cameroonian public sector has just sealed a deal with the insurance company, Allianz Cameroun – a partnership to provide insurance services. This will include a traditional car insurance product called “Campost-Auto”, “Campost-Retraite”, a bank insurance service that enables subscribers to use capital upon retirement and “Campost-individuelle Accidents” to cover personal and professional injury.




From the Federal Register: **Postal Regulatory Commission NOTICES** New Postal Products , 76863–


 [Wall Street Journal](#): FedEx Corp. said a shorter holiday shipping season stunted growth in its ground division, but the package-delivery company bolstered its full-year guidance and said it expects an improved financial performance next quarter. Still, operating income in the ground business rose 3% to \$424 million compared with the same quarter last year. The segment's revenue increased 10% to \$2.9 billion due to more shipments, higher prices and growth in the company's SmartPost business, which uses the U.S. Postal Service for final deliveries.


 [National Geographic](#): Waiting for a package? The holiday shipping countdown has begun: Online retailers are issuing regular reminders of how many days are left to order for delivery by Christmas, while shippers such as UPS and FedEx are scrambling to distribute record volumes of parcels from all of that e-commerce. Dubbing this “Peak Week,” UPS said it would deliver 29 million packages Tuesday, a single-day company record; FedEx saw its peak day, also a company record, on December 2 with 22 million shipments. Many of those shipments are traveling by air. This week, UPS is sending up 2,388 cargo flights per day, 465 more flights than a typical day in November. It’s clear from this view on FlightAware that FedEx also has its fleet of more than 630 cargo planes working overtime to meet shipment demand.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): You probably have never heard of LaserShip Inc., OnTrac or Eastern Connection Operating Inc. Yet these small regional shippers may well have dropped a package off on your doorstep this holiday season. These and other small shippers, which handle packages for companies ranging from Amazon.com Inc. to Avon Products Inc. to Walgreen Co., are expanding their networks across the U.S., creating a “super regional” threat to the duopoly of United Parcel Service Inc. and FedEx Corp., which are under pressure to build their own ground-delivery businesses in the face of weak demand for express air delivery. By cobbling together networks, the regional shippers are grabbing market share from UPS, FedEx and the U.S. Postal Service as e-retailers look for cheaper, faster delivery options for their online shoppers. Regional shippers typically can get a package between two points in one region—from New York to Boston, for example—faster than their national counterparts, and they are able to price shipments 20% to 40% below the national shippers because of their lower costs. Most regional shippers have ground-only delivery networks that employ contracted drivers who own their own company-branded vans. While the regional shippers’ total market share is only about 3%—total estimated revenues are expected to reach \$1 billion in 2013, compared with a total ground package market of about \$32 billion—their revenues have more than doubled since 2009, according to SJ Consulting Group, Inc. These companies separately now serve approximately 90% of all U.S. ZIP Codes, buoyed by the increase in parcel volumes from big customers like Amazon.

 [IT Business](#): Lexicon Technologies (<http://www.lexicontech.com>), an enterprise technology maintenance solutions provider, announced the renewal of its contract with the United States Postal Service (USPS). Under the contract, Lexicon is responsible for maintaining and repairing units from a population of more than 300,000 of the USPSs intelligent mail devices, robust enterprise mobility terminals used for tracking mail and package deliveries.


December 18, 2013


 [CanadaNews Wire](#): Postal workers delivered over 12,200 postcards of protest to Lisa Raitt, Minister responsible for Canada Post, today at her constituency office in Milton, Ontario. The postcards were signed by Canadians opposing postal downsizing and closures prior to the corporation's recent announcement that it intends to cut delivery and raise rates.


 [National Association of Postmasters of the U.S.](#): A legislative reset may take place early next year, possibly with a much narrower measure that addresses just the retiree pre-funding issue and some other issues, and such a bill would probably need to be considered by the committee by Presidents’ Day.

 [Lexology](#): On 6 December 2013, the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia dismissed an appeal by Australian Postal Corporation (Australia Post) and upheld the primary judge's decision that "DIGITAL POST AUSTRALIA" is not deceptively similar to "AUSTRALIA POST" and therefore would not infringe. Australia Post, which owns the "AUSTRALIA POST" trade mark, commenced proceedings against Digital Post Australia (DPA) after DPA announced that it would launch a digital mail box service under the trade mark "DIGITAL POST"

AUSTRALIA". Australia Post was unsuccessful before the primary judge and appealed to the Full Court. *PostCom owns the rights to America Post. Any offers?*


 **Government Executive:** Lawmakers remain optimistic Congress can get a bill to the president's desk at some point in the near future, however. While the previous cancellations were attributed to needing time to address "concerns raised by members of the committee and stakeholder groups," a committee aide said the latest delay was simply a matter of timing. The reform measure introduced by Carper and Coburn has received significant criticism, including from several of the oversight committee's Democratic members, who have said it cuts too deeply and allows USPS to raise its rates unilaterally. The American Postal Workers Union -- one of the bill's most vocal opponents -- was "pleased" the markup was delayed and pledged to continue to stand against its passage.


 **Washington Post:** The CEO of FedEx doesn't see drones taking over the package delivery business anytime soon. Fred Smith says FedEx has several drone studies underway. But the idea of delivering items by drone is "almost amusing," Smith said on a conference call on Wednesday after the company reported financial results. There are huge obstacles to residential drone deliveries. The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration barred their use for commercial purposes in 2007. No-fly zones abound in places like Washington D.C. There are questions about who is liable if a drone crashes and damages something, or someone, on the ground. *[EdNote: Who needs to use a drone when you can use the Postal Service?]*


 **ABC6:** Five people have been charged in an elaborate counterfeit check ring involving \$6 million worth of business checks stolen from a U.S. Postal Service processing center in Philadelphia. Prosecutors say the scheme involved four men from Pennsylvania and one from New York City, and checks stolen from the post office between 2010 and 2012. Three of the suspects, including two former Wells Fargo bank employees, allegedly worked together with others to open bank accounts using the doctored checks, then withdraw money immediately.


 **DMM Advisory:**


- **New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products** Today the final rule New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products Federal Register Notice for the January 2014 price change was published. It is on the [Federal Register site](#) and on Postal Explorer® pe.usps.com under the Federal Register Notices link on the left-hand side. This final rule contains revisions to the Domestic Mail Manual (DMM®) to accompany the price adjustments filed with the PRC on September 26, including new pricing eligibility for retail and commercial nonpresorted First-Class Mail® letters, several mail classification changes, and some condensing of current standards for Periodicals publications. **The effective date is January 26, 2014.**
- **New Standards to Enhance Package Visibility** Today the final rule New Standards to Enhance Package Visibility was posted. It is on the [Federal Register site](#) and on Postal Explorer® pe.usps.com under the Federal Register Notices link on the left-hand side. Mailing standards currently require an Intelligent Mail® package barcode (IMpb) on all commercial parcels, except Standard Mail® parcels, claiming presort or destination-entry prices and all parcels of any class including tracking, and all mailpieces of any shape requesting extra services. We are now implementing new standards requiring an IMpb on all remaining commercial parcels, and requiring the transmission of supporting electronic documentation, including piece-level address or ZIP+4® Code information, to the USPS®. Included in these new requirements is a per-piece price adjustment of 20 cents for mailpieces that do not comply with the IMpb standards. **This price adjustment will become effective for Shipping Services (Competitive) products on January 26, 2014.** In addition, **we intend to apply the noncompliance price adjustment to Mailing Services (Market Dominant) mailpieces at a future date, after filing with, and receiving approval from, the PRC.**


 **Press Release:** Harland Clarke Holdings Corp., a leading provider of best-in-class integrated payment solutions and marketing services, and Valassis, a leader in intelligent media delivery, today announced that they have entered into a definitive merger agreement under which Harland Clarke Holdings will acquire Valassis. terms of the agreement, Harland Clarke Holdings, a wholly owned subsidiary Holdings Inc., will acquire all of the outstanding shares of Valassis for \$34.04

 [Reuters](#): FedEx Corp posted higher quarterly profit on Wednesday as the shipping company cut costs and its express delivery segment, its biggest business, made more money. FedEx earned \$500 million, or \$1.57 a share, in the second quarter ended Nov. 30, versus \$438 million, or \$1.39, in the same quarter last year. FedEx's express unit had suffered as clients chose slower, cheaper delivery options. To combat that, it revamped routes and trimmed capacity to Asia and other international markets.

 [Canada.com](#): Canada Post president and CEO Deepak Chopra is defending his corporation's tough new business plan, saying the end of door-to-door mail delivery will allow Canada to become a world leader in electronic commerce. In an interview with Postmedia News at the Crown corporation's headquarters, Chopra maintained that the five-year plan, which also includes hiking stamp prices and cutting the labour force by up to 8,000 workers, was the only way for the ailing business to remain self-sufficient. Chopra said there will be no further consultation on the plan, despite calls for such by opposition MPs, and that privatizing the postal service is not on the radar "for the next several years."


 [Business Weekly](#): New Business Weekly Awards entrant RedBite Solutions is a global gamechanger. RedBite has just won an open, global Radio Frequency Identification tender from United Nation's Universal Postal Union (UPU). The success underscores the strength of RedBite technologies and highlights its ability to roll out its systems globally at significant scale. The UPU solution will be built on RedEdge - a customised RedBite platform technology for cloud-based RFID infrastructure. The new platform has the ability to drastically reduce the cost and complexity of RFID deployment. Other than the United Nation's Universal Postal Union, RedBite is now handling enquiries from other international postal service specialists and other similar non-postal RFID infrastructure.


 [Post & Parcel](#): The Universal Postal Union is working to help The Philippine Postal Corporation restore its infrastructure in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan. The UN-affiliated agency is now appealing to its member countries to contribute to its Emergency and Solidarity Fund to help re-establish postal services in the islands. Once the damage inventory is complete, the UPU said it will help PHLPost put in place an emergency plan to reestablish postal services.

 [Roll Call](#): Let's see if you can follow this logic. The U.S. Postal Service is seeking a rate increase that is three times the rate of inflation through an "emergency" (or "exigent") rate increase request. So what is the emergency? The emergency, says the Postal Service, is the recession. Yes, that recession, the one that officially ended several years ago. The Postal Service knows well that the recession is over, because their revenues are already increasing as a result. The Postal Service Board of Governors approved this rate request in September and, later this month, the Postal Regulatory Commission will determine if a permanent postage rate increase is justified. You might ask: What effect did digital diversion — such as email ubiquity and electronic payment of bills— have on mail volumes during the recession? According to the Postal Service, the answer is none. Zero. Huh?


 *From the Federal Register:*


Postal Service	
RULES	
New Mailing Standards for Domestic Mailing Services Products , 76533–76548 [2013–29879]	[TEXT] [PDF]
New Standards To Enhance Package Visibility , 76548–76560 [2013–30023]	[TEXT] [PDF]

 [Dead Tree Edition](#): Jacking up postal rates merely causes marketers to prospect more with email instead of direct mail, publishers to convert more subscribers to digital editions, and corporations to offer more incentives for customers who switch to electronic billing. What the Postal Service needs is mostly in the hands of Congress, which structured USPS in the pre-internet days to be a cash cow for the federal government. What the Postal Service doesn't need are rate-cap-busting price increases that drive away customers.


 By an overwhelming vote, the memberships of the [Association of Marketing Service Providers and the National Association of Printing Leadership](#) have agreed to merge their organizations effective January 1, 2014.


December 17, 2013


 **Fierce Government:** The Postal Service lacks the staff and vehicles to handle projected growth in package delivery due to more online purchases, a Dec. 11 USPS inspector general report says. Currently, the Postal Service handles about 3.7 billion packages a year, and that total is expected to rise to about 4.6 billion in fiscal 2017, the report (.pdf) says. Though the Postal Service is sufficiently staffed for the number of packages it currently carries, the agency isn't poised for the package increase in the coming years, the IG says. Read more: [USPS not ready for increase in package volume over next 4 years, IG says](#). Postal Service vehicles have not been designed to handle a higher volume of packages, the IG says. The vehicles were primarily designed for letters, flats and small packages, the report says. Read more: [USPS not ready for increase in package volume over next 4 years](#),

 **CBS Los Angeles:** More than 1,200 Los Angeles residents were expected to receive checks in the mail starting Tuesday, thanks to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. KNX 1070's Ed Mertz reports the money comes following an investigation into scams that encouraged people to send cash through MoneyGram. According to court documents, from 2004 to 2009, MoneyGram violated U.S. law by processing thousands of transactions for agents known to be involved in an international scheme to defraud the public.


INDUSTRYALERT **New Full Service Certification (FSC) program** The USPS announces the new Full Service Certification (FSC) program which recognizes those mailers who are able to implement the full service mailing process and consistently meet all full service mailing criteria. At this time there are two levels of certification being offered: Standard Certification - Awarded to those mailers who meet or exceed Full Service Verification thresholds. Platinum Certification – In addition to meeting the Full Service Verification thresholds, those mailers wishing to receive the Platinum Certification must pass an additional external quality audit completed by a Certified Quality Auditor (CQA). Click this [link](#) for more information about the Standard and Platinum Certification. Both certifications will be featured prominently on the USPS RIBBS website for all potential clients to see. For more information about the program or to apply, please email: <mailto:MSPcert@usps.gov> or visit <https://ribbs.usps.gov/gettingstarted>.

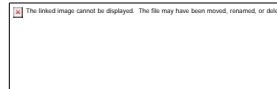
 The markup of S. 1486 (postal reform) that had been scheduled for tomorrow has been postponed.

 **Post & Parcel:** James Cregan of the Association of Magazine Media argues that the US Postal Service must adapt to the modern postal market instead of looking to recoup losses with major price increases. In its most recent exigency filing, the US Postal Service (USPS) attributes all financial losses since 2007 to the “Great Recession” (which ended several years ago) and none to the dramatic increase in email, electronic bill payments and other “digital diversion.” Those are facts that General Stroman has chosen to ignore. However, in 2012, DPMG Stroman’s boss, US Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe stated, “First-Class Mail...continues to rapidly decline, largely due to electronic diversion.” By attributing all losses since 2007 to the recession, and ignoring electronic diversion losses, the USPS conveniently paves the way for a greater increase in postage rates. Why? Because volume losses due to digital diversion, as the USPS knows, aren’t eligible for an “emergency” rate increase.


 **Europa:** Christmas season is a time when more people than usual are sending parcels, and the delivery market is being put to the test. The Commission has today adopted a communication on completing the Single Market for parcel delivery to boost e-commerce in the EU, and to ensure that e-retailers and consumers have access to affordable and high-quality parcel delivery services. The communication is a follow-up to last year's Green Paper on an integrated parcel delivery market (IP/12/1289). It builds on the results of the Green paper consultation and the work undertaken so far by the Commission and stakeholders, and sets out further actions to address delivery problems and challenges faced by consumers and e-retailers in the EU. Internal Market and Services Commissioner Michel Barnier said: "The e-commerce driven parcel delivery market is characterised by rapid growth and innovation, but also by signs of some market failures, particularly in the area of cross-border delivery. Further action


is required to provide e-retailers and consumers with high-quality, accessible and affordable parcel delivery services, taking due account of the needs of SMEs and of less-advanced or accessible regions. The industry is leading the effort, but we expect results soon and will follow up so that commitments are met."

 [Yahoo! Finance](#): America has a new Public Enemy No. 1. And chances are, you voted for it. CEOs are the usual target of ire over the diverging fortunes of the rich and the rest. But 2013 is turning into the year when members of Congress made greedy CEOs look good. Congress had its least productive year in decades in 2013, and may have done more harm than good through a government shutdown and other gridlock-fueled antics that hurt the economy. The partisan hostility in Washington has pushed Congress's already low approval rating to the sorriest level on record.




[Postalnews Blog](#): The APWU filed an amended complaint [PDF] with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) on Dec.13, alleging that the USPS is failing to comply with service standards on first-class mail and periodicals. The APWU alleges that significant delays in mail delivery are being caused by the closure of processing facilities around the country. The amended complaint follows a Sept. 5 filing [PDF] and gives the PRC additional evidence that the Postal Service is violating service standards. The APWU also is attempting to obtain USPS records about service failures to provide additional proof of the violations. The APWU Complaint asks the PRC to order the Postal Service to cease and desist from making any changes in its mail processing network that will cause violations of service standards. The Complaint also demands that the Postal Service take whatever steps are necessary to come into compliance with service standards. This could include stopping consolidations that have not been completed and reversing some that have been fully implemented, said APWU Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy.


 [The Globe and Mail](#): Canada Post will push for deeper concessions from its 60,000-plus workers as it scrambles to fix a badly underfunded pension plan, chief executive Deepak Chopra says. Making the \$17-billion pension plan sustainable is now among his top priorities, Mr. Chopra said in his first interview since announcing controversial moves last week to stem mounting losses at the postal service. That includes ending home delivery and shifting millions of Canadians to community mailboxes.


 [Dallas Morning News](#): Monday was the busiest day of the holiday season for the post office, with officials expecting to handle more than 607 million pieces of domestic mail nationwide. *[EdNote: Yup. It's all downhill from here.]*

 [From the Federal Register](#):


Postal Regulatory Commission		
NOTICES		
New Postal Products ,		
76332–76333 [2013–29825]		[TEXT] [PDF]
76334–76335 [2013–29826]		[TEXT] [PDF]
76334 [2013–29973]		[TEXT] [PDF]
76333–76334 [2013–29975]		[TEXT] [PDF]
Postal Service		
NOTICES		
Product Changes:		
	Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreements ,	
	76335 [2013–29876]	[TEXT] [PDF]
	76336 [2013–29877]	[TEXT] [PDF]


 [Office of the Inspector General: Sending Tidings of Good Cheer by Mail](#) Holiday greeting cards still outweigh e-cards in terms of sentiment and personal touch, recent surveys indicate. Even digital natives say a card in the mail evokes a stronger reaction than a text or email. Yet, each year, fewer and fewer people are sending holiday greeting cards through the mail.


 [SFGate](#): No other nation in the world possesses the cultural heritage so nobly embodied in America's prewar post offices and the New Deal works of art they often contain. Until recently, however, most Americans were unaware that what they paid for and rightfully own is being sold off wholesale, let alone who is profiting from those sales. The fire sale of postal properties is a textbook case of a favored few squeezing profits from a manufactured crisis.

 [The Register-Guard](#): Seven activists were arrested Monday at a protest against the pending closure of the Gateway mail processing center. The sit-in followed a rally outside the adjacent Gateway post office attended by about 40 people — including processing center employees, activists and local elected officials — on what is typically the busiest day of the year for the Postal Service. The Springfield processing center, which has 169 permanent employees, is on a list of facilities set to be closed sometime after February, although no closure date has been set. Similar mail sorting centers in Bend and Pendleton are in the same situation. Salem's processing center was closed in June. The closures are a cost-cutting strategy by the Postal Service, which has run annual deficits of \$5 billion to \$16 billion in recent years. All in all, the quasi-governmental agency, which is not taxpayer-supported, closed more than 100 processing centers nationwide between 2012 and this year, and plans eventually to close another 65, providing a total savings of \$2 billion a year while eliminating about 13,000 permanent jobs through attrition.


December 16, 2013


 [Postalnews Blog](#): Linn's Stamp News reports that Canada Post has quietly stopped selling "permanent" stamps in the wake of its announcement that it will raise its domestic letter rate from sixty three cents to a dollar next year. The stamps are the Canadian equivalent of USPS "forever" stamps.


 [At the Postal Regulatory Commission](#): Postal Regulatory Commission Office Of Inspector General [Semiannual Report To Congress](#) April 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013

 [USPS News](#) In a series of letters to the editor in several media outlets, DPMG Ron Stroman explains the steps the Postal Service is taking to restore its financial stability. In his editorial responses to Adweek, The Hill and Post and Parcel, the DPMG describes the need for pricing adjustments. Stroman notes that a request for moderate price increases was necessary and adheres to a 2006 federal law that allows the Postal Service to seek increases in the wake of "exceptional or extraordinary circumstances." The Great Recession qualifies as one of these circumstances, Stroman argues. "The Postal Regulatory Commission has reached this conclusion as well," he adds. "Since the end of 2007 mail volume has been declining rapidly," he explains. "In fact, by the end of 2010, approximately one out of every five mail pieces disappeared primarily due to the Great Recession." Stroman also notes that the Postal Service has pursued every responsible avenue of cost reduction available to us under the law to address its financial condition. The Postal Service Board of Governors' request to increase prices was a decision they "reluctantly came to . . . as a last resort," Stroman explained. The DPMG closes his letter by noting that the Postal Service would reconsider its pricing strategy if these financial challenges were alleviated by the timely enactment of laws that close a \$20 billion budget gap.





 [Wall Street Journal](#): The productivity of U.S. workers grew at the fastest pace in nearly four years in the third quarter, reflecting a pickup in the broader economic recovery. Nonfarm labor productivity, or output per hours worked, rose at a 3% annual rate from July through September, the Labor Department said Monday. That was above the government's initial estimate of 1.9% productivity growth and marked the fastest rate since the fourth quarter of 2009. Unit labor costs, a key gauge of inflationary pressures, fell 1.4%, a larger drop than the initial estimate of a 0.6% decline.

 [Post & Parcel](#): A key postal reform advocate on the Republican side of the US House of Representatives has praised Canada Post for its decision to end door-to-door mail delivery. Canada Post announced last week it would be converting those households that receive doorstep delivery to community mailboxes over the next five years to help reduce operating losses. Darrell Issa, the chairman of the US House Oversight Committee, who is currently leading reform proposals that would allow the US Postal Service to follow Canada Post's example, said Americans were changing the way they were using the mail in the same way as Canadians. "As technology advances, the Canadian people are changing the way they use paper mail. Canada Post has recognized this reality and responded to it. The Canadian government is supportive of its decision to modernize," he said. "The American people have also changed the way they use paper mail and the cash-strapped United States Postal Service must respond accordingly. Likewise, Congress and the Administration need to grant USPS the flexibility to modernize its mail delivery and eliminate unnecessary costs."


 [Canada.com](#): Transport Minister Lisa Raitt says Canada Post's new five-point business plan will restore the ailing corporation to self-sufficiency. Faced with hundreds of millions of dollars in annual losses, Canada Post announced Wednesday that it will end door-to-door delivery, increase the price of stamps and reduce its labour force. The plan has raised the ire of opposition MPs who say other options should have been explored and Canadians should not be charged more for less service. But Raitt, who appeared on CTV's Question Period program Sunday, said the plan will help Canada Post cope with plummeting levels of mail volume and increased operational costs.


December 15, 2013

 [Direct Marketing News](#): Last week's passage of the Innovation Act by the House of Representatives gave direct marketers hope for speedy enactment of a law that would stymie the efforts of "Non-Practicing Entities" (aka patent trolls) to squeeze quick settlements from alleged patent violations. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee is holding a hearing on his own version of the bill on December 17, and the Obama administration is expected to quickly sign the resulting legislation. *[EdNote: This bill had better move quickly because one patent troll's behavior could bring the whole intelligent mail program crashing down.]*


 [The Economist](#): Canada Post has been hit by a familiar story: rising electronic communication and declining volumes of letters. The decline did not start until 2007 but has picked up astonishing speed, with 1 billion fewer letters delivered in 2012 than in 2006. Canada is the first of the Group of Seven countries to signal the end of home delivery but it will almost certainly not be the last. Globally, the volume of letters posted has been sliding for a decade, dropping by 4.7% between 2011 and 2012 to 346.5bn items; a further 4% global decline is expected this year.


December 14, 2013


 [Newsday](#): The U.S. Postal Service and Canada Post have the same problems of plummeting mail volume and stubborn fixed costs. The difference is that Canada Post is free to reinvent itself for the digital age. The USPS isn't and so is dying a slow death. That's just senseless. Canada Post said Wednesday it will end most home mail delivery over the next five years. Residents of cities and suburbs will pick up their mail at community mailboxes. That's an extreme measure, but the USPS desperately needs that kind of flexibility. It lost \$5 billion this fiscal year, its seventh in the red. Congress, however, has refused to authorize changes sought by postal officials -- for instance, an end to Saturday delivery and freedom to expand its products and services. The USPS doesn't spend tax dollars. It's expected to operate like a business. Congress should let it.


 [Adweek](#): The holiday season has long been the post office's time to shine, and, as these ads show, the agency's done its best to keep the pretty colored lights plugged in. But while these print ads from 1976 and 2013 both feature red ribbons, happy people and an air of holiday cheer, they show all too clearly how the Postal Service has lately lost its way—and failed to capitalize on the few remaining selling points it has left. "Both of these ads are about goodwill—trying to make you feel good about the post office," observed Hayes Roth, chief marketing officer for brand consultants Landor Associates. The trouble is, the post office needs more than goodwill to survive now, and

its new ad isn't delivering the goods. "It's an attractive ad," he said, "but I don't see the compelling sales argument that going to the post office is better than going elsewhere."

 **Time:** Canada Post is actually a pretty close approximation of what the U.S.P.S. would look like without that Congressional mandate. The Canadian postal service recorded 16 consecutive years of profits until 2011. Since, it's had nine consecutive quarters of losses, largely due to the proliferation of digital communication. Mail volume has dropped by almost a quarter from 2008 to 2012 and the Conference Board of Canada estimates that Canada Post will lose \$1 billion by 2020 but that cutting door-to-door delivery could cut that in half. The reduction elimination of door-to-door delivery, which Canada Post estimates at \$283 per address while a community mailbox only costs \$108 per address, comes along with a number of other changes, including plans to raise the price of stamps and cut 8,000 jobs. The U.S.P.S.'s financial situation is similar; the pain just started much earlier.

 **The Chronicle Herald:** Some people were losing their minds this week because Canada Post is going to stop door-to-door mail delivery. But the biggest threat to the Canadian way of life is the impact of a \$1 stamp. The postal service in this country has been in trouble for years. The Conference Board of Canada speculated last year that the Crown corporation's financial losses will reach \$1 billion by 2020 unless certain measures are taken. The other shoe dropped this week when Canada Post revealed its "five-point action plan" to achieve its goal. Management is also hinting it will be looking for wage concessions and a restructuring of the pension plan in order to become more competitive with the private sector. The pension plan at Canada Post is underfunded and carries a reported deficit of about \$6.5 billion. Businesses may be the most adversely affected by the changes, but most business people I know would probably implement a similar cost-cutting plan if they were in the shoes of post office management.

 **Financial Times:** Royal Mail has appealed to Ofcom, the regulator, after a joint venture was announced to fund an expansion of direct mail deliveries by TNT Post UK in a challenge to the newly privatised postal operator. LDC, Lloyds Banking Group's private equity arm, and Dutch postal operator PostNL said they had agreed a joint venture that would provide the funding and expertise to allow TNT Post UK to roll out its end-to-end delivery service.

 **Chicago Sun-Times:** The Chicago Post Office will also start early-morning package delivery daily, with packages delivered before regular mail, a statement from the USPS said. All delivery stations in the city — except ZIP Codes 60612, 60624, 60644 and 60651 — will see package delivery on Sundays, Dec. 15 and Dec. 22. Customers in several areas can also pick up packages at post offices on those days if a "notice left" slip is left at their home.

December 13, 2013



PostCom Members!! [PostCom's latest report on USPS service performance](#) has been posted on this site.





At the Postal Regulatory Commission:


C2013-10 Amended Complaint of American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO Regarding Violations of 39 U.S.C. § 3691 and 39 C.F.R § 121.1 : [http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88546/Amended Complaint C2013-10.pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88546/Amended%20Complaint%20C2013-10.pdf)





The Postal Service has released an [updated version](#) of its Flats Sequencing System (FSS) Frequently Asked Questions.


 **Barron's:** FedEx is set to deliver more big gains, according to Raymond James, which upgraded the stock today. Sure, FedEx has had a tremendous year so far. The express delivery company has gained 50% this year, trouncing United Parcel Service's 38% advance, the 24 %rise in J.B. Hunt Transport Services and the 8.7% increase in Expeditors International of Washington.


 [Wink News](#): Some Post Offices in the Suncoast District will deliver packages this Sunday and next Sunday (Dec. 15 and 22). Customers may also notice their letter carriers delivering earlier in the day. The Sunday and earlier deliveries will take place in ZIP Codes in the Suncoast District that have significant increases in package volume. The Suncoast District includes Post Offices with the first three digits of the ZIP Code beginning with 321, 327, 328, 329, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 341, 342, 346 and 347. These special Sunday deliveries in the Suncoast District are for the holiday season and are not part of the recently announced Amazon Sunday deliveries with the Postal Service that are taking place in Los Angeles and the New York metropolitan areas. The Postal Service expects to process 545 million pieces of mail every day throughout this holiday season; totaling nearly 15 billion pieces of mail to be delivered between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve. Competitive package volume also is expected to increase by approximately 12 percent from last year to about 420 million packages during the 2013 holiday season. The busiest mailing day this season is projected to be Monday, Dec. 16, when more than 600 million pieces of mail are expected to be processed. The same day, 6 million customers are expected to visit Post Offices nationwide. The busiest delivery day for mail will be Wednesday, Dec. 18 and the busiest day for package delivery will be Thursday, Dec. 19.


 [AZ Family](#): Monday is expected to be the busiest mailing day of the year, according to the United States Postal Service. With a projected 420 million packages to deliver, it's crunch time for postal workers.


 [Toronto Sun](#): We are losing front door mail delivery in Canada, but the big story is why we are losing it. Pension costs. That's right, those of us who still get mail to our door will lose this service due to the huge cost of the pensions Canada Post needs to pay out.


 [Lloyd's Loading List](#): DHL earlier this week tested out a mini drone prototype, the 'parcelkopter' that could be used to transport emergency supplies of food and aid to remote areas of where a natural disaster has taken place. Equipped with four rotors and navigated from the ground by two technicians, DHL's drone made a journey of just over one kilometre in two minutes to transport a three kilo shipment of medicines from a local chemist's to the express group's HQ in Bonn, crossing the Rhine en route.


 [The Town Talk](#): Congressional leaders have gotten heat for the fact that the 112th Congress was one of the least productive in history. According to the Brookings Institution, the Congress that ended in 2012 passed fewer bills than any since these records were first kept in 1947. The total number of bills passed each year is not a meaningful measure of productivity, particularly if the legislation is about naming post offices and bridges. Indeed, because of bungling by Congress, the U.S. Postal Service is bankrupt and there aren't many bridges being built these days. What really matters is whether Congress is doing the important things, like passing a federal budget that pays for the essentials of government, including the military, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the federal courts. It should assure that the nation's economy has good highways and navigable seaports and rivers. It should quickly act on executive appointments to regulatory boards and agencies to keep the administrative branch smoothly functioning. It should pass comprehensive immigration reform to bring millions of productive people out of the shadows. Congress is failing to do any of those things.


 [CBC News](#): Big Brothers Big Sisters of P.E.I. says Canada Post's postal rate increase will have a big impact on the organization. Among many changes Canada Post announced earlier this week, was the news that rates will be rising on March 31 from 63 cents to a dollar for a single stamp or 85 cents if bought in a pack. The group mailing costs will jump about \$3,500, said Heather Doran, the organization's communication and development manager. These are some costs that we just can't get around. People need to get their tax receipts. And yes, we'll have to find a way to find \$3,500 in our budget," said Doran.


 [Reuters](#): PostFinance, the banking arm of Switzerland's state-owned postal services company, on Friday became the latest Swiss bank to say it would work with U.S. officials in a crackdown on wealthy Americans evading taxes through offshore accounts.


 [Worcester Telegram](#): The U.S. Postal Service has done a good deal to reform itself, but it needs Congress' help. If Canada can do it, so can we.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): China will expand a pilot value-added tax to the railway transport and postal service sectors starting Jan. 1, the Ministry of Finance said Friday.

 [Logistics Manager](#): TNT Post, which is part of Dutch post office PostNL, is to roll out an end to end postal delivery service in the UK, following a deal between its parent company and private equity house LDC. The joint venture will provide the funding and expertise for the phased implementation of the E2E-service, following trials in London and recent extension to Manchester. The joint venture will encompass all the current TNT Post UK operations, which includes the downstream access activities. The roll-out of the service will be led by TNT Post's current UK management team PostNL will have a 40 per cent stake in the joint venture.

 [The Globe and Mail](#): Canada Post Corp. chief executive Deepak Chopra might be wishing he was the other, more famous, Mr. Chopra – the New Age guru. The postal boss could use some inner peace right now, as the Crown corporation embarks on a dramatic, and controversial, five-year overhaul that could see him at the helm of a smaller and more marginal business when it's over.

 [Santa Monica Lookout](#): Patrons lobbying for more parking at Santa Monica's new 7th Street post office will get what they want and more, US Postal officials told The Lookout Thursday. New estimates by US Postal Service engineers show that the north end of the facility at 7th Street and Olympic Boulevard could accommodate nearly 20 onsite parking spaces, doubling the figure originally promised by Postal Service officials on Wednesday. Even Congressman Henry Waxman weighed in the issue, sending a letter to Postmaster General General Patrick R. Donahoe Wednesday outlining residents' concerns and reminding him that the federal agency promised onsite parking at the location.

 [The Nation](#): Twenty-seven countries have halted postal services from Pakistan owing to the security concerns. According to Pakistan Post officials, Thai Airlines has not been carrying letters and parcels from Pakistan to two European and 25 African countries including Ghana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia, Botswana, Poland, Bosnia and Herzegovina for last five days. They said that Pakistan Post was bearing loss of millions of rupees though alternative arrangements are being sorted out.



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

- According to Senator Baldwin, “In its current form, Section 301 will cause further declines in mail volume, threaten public and private mail jobs, and raise the possibility that for the first time ever postage rates alone will not be able to sustain the USPS. A ‘yes’ vote on the Baldwin amendment will prevent further damage to an industry that has lost more than a million jobs since 2007. The amendment will ensure that the USPS will not use its monopoly to raise rates to unsustainable levels. Rationale: The current CPI price cap – that Senator Baldwin’s amendment maintains – works.”
- The USPS has outlined the By/For information that is needed in order to maintain Full-Service IMb discounts.
- The USPS on December 4, 2013, issued two Sources Sought RFIs (Request for Information) for a “Smart Stack” Bundle Making System and “Smart Stack” Loading/Unloading System. One RFI pertains to a solution to bundle flats into “Smart Stacks” and the other pertains to an automated system for loading/unloading Smart Stacks onto and off of pallets.
- The USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG) on December 11, 2013, issued a white paper, “Strengthening Advertising Mail by Building a Digital Information Market,” that presents an analysis by two experts in attention economics of the advertising mail market and ways to strengthen advertising mail. The experts suggest expanding the USPS hardcopy platform for advertising mail into a digital information market.
- The USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG) on December 12, 2013, published the results of its self-initiated review of the Postal Service’s readiness for package growth. The report, “Readiness for Package Growth – Delivery Operations,” is one of a series of OIG reports that address the USPS’ readiness for growth in the package business. The OIG recommended that the USPS “continue to test and implement dynamic routing, modify package compartments on cluster box units, and use operational reports to

monitor and manage carrier package pickup data,” as well as recommending implementation of “a vehicle shelving system.”

- PRC approves USPS’ decision to delay Full Service IMb. PRC approves USPS competitive price change. USPS announces changes to key positions. Federal workforce shrinks even as overall jobs picture improves. Disruptions: At your door in minutes, delivered by robot. Budget agreement reached.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- An update on postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews

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



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Politico: The House passed a two-year bipartisan budget deal 332-94, reducing the likelihood of another government shutdown next year.



National Association of Major Mail Users: In a statement released today, the National Association of Major Mail Users (NAMMU) says the steep commercial increases announced by Canada Post will greatly accelerate the erosion of Transaction Mail. NAMMU President, Kathleen Rowe, said “Transaction Mail is over 50 per cent of the revenue of Canada Post, and business is 90 per cent of that. Pricing themselves out of the business market will rapidly destabilize revenues the Corporation needs to support other initiatives.” In conclusion, Rowe said “NAMMU will respond formally to the gazetting of the proposed general public rates, and will mount a business campaign with our members to defer and lessen these commercial increases.”

December 12, 2013





House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform: House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa, R-Calif., today applauded Canada Post, the Canadian postal service, for moving to phase out expensive to-the-door delivery for paper mail. Chairman Issa, chief sponsor of H.R. 2748, the Postal Reform Act of 2013, has advanced similar reforms. “As technology advances, the Canadian people are changing the way they use paper mail. Canada Post has recognized this reality and responded to it. The Canadian government is supportive of its decision to modernize,” said Chairman Issa. “The American people have also changed the way they use paper mail and the cash-strapped United States Postal Service must respond accordingly. Likewise, Congress and the Administration need to grant USPS the flexibility to modernize its mail delivery and eliminate unnecessary costs.” The vast majority of American homes do not receive expensive to-the-door delivery, but instead receive less expensive curbside or centralized delivery. The Postal Reform Act, which was approved by the Committee in July, would require USPS to transition 30 million delivery points over 10 years. This provision will save the financially distressed USPS at least \$4 billion per year and is one of the largest opportunities for USPS savings.



The Canada Post Action Plan:


- Canada Post Five Point Action Plan Main Page <http://www.canadapost.ca/cpo/mc/aboutus/corporate/ap.jsf>
- Canada Post Five Point Action Plan Description http://www.canadapost.ca/cpo/mc/assets/pdf/aboutus/5_en.pdf
- Summary of Canada Post’s Consultation with Customers http://www.canadapost.ca/cpo/mc/assets/pdf/aboutus/c_en.pdf
- Canada Post Video http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=2ejbgBECWEs


 **The Hill:** The Postal Regulatory Commission hired headhunting firm The McCormick Group for its executive search services, costing \$45,000, according to contract documents. The commission is looking for a new general counsel, a position set to become vacant in January. The position comes with a salary of approximately \$180,000. The Postal Regulatory Commission hopes to make an offer by March.


 **Postalnews Blog: DPMG Ron Stroman has named Sheila Meyers Acting VP, Government Relations and Public Policy.** Prior to her new appointment, Meyers served as manager, Government Liaison, where she worked as the Postal Service's primary contact with the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. In this capacity, she has extensively interacted with key congressional leaders and their staff regarding the Postal Service's public policy interests, including the development and House passage of legislation consistent with the Postal Service's operational and financial needs. Meyers has been with the Postal Service for 34 years. She has experience in a variety of positions, including mail processing, Retail Services, Human Resources, Labor Relations and Government Relations.





 *At the Postal Regulatory Commission:*

- **CP2014-5 Order No. 1903 - Order Approving Changes in Rates of General Applicability for Competitive Products**
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88540/Order%201903.docx>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88540/Order 1903.pdf>
- **On-Roll and Paid Employee Statistics (ORPES), November, FY 2014**
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88542/Letter_ORPES_NovFY14_20131212154930.pdf
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88542/National_Summary.docx
- **Docket No. R2013-10: Order Approving Amendments To Notice Of Market Dominant Price Adjustment** -- "With the Postal Service's decision to defer the implementation date of the Full Service IMb requirement, the associated price adjustments for First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, except at provided in paragraph 2 below, and Periodicals described in the Postal Service's Notice, filed September 26, 2013, are consistent with 39 U.S.C. §§ 3622(d), 3622(e), and 3626, and may be put into effect as planned."
- [Recording of the webcast of the December 11, 2013 meeting of the Postal Regulatory Commission](#) 

 **Exchange Magazine:** Yesterday, Canada Post unveiled five initiatives that together will form the foundation of a new postal system designed to serve busy Canadians and meet their changing needs for postal services. It will also open new opportunities to businesses that are redefining how they connect and serve customers in an increasingly digital world. These changes will begin taking effect in the new year. This comprehensive plan can be achieved without any changes to the Canadian Postal Service Charter. The integrated plan's five main initiatives are....

 **The Globe and Mail:** Worse service, higher prices. Most businesses would go bankrupt with that sales pitch. Yet Canada Post, our government-owned letter-mail monopoly, made it by announcing it will cut household delivery and hike stamp prices. Rather than focus on cutting service and raising prices, Canada needs real postal reform that results in mail services being better managed at a lower cost by private operators.


 **Office of the Inspector General: [Strengthening Advertising Mail by Building a Digital Information Market](#)** Report Number RARC-WP-14-002 -- How's this for a "win-win-win": By creating a digital platform that rewards recipients for providing feedback about the advertising mail they receive, the U.S. Postal Service could help direct mailers target their ads and catalogs more accurately and recipients get the ad mail that interests them. A new white paper from the Postal Service Office of Inspector General explores and outlines such a concept, which could ultimately help the Postal Service not only sustain its significant revenue from ad mailings, but possibly increase it. The paper includes an appendix by two experts in the intriguing field of attention economics.

 **Associated Press:** For one Alaska city, it's not rain, sleet or snow that's affecting mail delivery. It's a broken postal sorting machine that has prompted officials to fly letters and packages more than 200 miles away to be separated and flown back for delivery. That has left Ketchikan residents to complain about mail getting delivered up to five days late. U.S. Postal Service spokesman Ernie Swanson said Ketchikan's sorting equipment gave out and

it's not practical to replace it right now. He said the agency believes it can still provide customers with a good level of service under the current arrangement that calls for mail to be sorted in Juneau.

[Federal Business Opportunities:](#)

- [Solicitation Number: 3A-14-A-0024 RFI - Smart Stack Loading & Unloading](#). The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is investigating a new method for bundling flats called "Smart Stack" that will produce bundles of flats for automated processing without human intervention. The USPS is searching for a company that has expertise and experience in developing automated systems for loading and unloading material on pallets to demonstrate the Smart Stack concept described in this RFI. The USPS is seeking information in accordance with Attachment A. Information received through this RFI may or may not be used in any forthcoming Request for Proposal (RFP). Interested parties that submit information will be considered as potential sources if the USPS moves forward with a RFP.
- [Solicitation Number: 3A-14-A-0023 - RFI - Smart Stack Bundle Making System](#). The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is investigating a new method for bundling flats called "Smart Stack" that will produce bundles of flats for automated processing without human intervention. The USPS is in search of a company that has expertise and experience in developing automated systems for producing bundles of flat mail with straps to demonstrate the Smart Stack bundle concept described in this RFI. The USPS is seeking information in accordance with Attachment A. Information received through this RFI may or may not be used in any forthcoming Request for Proposal (RFP). Interested parties that submit information will be considered as potential sources if the USPS moves forward with a RFP.

 [Surf Santa Monica](#): U.S. Congressman Henry Waxman is asking the United States Postal Service (USPS) to make good on its promise to provide customers with on-site parking at the relocated postal facility in Santa Monica. In a letter to the Postmaster General Wednesday, Waxman echoed reports published in The Lookout last week that residents fear the on-street parking at the replacement facility at 7th Street and Olympic Boulevard is inadequate and unsafe.

[Senator Baldwin Amendment to Strike Section 301 Supports Private Sector Economy, Mail Volumes & Revenues for the USPS Background:](#)

"In its current form, Section 301 will cause further declines in mail volume, threaten public and private mail jobs, and raise the possibility that for the first time ever postage rates alone will not be able to sustain the USPS. A 'yes' vote on the Baldwin amendment will prevent further damage to an industry that has lost more than a million jobs since 2007. The amendment will ensure that the USPS will not use its monopoly to raise rates to unsustainable levels. Rationale: The current CPI price cap – that Senator Baldwin's amendment maintains – works.


"The CPI cap provides rate predictability that is essential to the mailing community AND it provides the Postal Service with additional resources each year. The USPS has lost 27% of its volume over the last 6 years with the current cap in place. If Sec. 301 is enacted and rates increase above CPI, it is logical to assume that volume will drop at an even faster pace.


"Carper/Coburn Changes to Section 301 from Base Text: (1) Changes postal rate index from CPI to CPI+2 for two years and then CPI+1 as the default rate. **If inflation remains constant, this will be a three year rate increase of over 10 percent, which is nearly DOUBLE the current exigency rate case of 5.9 percent.** (2) After 2016, the USPS (not the PRC as in current law) has the authority to rewrite the postal rate structure. The PRC will only have authority to veto the final proposal.

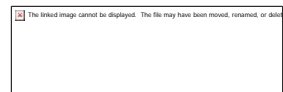
"Summary of Baldwin Amendment: (1) Strikes Section 301 of S. 1486, except the repeal of political committee's rate preference. (2) Maintains the current PRC rate review authority, the current CPI rate cap and USPS's ability to pursue exigent rate increases, like the current case

pending. (3) Supported by over 600 companies, retailers, non-profits, newspapers and other organizations.

"Conclusions: The revised language on postal rates and governance remains severely problematic for the business community, which accounts for 90 percent of the Postal Service's revenues. A rate increase of over 10 percent will drive away postal business at an accelerating rate, harming both business and the Postal Service, and costing jobs. It will cause faster diversions to the Internet, and less mail volume. Neither is conducive to stabilizing the USPS. On governance, the revised language will still place full authority in the hands of the USPS to create a new rate setting system. This is putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. The Postal Service's imperatives on this will conflict with those of its customers – that is unsustainable. A more objective body, like the PRC as in current law, should make those changes. Senator Baldwin's amendment protects jobs both in the private and public sector and will encourage more volume to move through the mail stream as a value-added product for customers across the country. **Vote YES on the Baldwin amendment.** For additional information, please contact: Brian Conlan Ken Reidy brian_conlan@baldwin.senate.gov ken_reidy@baldwin.senate.gov (phone: 202-224-5653)."

 **The Mirror:** Royal Mail has been accused of “penny- pinching” after ditching a cut-price stamp scheme for the hard-up, despite posting a surge in profits. Last Christmas, the postal giant allowed people on certain benefits to buy 36 first and second-class stamps at 2011 prices – 46p and 36p. It followed the decision to jack up stamp prices to 60p and 50p respectively in April last year. But Royal Mail confirmed it won't be giving the same help this time.

 **DVIDS:** For service members not going home during the holidays, the Christmas spirit can often be low and this cheerful time of year can feel like "just another month." In today's technological world, a phone call home or an e-mail to a loved one can sometimes fill the void of being away during the holidays, but not quite as much as seeing your name on a package or a letter. Working around the clock to fill that void, are six Marines at the Combat Center Post Office who work diligently to sort all Christmas and New Year's mail so that they arrive on time and intact.

 **American Postal Workers Union:** APWU Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy called on the Postal Regulatory Commission to conduct an investigation into delayed mail at the agency's public meeting on Dec. 11. Mail processing plants are being consolidated all over the country, she said, and have adversely affected the mail service in a very drastic way. The APWU has received reports of lengthy mail delays and of what appear to be management attempts to hide the delays. “You are now seeing the USPS privatize our work, take away good union postal jobs, destroying our service network, and closing post offices to place them in retail stores,” she said. “Postal workers are highly trained to secure the mail, protect the mail, and provide the best service to our customers. “We have to save our service and it's not only my job, but it is the PRC's job too,” she said.




Office of the Inspector General: Readiness for Package Growth- Delivery Operations Management Advisory Report - Report Number DR-MA-14-001:


"We recommended the vice president, Delivery and Post Office Operations, continue to test and implement dynamic routing, modify package compartments on cluster box units, and use operational reports to monitor and manage carrier package pickup data. We also recommended coordination with the vice president, Engineering Systems, to implement a vehicle shelving system."





National Association of Letter Carriers: NALC grassroots activists and the American public scored a huge victory on Tuesday when efforts to include elimination of Saturday mail delivery in the emerging budget agreement for 2014 failed. National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando reacted with gratitude and relief. “Thanks to the thousands of dedicated letter carriers, citizens and small-business owners who raised their voices in opposition to this misguided proposal to slash delivery service,” Rolando said, “Congress will not unwisely weaken the Postal Service or undermine our last-mile delivery network. Together, we

have not only helped save tens of thousands of good jobs, but we have preserved a path for recovery and growth for the USPS in the future. This is a win for tens of millions of Americans and countless businesses throughout the country that rely on the Postal Service for the world's most affordable delivery service. "Congress must continue to reject any legislation that would lead to the elimination of Saturday mail delivery," he added.

 [Post & Parcel](#): Postal customers in Sweden are set to benefit from further improvements in their service following an extension to the long term support contract between the country's national postal distribution organisation, Posten, and Lockheed Martin UK. Under the new contract Lockheed Martin UK will provide around the clock monitoring of the systems that control the Swedish mail processing operations. It will also provide a help desk and will distribute software updates and changes to address directories to synchronise with Posten's requirements.


 [EV World](#): The French national postal service La Poste has been operating a fleet of all-electric delivery vans for at least the last half decade. Such EVs are ideally suited for quiet, clean operation in cities, but less so across its sprawling, often quite rugged rural countryside approximately the size of the state of Texas. To make the use of the Renault Kangoo-based electric vehicles more adaptable to the rest of the country, the service is partnering with UTBM to test Symbio FCell fuel cell range extender kits on working postal vehicles on routes of more than 100 km (62 mi) in the Franche-Comté region of eastern France along the Swiss border. In addition to doubling the range of the electric vans, the heat from the Symbio FCell stack will be used to provide cabin heat and windshield defrosting, removing a significant electrical load off the batteries in cold weather.

 [The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner](#): A spokesman for the U.S. Postal Service says no additional cost is expected from a decision to fly mail from one Alaska community to another for sorting. Ernie Swanson said Wednesday that the agency already has flights between Ketchikan and Juneau, and no extra flights have been added due to the change in mail handling. *[EdNote: Hummm. Fly mail from one area to another at no cost. Must be a miracle of sorts.]*

 [Attention Postal One! Users](#): **Full-Service Discounts and By/For Information.** Electronic Documentation (eDoc) requires the identification of the eDoc Submitter, the Mail Preparer and the Mail Owner for Full-Service compliance. **The identification of the Mail Preparer and Mail Owner is called By/For** - where the mail is prepared BY a Mail Preparer FOR a Mail Owner. The Mail Owner and the Mail Preparer may be the same party or they may be different parties. For example, when a Mail Owner prepares and submits their own mailing, the Mail Preparer and Mail Owner would be the same. If the Mail Owner chooses to use a Mail Preparer to prepare and submit their mailing(s), the parties would be different within eDoc. eDoc is used to populate the electronic postage statements in PostalOne! What is populated depends on what resides in a particular field the eDoc.

Today, the information fields used to populate the postage statement By/For IS NOT the same information used for the Full-Service By/For. (This will change in a future release). At this time, **Acceptance employees are not able to validate Full-Service By/For information. The Full-Service discount will not be denied** if the "Org for Mailing Prepared" field is blank, or does not appear to be correct on the electronic postage statement in PostalOne!. Below is a summary of the four (4) reasons the Full-Service discount will be removed. These issues are discovered by Visual Inspection and/or by running the mailing on MERLIN at the time of acceptance.

Reasons for removal of the Full-Service discount include: (1) three or more Intelligent Mail Container barcodes or placards are missing or covered by shrink-wrap. (2) three or more tray/sack labels are missing Intelligent Mail Tray Barcode. (3) four or more mailpieces claiming the Full-Service discount are missing Intelligent Mail barcodes. (5) The loss of an automation discount based on the results of a MERLIN or Manual barcode verification will also result in the loss of the Full-Service discount.

 [Pensions & Investments](#): Canada Post Corp., Ottawa, would be allowed to avoid making special contributions to its pension fund for the next four years under regulations to be introduced by the Canadian government. Canada Post recommended the move as part of its five-point plan for financial stability issued on Wednesday.

[!\[\]\(b39c89771cd6fb2128a8c57aa7d97f9a_img.jpg\) Bloomberg Businessweek](#): Anybody who doubts where the U.S. Postal Service is headed should look at what's happening north of the border. Canada Post announced (pdf) today that it plans to end home delivery in urban areas over the next five years, part of a plan to restore its financial health. In addition, the Canadian mail will increase stamp prices and cut as many 8,000 jobs. Opponents of similar reforms in the U.S. blame the USPS's fiscal crisis on a congressional mandate to prepay \$5 billion to cover future health-care benefits of retirees. But that's just a side issue. If people would stop communicating via e-mail, text message, and Twitter (TWTR) and go back to writing letters, Canada Post and its American counterpart would be fine. That's not likely to happen.

[!\[\]\(d0a1791f26d167e866e44ebbf83efebe_img.jpg\) Canada.com](#): "Why you'll pay \$1 a stamp and won't get mail delivered to your door in urban areas." \$1: This is how much you'll pay for a stamp starting March 31, 2014, if you buy individually. That's a 59-per-cent increase over the \$0.63 you're paying now. Stamps bought in packages or coils will cost \$0.85 each (a mere 35-per-cent increase). Canada Post hopes it can generate an additional \$200 million this way. But Denis Lemelin, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, has attacked the increase, saying "skyrocketing stamp prices will make the postal service inaccessible to many people." For posterity's sake, a stamp cost \$0.46 in 2000.

[!\[\]\(5eb1325dfdc3f1cad8426726c0db51cd_img.jpg\) CTV News](#): The union representing postal workers says it will fight Canada Post's decision to eliminate door-to-door mail delivery as the company struggles with continued losses. President of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers Denis Lemelin said the Crown corporation could reduce costs through innovation rather than cutting jobs and scaling back services.

[!\[\]\(eafc244b53721dd1ec133f0772f70fc7_img.jpg\) O.Canada.com](#): Canada Post president and CEO Deepak Chopra is a board member of the organization that highlighted the financial plight facing the Crown corporation and suggested eliminating door-to-door delivery as a way for it to save money. Chopra is a member of the board of directors of the Conference Board of Canada. Chopra is also paid the highest salary range among so-called governor-in-council cabinet appointments, with potential earnings of more than half a million dollars a year as Canada Post CEO. Chopra is paid at the CEO 8 level, meaning he receives between \$440,900 and \$518,600 a year in salary to head an organization that has nearly two dozen presidents and vice-presidents.


[!\[\]\(d3fb9f94af8b26d1c844efa9a98805b0_img.jpg\) Ottawa Citizen](#): Canada is the first developed nation to cancel door-to-door mail delivery, a U.S. watchdog group says. "This is a drastic and unprecedented step," said Don Soifer, director of the Consumer Postal Council, an organization dedicated to bringing "sensible reform" to the U.S. Postal Service. Soifer, who monitors postal services around the world, said Canada is not unique in trying to stem losses as the use of traditional mail plummets. But others are employing other strategies — including full and partial privatization, changes of delivery frequency and the addition of other services — while largely maintaining home delivery. Soifer said all countries face difficult decisions on postal services, including whether mail delivery, like other government services, should be paid for or subsidized by general tax revenue. "If consumers want to maintain a national post (system) and have it be a government entity, then the question becomes who's responsibility it is to pay for it."


[!\[\]\(950a62bbddad88d64435fd35607dfc42_img.jpg\) Digital Journal](#): "No one would deny that the services provided by Canada Post must adapt to the changing needs of Canadians, but drastic cuts to services don't serve anyone." We need a visionary long-term plan for the postal service that ensures financial sustainability, while prioritizing good jobs and quality services."

[!\[\]\(5a132f13505a6571904d622757b7a8f0_img.jpg\) The Telegram](#): Local postal workers are reeling from the news that door-to-door delivery is being phased out. "It's huge," said Craig Dyer, who was out delivering mail as he spoke to The Telegram. Dyer is the chief shop steward with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) Local 126 in St. John's.

[!\[\]\(10f8862fc183b400327470ea85afe9ae_img.jpg\) Reuters](#): Canada's postal service will phase out urban home delivery within five years and hike the cost of postage stamps to try to stem soaring losses, the post office said on Wednesday. Canada Post, like the U.S. Postal Service, is suffering as customers switch to digital communications. In August it said it was on track to run short of cash by the middle of 2014 unless major changes were made. The government-owned corporation - which has a mandate to be self-financing - last month reported a third-quarter loss of C\$109 million (\$103 million) before tax and said mail volumes had fallen 7.3 percent from the same period in 2012. It must also deal with a C\$6.5 billion deficit in its pension plan. About 5.1 million urban households in Canada - a third of the total - get door-to-door mail

delivery. Under a five-point plan unveiled on Wednesday, this will be phased out over the next five years and replaced by a system of community mail boxes. See also the [Wall Street Journal](#).


 [The Republic](#): Canada's postal service said Wednesday it will phase out home delivery within urban centers within the next five years as it begins to post significant financial losses because of the increasing use of digital communication. Canada Post, a government corporation, said it will replace foot delivery with community mail boxes. About a third of Canadian homes still receive mail to their door. It also plans to eliminate 6,000 to 8,000 jobs during the next five years, mainly through attrition. The postal service expects nearly 15,000 employees to retire or leave the company in the next five years. Canada Post said if left unchecked, continued losses would soon jeopardize its financial self-sufficiency and become a significant burden on taxpayers and customers.


 [The Globe and Mail](#): Canada first G7 country to cut all urban home mail delivery See also the [Globe and Mail's](#) more general story.


December 11, 2013





Here is the presentation from the MTAC session from packages on [what will be included in the final Fed Reg rule](#).


 [National Association of Major Mail Users](#): Canada Post has advised their five-point plan to return to financial sustainability by 2019. Key elements for the short term are: The Commercial Incentive rates for Transaction Mail effective March 31, 2014: 69 cents and 70 cents; Roll out of the Cluster Mail Box option where all homes currently receiving home delivery, will be converted to CMB between 2014-2019. The Canadian domestic stamp rate will be gazetted this weekend, and is proposed at: \$1.00 per single stamp; Booklet or coil: 85 cents; meter: 75 cents.


 [Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs](#): Business Meeting Wednesday, December 18, 2013 10:00 a.m. SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building AGENDA Legislation -- **S. 1486, Postal Reform Act of 2013**


 [The Chartered Institute of Logistics Transportation](#): Postal customers in Sweden are set to benefit from further improvements in their service following an extension to the long term support contract between the country's national postal distribution organisation, Posten, and Lockheed Martin UK. Under the new contract Lockheed Martin UK will provide around the clock monitoring of the systems that control the Swedish mail processing operations. It will also provide a help desk and will distribute software updates and changes to address directories to synchronise with Posten's requirements. The support extension, spread over five years, has been combined with a new agreement for Lockheed Martin UK to consolidate its postal operations experience with Posten and to identify new, business enhancing projects to maintain the latter's leadership position in Scandinavia. Together the two agreements are valued at more than £8 million.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Patrick Donahoe, the U.S. Postmaster General, calls himself an optimist. He has to be. He has the unenviable task of managing an agency that acts as a private company in many ways but needs an act of Congress to introduce certain products or change some employee benefits. That's no easy feat in today's Washington. The U.S. Postal Service has waited for years for legislators to pass a bill to fix its ailing finances. In fiscal 2013, it had a \$5 billion loss, ending in the red for the seventh year.

 [China Daily](#): China and other emerging markets will significantly influence global trade in the next two decades, the chief operating officer of United Parcel Service Inc said. "The China story and the emerging markets story certainly hasn't been written - that's a story in process," David Abney told China Daily in an interview on the sidelines of the World in 2014 Summit in Manhattan. "All of our multinational customers that we talk to on a regular basis are focused on these emerging markets," Abney said. "You can't mention the word 'emerging markets' without talking about China. It's just got such an influence."


 [Washington Examiner](#): Postal Service employees have credit cards that can be used to make cash withdrawals against government funds, and 11 percent of their ATM withdrawals were determined to be "inappropriate," according to an inspector general's report published Tuesday. The cards are supposed to be used for travel, but of 328 "high risk" cash advances examined by the IG, 102 didn't occur on a trip. Unallowable cash withdrawals uncovered by the IG, that Postal Service managers had not detected themselves, totaled \$25,430. See [OIG report: "Monitoring of Government Travel Card Transactions in the Western Area"](#)

 [Azerbaijan Business Center](#): The National Post Operator "Azerbaijan Post" LLC (Azərpoçt) is ready to expand the volume of its postal deliveries within the framework of global e-trade. According to the Ministry of Communication and Information Technologies, the Operator has already introduced SMS-notification service to notify the recipient about delivery of internet order. "This service has already facilitated the process of receiving international parcels", - the Ministry informs. The growth of parcels number within the framework of global e-trade is expected in the country after 5-fold increase (from \$200 up to \$1000) of the cost of private goods imported without customs fee.

 [The Herald](#): Zimpost has invested US\$2 million purchasing five postal buses to combine the functions of public transport and mail delivery or collection, an official has said. The post-bus concept has been in existence within the postal industry for a very long time. The concept was introduced as a means of providing public transport in rural areas with lower levels of patronage where a normal bus service is uneconomic.

 [Politico](#): Rep. Paul Ryan and Sen. Patty Murray unveiled a two-year budget agreement late Tuesday night that they say will end years of bitter budget wars on Capitol Hill. The framework amounts to a modest deal that averts another government shutdown, replaces the sequester and provides a level of certainty on spending that hasn't been seen in Washington for several years. But it doesn't raise the debt ceiling, which Congress must address sometime next spring. President Barack Obama welcomed the two-year budget agreement unveiled Tuesday by Rep. Paul Ryan and Sen. Patty Murray, calling it "a good first step" that should remove the prospect of another government shutdown.

December 10, 2013


 [Bloomberg Businessweek](#): Ralph Nader, the consumer advocate and presidential candidate, has inundated the U.S. Postal Service for decades with suggestions. Even in better times, he was concerned that American citizens were being short changed by the agency, which lost \$5 billion last year, thanks to the proliferation of e-mail and the added burden of having to pre-pay its retiree health benefits. Today, Nader is more adamant than ever that stamp buyers should have a say in the USPS's fate. He talked about how to fix the USPS post office and how he relishes going to the post office.





PostCom Webinar on USPS 2014 Promotions: "Promotions to create awareness of innovative uses of mail."


Presented By: Gary C Reblin VP, New Products & Innovation U.S. Postal Service [Webinar Recording](#) |

[Slides](#)

 [Fierce Government](#): The Postal Service blamed time constraints for the poor performance of some postmasters in a business engagement program, but the USPS office of inspector general now disputes that conclusion. An [OIG audit](#) from earlier this year found wide variation in performance nationwide in the Business Connect program, where postmasters reach out to local businesses through meetings and events. One group of 196 postmasters reported about \$27,000 in revenue per Business Connect contact in fiscal 2012, while a separate group of 13,050 postmasters reported an average of \$10 in revenue per contact. Postal Service officials attributed the lower performance of many postmasters to time-consuming operational challenges. But in a [Dec. 9 report \(.pdf\)](#), the [OIG](#) says there was no relationship between the challenges faced by post offices and the performance of their postmasters in Business Connect.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): "Differences in How Men and Women Think Are Hard-Wire" Women and men display distinctive differences in how nerve fibers connect various regions of their brains, according to a half-dozen recent studies that highlight gender variation in the brain's wiring diagram. No one knows how gender variations in brain wiring might translate into thought and behavior—whether they might influence the way men and women generally perceive reality, process information, form judgments and behave socially—but they are sparking controversy [EdNote: Duh! Ask anyone who's married. Who needs the Wall Street Journal to tell them men and women think differently?]

 [Wall Street Journal](#): The success of the holiday shopping season—the difference between winners and losers—usually hinges on factors like the economy, fashion, color, price, or a blockbuster new items like tablet computers or videogame consoles. Increasingly, though, another factor is coming into play: Shipping. Package delivery is becoming a competitive weapon in the holiday retail season.

 [Roll Call](#): The post office in the Russell Senate Office Building will close at the end of 2013, as the Senate consolidates its postal services. Effective Jan. 1, 2014, the post office in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., will serve all the chamber's mailing and shipping needs. The decision to shutter the Russell location, found in room 34-B of the building's brick-walled basement, follows a thorough review of all aspects of the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms operation "in an effort to promote greater efficiency and meet shrinking budget allocations," according to an announcement on the chamber's internal website obtained by CQ Roll Call.




[Office of the Inspector General](#):


- [It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's . . . Your Package?!?](#)
 - [Relationship Between Business Connect and Post Office Performance](#)
Report Number MS-MA-14-001





WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

[Transport Intelligence](#): After 5 days of intense negotiation, the World Trade Organisation Bali Ministerial Conference has ended in success. The so-called 'Bali Package', which consists of a selection of measures to reduce global trade barriers, was finally adopted and represents the first multilateral trade deal which the WTO has been able to broker for 12 years. But what will this mean for global supply chains? The WTO says that the objectives of the Package are: to speed up customs procedures; make trade easier, faster and cheaper; provide clarity, efficiency and transparency; reduce bureaucracy and corruption, and use technological advances. It also has provisions on goods in transit, an issue particularly of interest to landlocked countries seeking to trade through ports in neighbouring countries. The benefits to the world economy are calculated to be between \$ 400bn and \$1 trillion by reducing costs of trade by between 10% and 15%, increasing trade flows and revenue collection, creating a stable business environment and attracting foreign investment.


 [Derry Journal](#): Sinn Féin in Derry has launched its annual Christmas postal service. The party has organised its own post service for Christmas cards in Derry for more than 30 years. This year's postal service was launched at the Rath Mór Sinn Féin office by councillors Patricia Logue and Colly Kelly. Colr. Kelly said the stamps for this year's service will commemorate the mass escape from Long Kesh prison in 1983 when 38 prisoners broke out of the high security jail. Speaking after the launch, colr. Kelly said; "The annual Sinn Féin post has been a feature of the Christmas period in Derry now for over thirty years and I would encourage people to make use of it. "Christmas cards will be delivered to any part of Derry City for the minimal price of 20p.

 [Roll Call](#): As the contours of a potential two-year budget agreement have emerged in advance of a Friday deadline, those outside the talks are expressing displeasure with both sides — perhaps a sign that a deal really is close. And any deal, although certain to fall far short of the aborted grand bargains of yore, would be remarkable in its own right, ending a year of historic dysfunction in Washington, D.C., with a road map for a return to some semblance of normalcy.

 **Hazard-Herald:** Those living in the Ary and Rowdy communities of Perry County will now have more and possibly closer options when it comes to sending mail after a village post office opened at a local service station last week. Campbell's Service Station, located on Hwy. 476 in the Ary community, will now offer flat-rate package shipping, mail drop-off, and stamps to customers in the area who do not want to or do not have the time to travel to the post office, said Nick Walker, village post office coordinator with the United States Postal Service. "It benefits the community with the mail collections, the availability of stamps and flat rate packages, and it also helps out the owners Sally and Shirley Campbell as far as increasing the foot traffic, and of course we're looking forward to benefiting the postal service," Walker said at the opening on Friday. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) started the village post office program a few years ago, Walker said, in order to help increase revenue in areas where the population may be more spread out making it harder for everyone in the community to reach a fully operational post office on a regular basis.

 **Sit News:** Without apparently any public process, the United States Postal Service (USPS) made a decision recently to change its longstanding practice for processing mail in Ketchikan and is now flying the mail to Juneau for processing, then back to Ketchikan. In a letter to U.S. Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe, U.S. Senator Mark Begich (D-AK) said the decision to change how Ketchikan mail is sorted was made several months ago with apparently no public notice. At that time the USPS decided to transport all mail deposited at the Ketchikan post over over 200 miles by air to Juneau where it would be sorted. The Ketchikan-destined mail is then returned by air to Ketchikan. A plan which Begich says is inefficient and does not take Southeast Alaska weather delays into account.

"It is my understanding that in theory the USPS planned to have Ketchikan mail sent to Juneau in the evening, sorted, and then returned the next morning for delivery," said Sen. Begich. "Unfortunately, it does not appear that those responsible for the decision had an adequate understanding of the weather in Southeast Alaska, which can cause flight delays and cancellations during much of the year, nor did they take into account the possibility of mechanical breakdowns of aircraft used by the USPS contractor. The result is that my office has received numerous complaints from local governments and businesses concerned about timely delivery of bills and receipt of payments for taxes, utilities, goods, and services." "I would urge you to review the decision to fly Ketchikan-bound mail hundreds of miles from Ketchikan to Juneau and back to Ketchikan, balancing the potential cost savings, if any, with common sense and the needs of Ketchikan residents, businesses, and local governments to have reliable and timely mail delivery, and the adverse economic impacts which the decision has already had on them," said Sen. Begich. "I believe that the result of such a review will be a decision to retain Ketchikan-bound mail for processing in Ketchikan."


 **The New Indian Express:** A nationwide agitation would be launched against the Government's move to privatise postal services including railway mail and MMS, said president of National Confederation of Postal Employees, Giriraj Singh, on the concluding day of the two-day national open convention here on Monday. Addressing the gathering, he demanded that the Government should roll back its Postal Policy of 2012 at the earliest.



At the Postal Regulatory Commission:

- Postal Service Active Employee Statistical Summary (HAT Report), Pay Periods 24-25, FY 2014
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88523/HAT%20Report%20PP25.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88523/HAT%20Report%20PP24.pdf>
http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88523/Letter_HAT_PP24-5_FY14_20131209163124.pdf

December 9, 2013


 **CBS Los Angeles:** The fallout from ongoing financial troubles for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) could end up reaching as far as the North Pole this Christmas. For the first time in over a century, a number of children's letters addressed to Santa Claus may go unanswered, according to postal volunteers.





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 **The Independent:** Royal Mail workers will receive a three-year pay rise worth around 9% and legally-binding employment protections under a "landmark" agreement. The deal between the Communication Workers Union and the recently-privatised company, which has averted strikes, covers over 130,000 employees. Royal Mail said the agreement was believed to be the first of its kind in the UK, giving legal protections that benefit workers and the company.



Deutsche Post DHL  **Wall Street Journal:** Deutsche Post-DHL AG launched a test flight for drone delivery Monday, just about a week after e-commerce giant Amazon.com Inc. stirred a media frenzy by saying it would use drones to bring packages to customers. The postal and logistics company said it began a weeklong pilot project on Monday in cooperation with a pharmacy in Bonn, where the company is located. "Our plans are in the early stages and there are a number of scenarios we're evaluating, including delivering medicine that's needed quickly, or to hard-to-reach places," Deutsche Post spokeswoman Dunja Kuhlmann said.

 **Press Release:** **DPS magazine** has named Bell and Howell – a leading global provider of multi-channel communications solutions for print, Web and mobile delivery – as a winner in its [2013 Top 30 Readers' Choice Awards](#). The distinction recognizes companies for their popularity as selected by the magazine's readership. Using the magazine's website metric system (www.dpsmagdirect.com), the publication tallies readers' interest in companies and products throughout the year. This is done via requests made on print and Web editorial and advertisements as seen in the magazine, as well as on the website or in DPS' weekly e-newsletter. Bell and Howell was recognized for overall reader interest, as well as its featured products: BH™ Mobile Mail, Criterion Apex® DM sorter, and JETVision® Quest.


 **New York Times:** Worldwide, e-commerce sales topped \$1 trillion last year, according to the research firm eMarketer. Sales growth in the double digits will almost certainly continue through at least 2016. There is going to be a lot more stuff to deliver out there. What we buy on our smartphones in seconds we want on our doorstep in minutes. Given the explosive growth of e-commerce, some experts say the shipping business is in for big changes. Robots and autonomous vehicles — think Google's driverless car — could also disrupt the delivery business. Autonomous vehicles, including drones, promise a faster, cheaper option. "The cost of use will be pennies on the dollar compared to today's delivery systems," Brad Templeton, a futurist and a member of the board of the Electronic Frontier Foundation said. This, he added, could very quickly eat into the business of many delivery companies.


 [Trade Arabia](#): Bahraini firms hit by a shock 300 per cent increase in overseas postage fees are calling on authorities to reverse the decision, saying it will cost them thousands of dinars and could force them to look for postal alternatives abroad.


 [Post & Parcel](#): The US Postal Service has insisted it should be able to break its annual price cap to combat the effects of the “Great Recession” on its mail volumes. The world’s largest postal service is currently seeking regulatory approval for a 6.5% increase to its retail stamp prices for First Class Mail, and a 5.9% increase for its business mail rates. The rate rise, which is well about the rate of inflation on which its annual price cap is based, aims to raise an additional \$2bn in revenue to help the Postal Service cope with its current financial crisis. USPS has said it will not need to implement the “exigent” rate increase if Congress passes comprehensive postal reform laws by the end of this month. Last month major USPS customers called on regulators to reject the exigent rate rise, stating that the primary cause of mail volume losses in the United States has been the diversion of communications to the Internet. The mailers argued that the ongoing e-substitution of physical mail volumes was not grounds under US postal law to break the price cap. But the Postal Service has insisted to Post&Parcel that from 2007 to the end of 2010 20% of its mail volume disappeared “primarily” because of the recession.....[USPS Deputy Postmaster General Ron Stroman](#) responds to our article reporting mailers’ demands that US postal regulators reject above-inflation price rise proposals.


  [Hindu Business Line](#): Japan has launched an initiative to modernise Myanmar’s postal system by introducing its fast, efficient and precise services in the Southeast Asian country. The initiative is part of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s economic revitalisation plans featuring exports of its advanced technologies and services to other countries, especially developing countries in Asia.

December 8, 2013


 [Press Release](#): UPS®, a global logistics provider and leading advocate for global trade, welcomes today’s news of an agreement struck at the World Trade Organization to facilitate global commerce and support growth in developing countries. After years of debate and compromise, the World Trade Organization (WTO) successfully delivered a trade package at the WTO’s 9th Ministerial Conference, reconfirming the organization’s ability to serve as a forum for negotiation of global trade rules.


 [National Association of Letter Carriers](#): NALC has recently become aware of an effort by the Postal Service in different parts of the country to convince customers to agree to change their mode of delivery to cluster box or centralized delivery. The language above makes clear that property owners must sign indicating their agreement with the conversion. If property owners do not sign, they retain their current mode of delivery. Owners’ associations and managers in rental areas may also control the mode of delivery. The final paragraph states that the Postal Service may not arbitrarily change the mode of delivery when a residence is sold.


 [Jamaica Observer](#): With the popularity of social media to include technological advances in instant communication like Skype, WhatsApp, Facebook, and various other instant messaging services, many people, especially the young, have confessed to not using the services provided by the Postal Corporation of Jamaica, the postal services’ umbrella organisation. Some have even admitted to not seeing the relevance of the existence of post offices and postal agencies.


 [Marketwatch](#): Severe winter weather across the U.S. has been blamed for nearly a dozen deaths, more than a thousand canceled flights, and delayed freight deliveries by major shipping companies and online retailers during the busy holiday season. FedEx Corp. said on Saturday that winter weather caused “substantial flight and sort disruptions at multiple hubs” and warned that packages due for Saturday delivery could be delayed. United Parcel Service Inc. said pickups and deliveries weren’t available in parts of Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Texas. Similarly, eBay Inc. warned that the weather could delay shipments to Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Ohio, and Texas. Winter storm warnings were in effect in Northern Nevada, Utah and Western Virginia on Saturday. Northern Virginia, the Washington, D.C. metro area, Maryland and parts of Pennsylvania were under a winter storm watch, according to the National Weather Service.


December 7, 2013


 [Washington Examiner](#): What ultimately became of \$27,000 worth of mail loaders in Atlanta? The U.S. Postal Service's inspector general is unsure. The Atlanta distribution center lost at least \$26,7000 in equipment that could have been traded, sold, recycled or used in parts. Instead, management marked down the 20 loaders as lost, stolen, destroyed or simply "not found." "Ultimately, we could not determine what became of this equipment," the IG reported.


 [Raleigh Telegram](#): According to the United States Postal Service, a new contract post office has now opened in Raleigh. The USPS says the new office has virtually all of the services of a regular post office.

 [Delphos Herald](#): Postal Reform is a complicated issue and a very personal one. Just think of the numbers of industries and the people whose livelihood depends on the post office. Actually it is harder to come up with a list of industries that are not affected by this massive organization. Almost 40 years ago, I used to tell school groups that if you can think of a job that someone has, there is someone working for the post office that is doing that very same job.

 [WTLV](#): Come rain or sleet or snow, you'll get your mail. But ... "Right now, letter carriers are upset because the postal service has changed the letter carrier's starting times to anywhere between 8:30 and 9 o'clock in the morning," said Bob Henning, President of the North Florida Letter Carriers Union Local Branch 53. Henning is a retired letter carrier after 35 years. He said he's seen carriers out as late as 7:30 p.m. "It's very hazardous for us to be out there delivering mail in the dark," he said.

 [VOCM](#): Craig Dyer with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers says saving money shouldn't be about cutting customer service. Dyer says over the past couple of days, he's received complaints from consumers that they cannot get their parcels at postal outlets because of the large amount of packages that need to be sorted. He told VOCM BackTalk with Paddy Daly, that's because the packages are not being sorted by postal workers anymore - rather they're being sent to outlets, like drug stores.

 [USA Today](#): Mark Lipscomb has been delivering mail to people who live along Week's Bay and the Magnolia and Fish rivers here for nine years . His mode of transportation isn't the usual, white U.S. Postal Service vehicle. It's a 15-foot-long Alumacraft boat with a semi-V hull. Lipscomb works the only water delivery mail route in the country.

 [Washington Post](#): Total federal employment, including the military and Postal Service, has dropped 0.32 percent per month on average so far this year, according to BLS data. That compares to an average increase of 0.17 percent per month for the private sector and 0.12 percent per month for the overall economy. Even without the Postal Service, the numbers do not look good for the federal government. Federal employment excluding postal workers has declined by an average of 0.3 percent per month so far this year.

INDUSTRYALERT **OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY POSTMASTER GENERAL** Effective December 9, **Sheila Meyers** will begin a detail as **Vice President, Government Relations and Public Policy**. Sheila is a 34-year career postal employee who began her career in Seattle, Washington. She has worked in a wide variety of postal operations, including Mail Processing, Retail Services, Human Resources, Labor Relations, and Government Relations. As Manager, Government Liaison, Sheila is the Postal Service's primary liaison with the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. In this capacity, she has extensively interacted with key congressional leaders and their staff regarding the Postal Service's public policy interests, including the development and passage of legislation consistent with the Postal Service's financial and operational needs.


During this period, **Talaya Simpson** will be detailed as **Manager, Government Liaison**, in the Government Relations and Public Policy group. Talaya is a 23-year career postal employee who began her career in Washington, D.C. In her most current position, Government Relations Representative, she has led the cross-functional Election


Mail Task Force (EMTF), developed an EMTF tracking log to address questions and mitigate issues on Election Mail from internal and external stakeholders, and served as the DRIVE point of contact for two key initiatives.

INDUSTRYALERT **OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER** Effective immediately, **Krista Finazzo** will be returning to Operations as **Manager, Integration & Support**. Krista will provide coordination and oversight in the development of defined core operational initiatives for the office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Krista will serve as a liaison to operational officers and be responsible for strategic support and alignment of operational initiatives under the COO's purview. Previously, Krista served as the Consumer Advocate and Manager, Customer Relations where she was the primary voice of the customer for the Postal Service. A 22-year veteran of the Postal Service, Krista has held several positions within Operations and Marketing at various levels of the organization. Krista attended Michigan State University and received her master's degree from American University.

INDUSTRYALERT The USPS Mailing Services team will hold a webinar on Thursday, December 12 to discuss the upcoming 2014 Promotion Calendar. This webinar is intended for mailers and mail service providers interested in hearing more about the 2014 mailing promotions calendar that was recently approved by the Postal Regulatory Commission. We will provide a brief overview of the seven promotions slated for 2014 and describe eligibility requirements and other program parameters. For additional information on the USPS 2014 Promotion Calendar, please visit our RIBBS website at: <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=mobilebarcode>


December 6, 2013


 **Attention Postal One! Users:** The Memphis Metropolitan area is currently under a winter storm event. The NCSC - Memphis inclement weather policy has been implemented, which impacts the PostalOne! Help Desk. If you should require assistance with PostalOne!, and experience difficulty making contact by phone, please send an email to postalone@usps.gov and we will respond as soon as possible. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.


 **Washington Times:** Looks as if a Postal Service facility forgot a key part of reducing waste — recycling. Investigators say that an Atlanta sorting facility ditched 20 of its mail loaders, labeling them as lost, stolen, destroyed or not found. “We estimate the Postal Service lost at least \$26,700 in scrap value for this equipment,” said the U.S. Postal Service's inspector general, the organization's watchdog.


 **At the Postal Regulatory Commission:**


- R2013-11 Reply Comments of the National Postal Policy Council, the Major Mailers Association, the National Association of Presort Mailers, and the Association for Mail Electronic Enhancement <http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88499/nppc-mma-napm-amee-reply-R2013-11.pdf>
- R2013-11 Reply Comments of Time Inc. <http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88500/TIrpCmtsR2013-11-F.pdf>
- R2013-11 Reply Comments of the Parcel Shippers Association [http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88504/PSA%20Reply%20Comments%20\(R2013-11\).pdf](http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88504/PSA%20Reply%20Comments%20(R2013-11).pdf)
- R2013-11 Public Representative Reply Comments in Response to the Exigent Request of the United States Postal Service <http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88503/ReplyComFinal.pdf>
<http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88503/ReplyComFinal.docx>
- R2013-11 Reply Comments of the Greeting Card Association http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88505/R201311_GCA_Reply.pdf
- R2013-11 Reply Comments of Valpak Direct Marketing Systems, Inc., and Valpak Dealers? Association, Inc. http://www.prc.gov/docs/88/88506/Valpak_Reply_Comments.pdf


 [New Zealand Herald](#): Why does New Zealand Post continue to flounder while Deutsche Post, the German postal provider, has significantly outperformed the Frankfurt sharemarket in recent years and Royal Mail, the UK mail operator, has just had an extremely successful IPO? A brief assessment of the three post providers shows that the two European companies have clear e-commerce driven parcel and logistics growth strategies whereas New Zealand Post has been adversely affected by the requirement to contribute substantial capital to Kiwibank, its 100 per cent owned subsidiary.


 [The Adobe Chronicles](#): Today, the United States Postal Service (USPS) announced its response to Amazon's drone delivery. It is calling it the Rabbit Express, not to be confused with the bus service to and from New York City. Classified documents obtained by The Adobe Chronicles revealed that USPS has been training herds and herds of rabbits which, with the aid of computer chips, could deliver letters and flat envelopes to addresses within a 50-mile radius of post offices in less than 20 minutes. The documents showed that the cost of the Rabbit Express would be 50% less than what USPS now charges for flat-rate priority mail. The secret training farm is located somewhere in Arizona. If it fits the size and weight of the rabbit, it ships!

 [RocketCity Times](#): Walmart today announced plans to install mini surface-to-air missile batteries on the rooftops of all 4,786 store locations across the United States. The missiles will exclusively target Amazon Prime Air drones. The new concept called Walmart Megatron is the latest effort to drive customers back to retail locations. While Walmart's growth has remained steady, it has been unable to keep pace with online retailers such as Amazon. The Megatron missiles will be miniaturized surface to air missile based on the RIM-174 Standard ERAM. The missiles are 7 inches long and in testing showed the capability to target an Amazon drone up to 10 miles away. The missile batteries are equipped with special camera equipment calibrated to search for the Amazon arrow on the side of the Prime Air drones and fire automatically.


 [Reuters](#): Twitter Inc is tying up with a Singapore-based startup to make its 140-character messaging service available to users in emerging markets who have entry-level mobile phones which cannot access the Internet. Users will need to dial a simple code to get a feed of the popular trending topics on Twitter.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Dutch mail firm PostNL is in the spotlight Friday after revealing it had received gross cash proceeds of €507 million (\$692 million) after disposing part of its stake in logistics company TNT Express. PostNL sold approximately 15% of the outstanding share capital of TNT Express, at an offer price of €6.20 a share, and will use the proceeds to strengthen its balance sheet via a reduction of outstanding debt. PostNL owned nearly 30% of TNT Express after the demerger of the mail and express delivery business in May 2011. PostNL has had a difficult time of late, with Dutch domestic mail volumes declining sharply. Last month it stated its revenues for the third quarter dropped 2%, while operating income dropped by 12%. That said, the mail firm raised its outlook for the full year, mainly as a result of the cost savings being realized ahead of schedule.


 [Post & Parcel](#): A group of 24 postal companies from around the world have launched a new programme that aims to establish a fully interconnected network for shipping e-commerce products across borders. The programme was agreed by members of the International Post Corporation at a meeting of their chief executives in Washington last month. The IPC membership comprises some of the biggest national postal services in the world, including the US Postal Service, Deutsche Post, Poste Italiane, Royal Mail and La Poste Group. It also includes the national postal services of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. The IPC revealed this week that the new IPC e-Commerce Interconnect Programme will offer a global shipping platform with full track and trace capabilities offering end-to-end visibility to retailers and consumers alike. The platform will provide retailers with a choice of end-to-end delivery times and features, and a cross-border returns solution allowing consumers to ship unwanted items back. The IPC, a Brussels-based group of cooperating postal companies, said ultimately the project aims to provide consumers with the same kind of shopping and delivery experience when buying online from retailers in other countries as they would expect when buying from domestic retailers.


 [Business Wire](#): FedEx Corp. will increase shipping rates for FedEx Ground and FedEx Home Delivery by an average of 4.9% effective January 6, 2014. FedEx SmartPost rates also will change. Details of


surcharge changes and new rates for FedEx Ground will be available at fedex.com/us/2014rates on December 6, 2013. FedEx previously announced on Sept. 18, 2013 that it will increase shipping rates for FedEx Express by an average of 3.9% for U.S. domestic, U.S. export and U.S. import services also effective January 6, 2014.

 **Trade Arabia:** *Postal charges in Bahrain have increased by 300 per cent*, a report said. It is understood the new rates, which came into effect yesterday, apply to local mail and anything sent within the Gulf, according to the report in the Gulf Daily News, our sister publication. *[EdNote: So much for the benefit of living postal life without an inflation cap.]*

Why are policies in America being driven by those not satisfied with getting what they need but by those who insist on overreaching to get what they want?

 **Seeking Alpha:** "Gold does not have a fundamental intrinsic value, and does not provide any cash flow, a right to future earnings or a promise of repayment at a later date. Furthermore, it has little economic use and is not tied to global consumption." *[EdNote: I guess you could say the same today about promises from politicians.]*

 **Politico:** Rep. Paul Ryan and Sen. Patty Murray are only a few billion dollars in budgetary savings away from a deal that would set spending levels and blunt the impact of across-the-board spending cuts for the next two years, according to sources close to the negotiations. But hurdles remain, as finding those few billion dollars is difficult in an already tight federal budget. *[EdNote: Got that? Only a FEW BILLION apart. Incidentally, federal employees are already being prepped on the possibility of another federal shutdown.]*

 **Press Release:** Escher Group announces that the South African Post Office has selected the RiposteTrEx™ platform to deliver its eRegistered mail solution following a rigorous tender process. The South African Post Office will, through this platform, provide eRegistered mail services to the country's more than 51 million citizens. Escher's solution, RiposteTrEx™ is a secure, scalable high performing platform for "digital correspondence". The RiposteTrEx™ platform heralds a new phase in the evolution of secure e-services and digital communication.



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

- **POSTCOM'S VOICE OF THE MAIL:** This week, join Jessica Dauer Lowrance, Executive Vice President of the Association for Postal Commerce and Andy Mandell, Founder and Chairman of Data-Mail Inc. on a discussion of how his company uses mail and how postal rates impact his business.
- The Postal Regulatory Commission gave the Postal Service until November 29 to address two issues from its recent order determining that the CPI price increase was consistent with the Postal Act of 2006. The first was whether or not it would implement the Full Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) with its price change on January 26, 2014. The second was the remand for the commercial and nonprofit Standard Mail 5-digit automation flats discounts.
- Mailers attending last week's USPS Leadership Forum for Stakeholders and Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) meetings raised to the USPS the growing issue of IMb and QR Code patent infringement lawsuits and their potential negative impact on innovation and barcoding within the postal industry.
- USPS expands MetroPost market test. Email signature software - why your company should be using it. UPS praises USPS' improvements, but not its rate hikes. Amazon's drone delivery idea faces hurdles. Critics to Congress: Put the brakes on patent bill. Advertising & sponsorship at the NPF. How e-commerce sites use text marketing to boost sales. Senator Baldwin says bulk mailing rate amendment will help printing firms. PostCom and others applaud PRC on Full-Service IMb mandate. PostCom welcomes its newest member.
- Announcement of postal related Federal Register Notices.
- An update from the USPS Office of Inspector General.
- An update on postal news from around the world.
- Postal previews.

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



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CBSNew York: A Brooklyn man whose brother's remains were lost by the U.S. Postal Service received some good news Thursday. As CBS 2's John Slattery reported, the cremated remains of Michael Schecter were located and finally delivered to his brother, Ken. Michael Schecter, an aerospace engineer who lived in Los Angeles, died of cancer last month at age 63. The cremation was handled by the Neptune Society, which said on Nov. 13 it shipped the remains in a box from Valley Village, Calif., to New York City on second-day Priority Mail with the U.S. Postal Service. But the Postal Service lost track of it. The Postal Service told CBS 2: "Thanks to your intervention, we were alerted to a situation that we were able to remedy." After more than three weeks, the family can now make plans for a memorial service.

December 5, 2013

Press Release: Today, a broad coalition of postal customers and suppliers issued the following statement applauding the Postal Regulatory Commission's (PRC) action on the Full-Service Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb) mandate. The coalition's statement reads:

"We are very supportive of the Postal Service's efforts to add intelligence to the mailstream. Increased adoption of Full-Service IMb will help the United States Postal Service (USPS) reduce its costs, improve the accuracy and timeliness of deliveries, and add value to mail. "However, mandating adoption of this technology to qualify for certain postage rates will result in substantial rate hikes for many mailers. The Commission should be commended for requiring the Postal Service to account for this rate hike when evaluating USPS compliance with the price cap. Any other decision would have enabled the Postal Service to impose above-inflation rate increases through changes in mailing rules. The inflation-based price cap is the only protection that mailers have against the Postal Service's monopoly powers and potentially excessive rate increases. "We appreciate that the Commission is working to preserve the integrity of the price cap and prevent unlawful rate hikes."

Coalition members include: MPA-The Association of Magazine Media, Association for Postal Commerce, Direct Marketing Association, Inc., Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, Association of Marketing Service Providers, Major Mailers Association, National Newspaper Association, Printing Industries of America, Quad/Graphics, Inc., R.R. Donnelley and Software and Information Industry Association/American Business Media.

Gifts and Dec: Nickelodeon and the United States Postal Service are launching SpongeBob MailPants, a letter-writing program that will help encourage kids to write, send and receive mail during the holiday season. The campaign, which runs now through Jan. 4, 2014, will include 30 custom-wrapped SpongeBob mailboxes, which will be placed in 13 cities nationwide. Kids can get special postage-paid, customized SpongeBob postcards at more than 25,000 Post Office locations nationwide to send out through the U.S. Postal Service. In addition to the postcards, 30 mailboxes are being wrapped in a custom SpongeBob design in cities, including: Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, NC, Chicago, Dallas, Hollywood, FL, Kirkwood, MO, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Orlando, FL, Philadelphia; and Washington.

Anchorage Daily News: A spokesman for the U.S. Postal Service says the agency has sent a couple clerks from Juneau to help ease staffing problems at the Skagway post office. Sen. Lisa Murkowski on Wednesday asked Skagway residents to report any service disruptions or other concerns with the Skagway office to a special email address.

[!\[\]\(50ba758255c5d7cec2761495a31c7c80_img.jpg\) **Ars Technica**](#): Underscoring the growing sophistication of Internet crime, researchers have documented one of the first known botnets to target point-of-sale (PoS) terminals used by stores and restaurants to process customers' credit and debit card payments. The infections observed by IntelCrawler, by contrast, are much more advanced. They allow attackers to corral large numbers of PoS devices into a single botnet. The interface makes it easy to monitor the activities of infected machines in real time and to issue granular commands. In short, they are to PoS terminals what ZeuS, Citadel, and other banking trojans are to online bank accounts. The code helping to streamline the process has been dubbed StarDust. It's a major revision of Dexter, a previously discovered piece of malware targeting PoS devices that has already been fingered in other real-world payment card swindles.

[!\[\]\(529949c2c3dadbaa4e538e8c643454bc_img.jpg\) **Bloomberg**](#): The U.S. Postal Service plans to test same-day delivery in the New York metropolitan area for the next year, expanding a pilot program it started a year ago in San Francisco to win business from online retailers. The Postal Service disclosed its intention to expand the same-day distribution test to the biggest U.S. metropolitan area in a regulatory filing yesterday.

[!\[\]\(3dfb8d66e81160ad61421a3452093d1b_img.jpg\) **Santa Monica Lookout**](#): US Postal Service officials said Wednesday they are close to striking a deal to sell the 75-year-old building that was once home to Downtown Santa Monica's main post office.

[!\[\]\(99f58673407353e96a019fbca558fd72_img.jpg\) **Business Wire**](#): UPS Capital(R) Corporation, a business unit of UPS(R) which helps customers manage risks and protect finances, today announced a new service, UPS Capital C.O.D. Delayed Deposit. The service is designed to improve how and when companies that accept C.O.D. can deposit their customers' checks. This new service provides a safe, secure, technology-based solution to control the timing of individual check deposits.

[!\[\]\(0f848bbd71cef6b345273b16f905912a_img.jpg\) **Memphis Commercial Appeal**](#): A federal judge in St. Louis has denied a request by FedEx Corp. to reconsider his September ruling permitting a group of former FedEx Ground Package System drivers to seek damages based on the company's misrepresentation that they were independent contractors.

[!\[\]\(339a16584d5da0f0a3ca4e9ec17bf6a1_img.jpg\) **Transport Intelligence**](#): The Communication Workers Union and the newly privatised mail provider stated yesterday (Wednesday 4/12/2013) that they had reached "a negotiators agreement in principle...on pay, legal protections, industrial stability and pensions". However the details of the agreement will only be made public when the trade union presents the proposal to its members in order to gain their approval through a vote. According to press reports the new deal includes a commitment to an increase in pay of over 8% and possibly guarantees on security of employment. Both have previously been issues of dispute between the two sides and the trade union was given in October some limited support by its membership to organise strikes over the issue. This latest agreement must be significant for the future of Royal Mail particularly in terms of its cost base. Whilst the pay increase is substantial, it is likely to be spread over three-years. However the issues around employment may be more important especially if they effect the flexibility of the work force or the ability of Royal Mail to reduce its size.


[!\[\]\(a870788d6ed9b8fd294b7654a8c8526b_img.jpg\) **Financial Times**](#): The BBC's history of sizeable pensions is set for further scrutiny by MPs after the government nominated one of the primary beneficiaries as the next chair of the regulator Ofcom. Dame Patricia Hodgson, currently the deputy chair of the communications watchdog, has been entitled to an annual pension of £119,000 since leaving the BBC in 2000. She would be paid an additional £142,500 a year if confirmed as Ofcom's next chair – a three-day-a-week position. Executive pay has been a key issue for both the BBC and Ofcom in recent years amid a squeeze on budgets and the salaries of junior employees.


[!\[\]\(de95854c7ee024cfadc48187bbb781b2_img.jpg\) **CBS New York**](#): A Brooklyn man whose brother died in California last month is still waiting for his cremated remains to be sent back to our area. He blames the U.S. Postal Service for losing his loved one. The cremation was handled by the Neptune Society, which said on Nov. 13 it shipped the remains in a box from Valley Village, Calif., to New York City, on second day Priority Mail with the U.S. Postal Service. It was supposed to be shipped by plane. A spokeswoman for the Postal Service concurred, saying the package was scanned into a California postal facility. However, that's also where the trail goes cold. The package hasn't turned up at the postal building at John F. Kennedy International Airport. The Postal Service is trying to trace it.


December 4, 2013





PostCom welcomes its newest member: [AccuZip](#) 3216 El Camino Real Atascadero, CA 93422-2500 represented by [Steve Belmonte](#) CEO/President


 [The Milwaukee Business Journal](#): U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) is championing an amendment to the postal reform bill that would curb large increases in postal rates for bulk mailers. Baldwin visited Quad/Graphics in Sussex Wednesday morning and spoke with Milwaukee Business Journal reporters and editors Tuesday to talk about the impact of the amendment on Wisconsin's economy. She outlined how the amendment would give postal customers "pricing predictability" and benefit forestry, paper and printing companies throughout the state like Quad/Graphics.


 [The Scotsman](#): Royal Mail will deliver its maiden half-year results as a listed company on Wednesday as Business Secretary Vince Cable and business minister Michael Fallon face MPs on the Business Select Committee at Westminster.


 [Slicktext](#): To understand why SMS Marketing open rates are high, one needs to understand why SMS open rates are high in the first place, from three perspectives – the sender, the carrier or the mobile company and the receiver. From the sender's perspective sending an SMS is attractive for a number of reasons. That includes all of the following: Asynchronous – the sender can send a message even when the recipient is not available to react to that message at that exact time. Mass – the sender can create and send hundreds or even thousands of messages programmatically and send them in a matter of seconds. Personalizable – since the sender can programmatically generate the sms, they can personalize it too in various ways easily. *[EdNote: And if the recipient has explicitly told his telecom carrier not to pass on commercial SMS, as a marketer, you're flat out of luck.]*

 [Slicktext](#): SMS Marketing Facts Consumers prefer to use coupons they have been provided via SMS Marketing rather than email SMS marketing is more beneficial than email marketing. The average mobile message is read within 3 minutes of time. Over 90% of the population of the world uses cell phones, with an amazing 80% of them carrying their cell phone with them the biggest part of the day. Although you will need a smartphone for MMS marketing, SMS marketing works for any type of phone. Yes, most people have smartphones, but don't leave out those that do not. 78% of all businesses use SMS marketing to communicate with customers as well as other businesses. Around 92% of people communicate personally via text message.


 [Pocketlint](#): As if controlling a quadcopter with a camera from your phone wasn't high-tech enough, or Amazon dropping packages to your door with them didn't amaze, now they're getting smarter. Well, sneakier at least. SkyJack is a hardware and software spec list written by hacker Samy Kamkar for creating drones that fly near other drones, hack them, and recruit them under its control. And with Amazon talking of making deliveries with drones this seems like a worrying time for this to appear. *[EdNote: Har-har, Matey. And if we can't capture our prize, we'll blast ye from the skies. Har-har!]*


 [The New York Times](#): Newsweek, the struggling weekly magazine that ceased print publication last year, plans to turn the presses back on. The magazine expects to begin a 64-page weekly edition in January or February, said Jim Impoco, Newsweek's editor in chief. Mr. Impoco said in an interview that Newsweek would depend more heavily on subscribers than advertisers to pay its bills — and that readers would pay more than in the past.

 [The Zimbabwean](#): Is there still a place for the post in Zimbabwe? The government remains quiet on plans to resuscitate – or not – the country's postal and stamp service, which has virtually collapsed in the face of modern technology.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Community groups and elected officials across the country are protesting as the cash-starved U.S. Postal Service shuts down and sells post offices in a bid to raise money and cut expenses. But few cities are going as far as this one. The Postal Service over the summer began moving ahead with a plan to sell its 1914 Beaux-Arts post office in the heart of Berkeley near the old city hall and a park named after Martin Luther King Jr. The move drew howls from residents worried that the building would turn into condominiums or office space, even drawing dissidents to camp out for days by the columned building entrance. Now, opponents are gaining traction with an unorthodox zoning restriction: that the mustard-colored building must remain open to the public.


 [Postalnews Blog](#): Video: PMG's State of the Postal Service Message -- A message to all employees of the United States Postal Service from Postmaster General Patrick R. Donahoe.


 [Techtree.com](#): Now there are schemes that are being planned to save India Post, India's postal system from extinction. And this may be its best chance ever, as e-commerce site Amazon has rolled out a pilot project with the country's premier postal service to test a cash-on-delivery model, reports the Economic Times. Amazon is clearly trying to penetrate into tier two and tier three cities with a model it already tried in the US (yes, it uses US postal services to deliver on Sundays) — of the 150,000 post offices in India, 89% are located in rural areas. Amazon already offers COD on some of its products — those tagged with "Fulfilled by Amazon" and "Eligible for Cash on Delivery" listing on the product details page.


 [The Guernsey Press](#): A proposed deal has been agreed between the Royal Mail and union leaders on pay, pensions and other issues linked to the privatisation of the postal group. The Communication Workers Union had been threatening industrial action, but held off calling strikes so talks could be held. After "extensive" negotiations, the two sides announced that a proposed agreement had been reached.



[Office of the Inspector General](#): "Spending Trends for Maintaining Postal Service Facilities" Report Number SM-AR-14-002

 [Roll Call](#): House Appropriations Chairman Harold Rogers said Tuesday that he is "somewhat optimistic" that the members of a bipartisan, bicameral budget conference committee will deliver on a broad spending agreement by their Dec. 13 deadline.


 [MNI](#): A State Council meeting chaired by Premier Li Keqiang on Wednesday decided to further expand the value-added-tax reform pilot program to the railway transportation and postal service sectors, effective January 1. According to a State Council statement, the move will reduce the tax burden for transportation businesses as well as logistics costs for the entire economy.

 [The Hill](#): House Democrats of all stripes are lining up against a stopgap spending bill that further entrenches the blunt sequester cuts. GOP leaders could bring a vote as early as next week on a short-term continuing resolution (CR) likely to adopt the \$967 billion sequester-level spending cap urged by many Republicans. But the pushback from Democrats this week has been near universal, with liberals and centrists alike vowing to join party leaders in opposition to any such measure.



[National Postal Forum](#): *Ever thought about advertising or sponsoring at the National Postal Forum?*

The National Postal Forum Program and Exhibit Hall Guide will be combined into one publication that will be distributed on-site to over 4,000 mailing industry professionals. The NPF Program/Exhibit Hall Guide contains detailed information on the keynote address, business sessions, special events, product and contact information for all exhibitors, floor plans and all information needed to take maximum advantage of the NPF Forum. **Registration Bag Insert** Promotion Put your company product and services information in the hands of mailing industry personnel who are attending the Forum to learn about and purchase the latest in mailing industry technology. Approximately 2,000 National Postal Forum attendees receive, on-site, a registration bag filled with the official NPF Program/Exhibit Hall Guide and other Forum information. **Sponsorship Information** Sponsorships are your unique opportunity to reach out to all National Postal Forum attendees. Combine sponsorship recognition with NPF exhibition participation and increase the success of attracting your target audience.

 [Burnham-On-Sea](#): Huntspill and Highbridge Scout Group are gearing up to launch their popular low-cost Christmas card delivery service across the Burnham-On-Sea area. The service has been provided by the group for many years and is one of their key fundraising activities, requiring hours of work by the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and their parents, as well as a group of dedicated helpers. Cards are delivered to Pawlett, East and West Huntspill, Highbridge, Burnham-On-Sea and Berrow at a cost of just 20p per card. "This annual service is not only our main

fundraiser but is also seen as a service for the community. *[EdNote: Don't try this in the U.S., Bucko. You'll get in Dutch with the USPS monopoly police.]*

[Mobile Storm](#): When it comes to online and mobile services, consumers value their privacy. But they also value a good discount. The findings of a new study commissioned by TRUSTe and conducted by Harris Interactive reveal that 9 out of 10 Internet users in the United States are concerned enough about their privacy to take steps to shore up their mobile security or online privacy. But contrary to conventional wisdom, which holds that consumers are so protective of their digital privacy that they are wholly resistant to marketers gaining access to user data for advertising purposes, the facts suggest otherwise. 41% of connected individuals are admittedly willing to allow marketers to gain access to personal data in return for discount shopping opportunities.

[eCommerceBytes](#): The USPS rolled out its Metro Post same-day delivery service in New York on Monday beginning with two customers that have both online and retail presences. The USPS had rolled out its Metro Post early-stage pilot program in San Francisco this time last year with a single retailer - 1-800-FLOWERS.com. At the outset, the Metro Post trial was available only to a select group of large retailers with stores in San Francisco.

[PC World](#): The U.S. House of Representatives needs to take more time to debate and rewrite a bill targeting so-called patent trolls because several provisions would hurt legitimate patent holders, several critics of the bill said Tuesday. The House is scheduled to vote on the Innovation Act as soon as this week, but members of the higher education, venture capital and other industries called on Congress to refine the legislation before passing it.

[The Verge](#): Amazon made headlines Sunday night when it announced it was working on small drones that could someday deliver customers packages in half an hour or less. But the e-commerce giant isn't the only company researching how to harness the potential of small unmanned aircraft: The Verge has learned that the world's largest parcel service, UPS, has been experimenting with its own version of flying parcel carriers. *[EdNote: See what happens when propeller heads get to rule the world. You end up with drones.]*

[TechCrunch](#): Based on my pure anecdotal experience and spend, and this Wired article, I think that Amazon and Bezos should straight up win the award for best PR stunt ever for this drone thing, and I am not alone. Hell, even UPS and FedEx thought the marketing gimmick was lucrative enough to fast follow.

[Save the Post Office](#): "Shining the light on NSAs"

[PR Newswire](#): APC Postal Logistics, a leading provider of international parcel and mail delivery services, has launched a new West Coast facility this month in Bell, CA. The new, fully-operational, sales and warehousing facility is strategically located in a commercial hub near LAX airport. Designed to process and export both parcels and mail, the facility will serve as the nexus of the company's West Coast sales and operations.

[Washington Times](#): How does a venerable operation get something so colossally wrong? I mean, we are talking about missing the proper address by 2,225 miles, from one side of the country to the other. And it's not just some crappy little "wish you were here" postcard mailed out from Detroit that winds up in the Dead Letter Office for seven decades. This was a postage stamp that was to commemorate all of America's other achievements, like liberty, self-governance and a slavish devotion to the rule of law. The post office issued some 5 billion stamps of the phony Lady, according to the Associated Press. What's worse is that even after the post office was exposed by inflamed philatelists, postal officials decided to keep the stamps of the bogus statue. Attorneys for the designer of the Vegas Lady say that the knock-off was chosen because she was more "fresh-faced," "sultry" and "sexier."

[The Bergen Record](#): Now that we're getting deeper into the holiday shopping season, we checked in with Amazon and the USPS to see how many packages have been delivered the past few Sundays, and how many might be delivered from now until Christmas — three Sundays away. But no one was willing to give numbers.


[Fierce Government](#): Budget constraints caused the Postal Service to leave some of its facilities in disrepair, a Nov. 27 USPS inspector general report says. Between fiscal 2009 and 2012 financial challenges led to a \$382


million decrease in the Postal Service building repair budget. By not completing necessary repairs, the Postal Service exposes itself to increased costs in future years, the report says.


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PostCom Members! The latest issue of [PostCom's Postal Executives Summary](#), December, 2013 Volume 2 Issue 37 has been posted on this site. Please feel free to share it with others within your company.

 [Wall Street Journal](#): Amazon.com Inc. wants to deliver packages by unmanned flying vehicles it calls octocopters. But the plan faces some obvious headwinds. Besides logistical challenges of managing fleets of drones, legal experts point to safety risks and issues such as whether people on the ground might take umbrage to Amazon's aircraft flying over their property. Chief Executive Jeff Bezos revealed the plan in a televised interview Sunday on "60 Minutes," noting that it needs Federal Aviation Administration approval and will take at least four years of technical work. He said he hoped to develop the vehicles to make deliveries to doorsteps within a 10-mile radius of a warehouse about 30 minutes after an order is placed. Bezos pointed to the drones' advantages in urban spaces where they could presumably eliminate some delivery trucks. While acknowledging challenges ahead, he also said expressed confidence. "It will work and it will happen," Bezos said.

 [AdWeek](#): This year, the Grinch may go postal with an extraordinary rate increase. The U.S. Postal Regulatory Commission is expected to decide whether to allow the U.S. Postal Service to raise rates above the annual inflation rate increase on Dec. 22, on the eve of the holidays. The proposed exigent increase would raise postal rates three times the rate of inflation for magazines, newspapers and other mail-dependent media beginning Jan. 26, adding hundreds of millions in costs. It could also depress mail volume, which has already declined in the last seven years due to increases in digital distribution for correspondence, advertising, billing and payments.

 [Business Day](#): Delay by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to mandate financial institutions to commence remittance of the N50 – stamp on all bank receipts, in the form of bank tellers, and electronic transfers with values of N1, 000 and above, is hindering about N2 trillion in postal revenues to government. In January, the Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST), in strategic partnership with the School of Banking Honours (SBH) had appointed three banks to drive this initiative as mandated by the Stamp Duty Act 2004 (amended in 2010) and NIPOST Act 2004.


 [Compass Cayman](#): While Amazon is flirting with standards now met only by the most reckless of pizza delivery drivers, Cayman's postal service continues with its long "lead times." To wit: In order to ensure that packages will arrive in many countries before Christmas — three weeks hence — people have to mail their packages today. For the sake of comparison, a period of three weeks was long enough for a letter sent in 1860 from the East Coast of the U.S. to arrive in California via the legendary Pony Express.



[Dead Tree Edition](#): United Parcel Service recently praised "impressive efforts by the Postal Service to reduce costs and improve productivity" but criticized USPS's request for emergency rate hikes. The Postal Service's request for "exigent" rate increases on "Market-Dominant" mail is "an unsustainable business model which can only lead to continued postal deficits and more requests to exceed the rate cap," UPS wrote in a filing last week with the Postal Regulatory Commission. Instead, USPS's "Competitive" products should bear a larger share of the agency's institutional costs, according to UPS, which is a major competitor, customer, and vendor of the Postal Service.



[Business First](#): Employees at United Parcel Service Inc. are expecting a big week this week thanks to the holiday shopping rush. Many retail websites were holding sales over the Thanksgiving weekend, and that trend continued with Cyber Monday, when some of the biggest online price breaks are expected. Those sales added up to big business for UPS, which bases its UPS Airlines division in Louisville and operates its largest air sorting hub, Worldport, here. The company expects to make 129 million deliveries this week, Mike Mangeot, manager of public relations for Louisville-based UPS Airlines, said in an e-mail. About 30 million pickups from customers are expected around the world today.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): Portugal's government has set the initial public offering price of its 493-year-old postal service Correios de Portugal SA at 5.52 euros (\$7.49) a share to raise EUR580 million from the sale.

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[Office of the Inspector General: Semiannual Report to Congress April 1 — September 30, 2013](#)

 [Washington Post](#): The U.S. Postal Service's inspector general is seeking public opinion about the recently released Harry Potter stamps as a test of how Americans feel about a new commercial direction for postage. Inspector General David Williams is asking stamp fans to weigh in on its blog and wondering whether the fictional British boy wizard created by author J.K. Rowling will "cast a spell" on young collectors as the Postal Service hopes.

 [Kashmir Times](#): In an endeavour to make the delivery of parcels faster and more convenient enabling real time (online) tracking of parcels, the Department of Posts today launched Express Parcel Service in the select cities of country





[At the Postal Regulatory Commission](#): PRC hearing transcripts.


- http://www.prc.gov/Docs/88/88331/R2013-11_Volume1.pdf
- http://www.prc.gov/Docs/88/88333/R2013-11_Volume2.pdf


Deutsche Post DHL


[Wall Street Journal](#): Federal regulators Monday approved Deutsche Post AG's (DPW.XE) request to raise postal rates next year, as the company tries to offset declining mail volumes and higher labor costs. The German mailing and logistics group will raise the price of stamps for regularly sized domestic letters, to EUR0.60 (\$0.82) from EUR0.58, in addition to increasing fees for select mail forwarding services, packages and international mail.


 [Postalnews Blog](#): You may remember that in 2011 the US Postal Service issued a Statue of Liberty "forever" stamp. You may also recall that shortly thereafter, it was revealed by Linn's Stamp News that the statue pictured on the stamp wasn't the famous one in New York Harbor, but rather, a replica that stands outside a casino in Las Vegas. In a memorable statement, the USPS admitted that while there may have been mistakes in selecting and describing the stamp design, "We still love the stamp design and would have selected this photograph anyway". Those words may come back to haunt the agency, because the sculptor of the Las Vegas statue is now suing the USPS for copyright infringement. [*EdNote: Seems as if the USPS has been suffering a string of stamp faux pas.*]


 [Yahoo! Small Business Advisor](#): The number of emails sent from mobile devices has significantly increased over the last 5 years. The biggest problem businesses will discover is that their email signature will not be appended to mobile emails. If you chose an email signature software which is server-based, every email which passes through the server will include the appropriate branding, including mobile emails. Because millions of emails are sent everyday, it is very important to include a legal disclaimer, another thing that email signature software allows you to automatically include on every email.


 [Wall Street Journal](#): In their search for new ad revenue, many news outlets have embraced "sponsored content"—advertisements that are meant to blend in with regular editorial content. Now regulators are taking a look at the practice.


 [New York Times](#): Even as the universe of printed matter continues to shrivel, the book — or at least some of its best-known features — is showing remarkable staying power online. The idea is apparently embedded so deeply in the collective unconsciousness that no one can bear to leave it behind.

 [Waikato Times](#): The Waikato Times will be delivered to country subscribers by their postie from tomorrow as the newspaper and NZ Post work together to ensure the future of rural delivery services. The switch to six day a week delivery by NZ Post's rural contractors has been welcomed by NZ Post and Federated Farmers. The state-owned enterprise's Hamilton-based head of provincial contract management Stuart Kane said winning the contract to deliver the Times to rural letter boxes in the greater Waikato was "really positive" for NZ Post. "Rural delivery services, particularly in the Waikato, face some pretty challenging issues. It couldn't have come at a better time - it's a really important development for both contractors and customers. "This will help secure the delivery service for Rural Post and the Waikato Times . . . it will help future-proof the service for both."


 [The Courier](#): Ballarat MP Catherine King has called on the federal government to ensure Australia Post maintains next day mail delivery in Ballarat. Speaking in parliament yesterday, Ms King said Australia Post was planning to cut next day delivery in regional centres which was leading to postal delays in Ballarat. She said smaller towns in her electorate had been reporting waits of between six and seven days to receive mail.

 [USA Today](#): Amazon.com is testing delivering packages using drones, CEO Jeff Bezos said on the CBS TV news show 60 Minutes Sunday. The idea would be to deliver packages as quickly as possible using the small, unmanned aircraft, through a service the company is calling Prime Air, the CEO said.


 [Helsinki Times](#): Drastic changes in the postal sector are projected to result in a decrease of 7,000 jobs. Postages for letters will increase considerably at the turn of the year, postal and logistics services provider Itella announced on Thursday. The postage for a first-class letter is to increase from 0.85 to 1.0 euro and the postage for a second-class letter from 0.75 to 0.90 euro. The price of second-class postage stamps will thereby increase by 20 per cent. The prices charged from business customers will similarly increase. Magazine delivery charges, for example, are to increase by 10 per cent. The price increments will be reviewed by the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (FICORA), which monitors the availability of statutory postal services.


 [Post & Parcel](#): The US Postal Service has shelved plans to require business mailers to use its full service Intelligent Mail barcode in order to claim discounts for machine-sortable mailings. The Postal Service had wanted to bring in the requirement for use of the barcode to improve the tracking capabilities of business mail services and the efficiency of the postal network. The Postal Regulatory Committee said the barcode requirement would have constituted an extra cost for businesses, and therefore was effectively an extra price increase for using postal services, which should be limited within the same inflation-based annual price cap.

In complying with the ruling by the Postal Regulatory Commission, USPS accused the Commission of overstepping its authority and "improperly" involving itself in postal operations under US postal regulations. The Postal Service told regulators: "The intent of the Congress in passing the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act was to afford the Postal Service true pricing flexibility, unencumbered by the Commission's own vestigial views on pricing. The Commission's findings on the Full-Service IMb issue ignore that Congressional intent, inappropriately expand the scope of the price cap, and erode whatever pricing flexibility the Postal Service purportedly enjoys." In a message to customers, USPS went further in stating its disagreement with the regulators' "ill-conceived" decision.

 [Miami Herald](#): House Majority Leader Eric Cantor is not anticipating another partial government shutdown next year, he told the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

December 1, 2013

 [The Hill](#): The mailing industry is stepping up their efforts to defeat a rate increase proposal from the cash-strapped U.S. Postal Service, pressing the agency's regulator this week to rule against the plan. USPS said in September that it was reluctantly seeking to increase the price of stamps more quickly than the rate of inflation, to help it deal with the long-lasting impact of the most recent recession. But a dozen organizations that represent heavy users of the mail – including nonprofits, magazines, newspapers, catalogers and direct mailers – say the Postal Service's rationale for the rate increase is deeply flawed.

 [Reuters](#): The Fed, still struggling to boost the U.S. recovery from the Great Recession, remains intent on assuring investors that easy monetary policy is here for the long haul. Households and businesses, in the Fed's view, need low borrowing costs to get spending and investment back on a self-sustaining path.