



Association For Postal Commerce

NEWS ARCHIVES

MAY 2017

National News

May 30, 2017

NewsChannel20: Lawmakers say a loophole makes it easier for foreign distributors to ship deadly, illegal drugs into the United States directly through the U.S. Postal Service. It is an international fight for the DEA considering carfentanil and fentanyl are typically manufactured overseas and shipped into the U.S. The drugs get mixed in with the millions of foreign packages that show up here every day, and get screened by U.S Customs and Border Protection. The DEA says flagging dope isn't impossible because it stinks and often takes up a decent amount of space. But these synthetic drugs come in stealth.

May 27, 2017

PBS: From 2014 to 2015, deaths from synthetic opioids rose by [72 percent](#), fueling the [more than 33,000](#) opioid overdose deaths. Almost every week we hear of communities being ravaged by new, increasingly potent and exotic synthetic drugs. Reports indicate that [China](#) is the number one supplier of synthetic opioids, so addressing the shipment of these drugs into the U.S. is crucial. Yet a loophole in the global postal system allows bad actors overseas to avoid scrutiny and mail their drugs directly to Americans' doorsteps with minimal detection from law enforcement. As the opioid epidemic ravages communities across America, our lawmakers have a responsibility to do all they can to keep Americans safe. As officials gather for the Senate hearing Thursday to discuss how to shut down this pipeline of drugs into our country, here are three things to watch for. In these politically polarizing times, it's increasingly rare for people across all parties to unite on an issue. But with every state reeling from the opioid epidemic, there is no time for partisan bickering. Fortunately, there is bipartisan support for closing the global postal loophole, which is a commonsense step to disrupt the flow of these drugs into the U.S.

May 26, 2017

FoxNews: President Donald Trump's proposed budget would let the U.S. Postal Service cut back on delivery days, a move that helps the unprofitable agency save money while putting it at odds with longstanding congressional demands. The White House budget released last week would let the quasigovernmental agency scale back delivery frequency "where there is a business case for doing so." It is one of several solutions proposed to address the financial struggles at the USPS. The White House is also pushing for changes to how rates are set and for more efficient delivery options than going door to door, like dropping off letters at "cluster boxes" for residents of a neighborhood or property development. It estimates the overhauls could improve the USPS's financial picture by \$47 billion over the next decade. Most of the White House's changes in the budget document fit with congressional postal overhaul legislation that passed the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee with bipartisan support. The legislation also would change how the agency calculates pension costs and liabilities and would automatically enroll USPS retirees in Medicare programs.

Cleveland: Federal postal and State Department officials pushed back Thursday on a congressional proposal sponsored by Ohio U.S. Sen. Rob Portman to require advanced electronic tracking of all packages and large envelopes mailed to the United States. Portman and others in Congress say would help law enforcement stop deadly opiates from reaching dealers and users in a drug epidemic. Only 40 percent to 50 percent of foreign countries now provide that kind of advanced data, the U.S. Postal Service says. A top Postal Service official agreed that requiring electronic tracking, as Portman and others want, would "require the suppression of inbound mail to the United States." The Postal Service, said Robert Cintron, the service's vice president for network operations, "would be compelled to refuse to accept mail from many countries. The blocking of inbound mail destined for the United States could also lead other countries to block outbound mail originating in the United States."

WashingtonPost: In the fiscal 2018 budget plan the Trump administration released this week, he reopened the divisive issue of cutting Saturday mail service. After a long and contentious effort, Republicans and Democrats, postal officials, postal unions and mass mailers managed to reach a compromise on postal reform with Saturday service intact. But deep, very deep, in the [budget's appendix](#) is a line that says that "the budget proposes operational reforms to reduce costs and improve revenue, including ... authority to reduce mail delivery frequency where there is a business case for doing so." It could be easily overlooked, coming on page 1,207 of the 1,284-page document. But it has the potential to tear the scab off a wound that has been healing for more than a year.

PostalNews: From the National Association of Letter Carriers: The \$4.094 trillion request, titled "A New Foundation for American Greatness," proposes job-killing delivery service cuts at the U.S. Postal Service and calls for massive federal spending reductions over 10 years, including major cuts to federal and postal employee pension benefits. The controversial budget, which is not binding on Congress and serves only as a declaration of the administration's spending priorities, was immediately declared "dead on arrival" by leaders of both parties. With regard to the Postal Service, the budget calls for \$46 billion in vaguely defined cuts and revenue changes over a decade. It proposes reducing the frequency of delivery (presumably eliminating Saturday delivery) and scaling back door delivery. Rather than resolving the pre-funding burden, the budget seems to propose giving the Postal Service greater freedom to raise

rates to cover future retiree health care costs. As a result, the administration's postal proposals are certain to be opposed by all of the Postal Service's major stakeholders, unions and mailers alike.

PostalNews: From the National Association of Postal Supervisors: The Fiscal Year 2018 budget sent to Congress by President Trump earlier this week proposes legislative changes that would impose dramatic cuts in federal retirement benefits for current and future retirees and potentially erode the current size of postal employee paychecks. It also would provide a modest set of reforms to the Postal Service, but rely chiefly on employee compensation cuts to restore financial solvency. The Trump budget proposes a series of "reforms" for the Postal Service, many that coincide with the key elements of H.R. 756, the foremost postal reform measure pending in Congress, but without reliance on the integration of Medicare health benefits to achieve savings. Instead, the Trump budget seeks savings through proposed service reductions and greater flexibility in USPS rate-setting authority.

May 25, 2017

WashingtonTimes: Senators from both parties said Thursday they're growing impatient with foreign postal services that do not provide electronic data to U.S. inspectors hoping to intercept packages that contain highly dangerous opioids. International agreements make it difficult to bar the flow of packages from countries that don't provide advanced data on what's in the parcels, and refusing to accept their packages could mean they won't accept ours, State Department officials testified Thursday. The inspector general for the U.S. Postal Service also said mail officials could do better on the home front, citing instances in which postal employees failed to present packages for screening to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection at processing centers. Gregory Thome, a director at the State Department, said the government is trying to help postal services around the world provide the data, since refusing to accept packages without the data could flout agreements with the Universal Postal Union to accept international mail. Yet many post offices in the developing world do not have internet connectivity or even reliable sources of electricity, making it difficult to get electronic data operations off the ground.

Benzinga: The Postal Reform Act of 2017, a bipartisan attempt to overhaul the perennially ailing U.S. Postal Service, appears headed for the dead letter office amid the chaos in Congress. Even though the U.S. House Oversight and Government Reform Committee approved the sweeping legislation on March 16, Congress likely will tackle health care, tax reform, the debt ceiling and other priorities at the expense of postal reform, said Height Securities analyst Shrey Verma. He wrote that the bill, which is supported by the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO, was also crippled by the abrupt announcement last week of its lead sponsor and the committee's chairman, U.S. Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) that he was leaving Congress to return to the private sector.

DMNNews: Direct mail used to be the way marketers looked for customers. But the advent of digital has empowered marketers to track every mouse click and find new ways to drive prospect down the funnel, from first look to final sale. Still, none of this has fully displaced paper-based marketing — paper continues to linger. Yes, direct mail has declined; however, it's been ambling down a gentle slope rather than falling off a cliff. According to the Data and Marketing Association (DMA), it's been slipping by 1.9% annually since 2005. The United States Postal Service (USPS) continues to move mountains of paper, too. There were 10.6 million catalogs mailed in 2015, according to the DMA, and 2.5 billion coupons were redeemed that same year.

RetailDive: Supply chains and carriers have business-to-business delivery down to a science, but the rise in trends like e-commerce, crowdsourcing apps and same-day delivery has upended the last-mile delivery segment. If the last mile is ripe for disruption, supply chains must begin to perfect those fulfillment processes to find new and cost-efficient ways to deliver products to customers. Of course, delivering to residential customers is inefficient and more expensive than delivering to companies. Carriers are bringing single packages to low density areas, and often the resident isn't home.

WashingtonPost: Trump's plan, released Tuesday, leaves federal employees livid, despite its 1.9 percent pay raise. As [The Washington Post first reported](#), the Trump budget vigorously targets federal retirement. It's unlikely the budget will become law as written, however, and some Republicans on Capitol Hill don't even like it.

Linns: President Donald J. Trump has entered the debate over the future of the United States Postal Service, endorsing some cost-cutting ideas that even the postmaster general has abandoned. The president's long-awaited ideas were contained on page 1207 of an annex to Trump's proposed fiscal 2018 federal budget, released May 23. That's where the president urged Congress to give the U.S. Postal Service "authority to reduce mail delivery frequency where there is a business case for doing so." Trump also urged Congress to endorse another controversial cost-saving idea — "Shifting to centralized and curbside delivery where appropriate." The administration also urged "enhancing Postal Service governance to ensure sound financial management," and "requiring the future rate structure for the Postal Service to provide enough flexibility to ensure both the stability of postal operations and the ability of the postal service to meet its statutory obligations for retiree health and pension costs."

May 24, 2017

GovExec: President Trump proposed overhauling the U.S. Postal Service in his fiscal 2018 budget released Tuesday, calling for a slew of changes that would save the agency \$46 billion over 10 years. While lawmakers have sought to maintain delivery standards, however, Trump would allow USPS to "reduce mail delivery frequency where there is a business case for doing so." That proposal would likely face pushback in Congress, especially from lawmakers representing rural areas, and even postal management has dropped its proposal to eliminate mail delivery on Saturdays. The White House suggested USPS bring its retirement benefits in line with the same changes [proposed](#) for the rest of the federal workforce, which would save the agency \$33 billion over the next decade. The Postal Service would also save \$1 billion under Trump's plan by increasing employees' contributions toward their health and life insurance.

May 23, 2017

einnews: Under the proposal, a patented service called Postal Notice would work in tandem with the USPS' Informed Delivery system to tell recipients the moment mail has arrived in their mailbox. The automated notification service would enable recipients to know when critical mail arrives such as Social Security checks, mail-in ballots and other legal documents. It also could provide public service messages, reminders to vote, weather alerts and other time critical data. The Postal Notice system, a notification system developed over a two year period, uses existing technology and is totally invisible to letter carriers. The result would be better service to Postal Service customers without an increase in cost for equipment and labor. The addition of Postal Notice to the USPS' customer service mix could generate almost three quarters of a billion dollars annually. The revenue would be generated by a minimum monthly subscription, and through the addition of advertising. Postal Notice could also contain public service messages, and internet links to the delivery notification email.

May 22, 2017

PostalNews: The Washington Post is reporting that Donald Trump's proposed budget, due to be unveiled on Tuesday, would cut federal workers' retirement benefits. The Post story by Joe Davidson, lists the following changes to federal retirement benefits:

- Increase Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) contributions from workers by 1 percentage point each year until they equal the government's contribution. This would take five to six years and would result in increased out-of-pocket payments of about 6 percent over that period. Out-of-pocket payments by federal law enforcement officers would increase by the same amount, but would not equal the greater contributions from law enforcement agencies.
 - Base future retirement benefits on the average of the high five years of salary instead of the current high three
 - Eliminate cost of living adjustments (COLA) for current and future FERS employees
 - Cut the COLA for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees by 0.5 percent from what the formula would allow
 - Eliminate supplement payments for FERS employees who retire beginning in 2018. The supplement approximates the value of Social Security benefits for those who retire before age 62.
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May 19, 2017

TheHill: The U.S. Postal Service has just reached the [halfway point for its 2017 fiscal year](#) and the latest results only look like more bad news for the struggling agency – another loss of \$562 million. For those counting, USPS has dealt with multi-billion dollar losses for 10 years running. Interestingly, despite its wayward financial path, Wall Street has grown bullish on the Postal Service's outlook. The answer is the work of Congress. They are looking to give the USPS a leg up through misnamed legislation working its way through Congress, known as the [Postal Service Reform Act of 2017](#). While the analysts do have some hesitation about USPS' financial position, this bill has quickly allayed many major qualms based on the drastic measures that policymakers seem prepared to take.

FederalNewsRadio: The Postal Regulatory Commission's ruling later this year could give USPS some of the pricing flexibility on postal products that Postmaster General Brennan has repeatedly called for as part of a larger campaign to reform the Postal Service's financial future. The current cost of a first-class stamp is 49 cents. The PRC in April 2016 repealed a 2 cent exigent postal rate increase that had been in place since the 2008 recession, bringing the price of a stamp down to 47 cents, but had reversed that decision this January. The PRC regularly reviews postal rates to keep pace with inflation. The PRC is reviewing the postage rate-setting system due to a mandate in a 2006 postal reform law, and must determine whether the current system meets nine viability criteria listed in the law.

PostalNews: The USPS Office of Inspector General has issued a report criticizing the postal service's use of social media to interact with customers: First, the Postal Service did not respond to all actionable customer inquiries. Second, when the Postal Service did respond, it did not do so in a timely manner — taking 16 hours on average to respond to customers' initial posts. Only 43 percent of responses occurred within the Postal Service's 6 hour target. The OIG recommended management develop immediate strategies to address resources and staffing shortfalls to respond to all actionable customer inquiries posted on Postal Service hosted social media platforms within the Postal Service's six-hour target; and enhance the coordination between the SMOC and customer care program.

May 18, 2017

Politico: Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) is expected to announce Thursday that he is resigning before the end of this congressional term, according to three sources familiar with his plans. Chaffetz, 50, is chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, the top investigative body in the chamber. He recently subpoenaed James Comey's memos, and invited the fired FBI director to testify next week before his panel. Chaffetz told POLITICO last month he had begun exploring employment outside Congress. Several sources in the Capitol say Chaffetz has told his colleagues he will appear on Fox News.

May 16, 2017

PostalNews: UPS on Monday said it has integrated its customer-facing chatbot with UPS My Choice®, allowing customers to obtain information about their incoming packages and recent deliveries without providing a tracking number. UPS is the first U.S. package delivery company to offer a chatbot experience specifically designed for authenticated users. The chatbot enables a customer to log in to their UPS My Choice Account. It then can provide customized information, including package location and delivery detail – all without a tracking number. For now, the updated chatbot focuses on providing information about incoming packages. But UPS plans to add even more sophisticated UPS My Choice functionality to its chatbot in the near future. In the next planned iteration, members will be able to sign up for notifications via Facebook Messenger and Skype. They also will be able to manage the delivery time and location of incoming packages through this interface.

Linns: When Postmaster General Megan J. Brennan addressed the May 10 meeting of the United States Postal Service's "Temporary Emergency Committee," she made an open appeal to President Donald J. Trump. Specifically, she asked Trump to nominate some people for the Postal Service's board of governors. There hasn't been anyone on the board since December 2016, when the term of the last presidential nominee, James Bilbray of Nevada, expired. Under current law, there are supposed to be nine individuals who serve on the board of governors, overseeing the USPS and serving seven-year terms. A House bill would cut the number of governors to five, but as Brennan noted, there has not been any board nominee approved by the Senate for seven years.

Association Trends: According to Steve Kearney, Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers, for those nonprofit mailers working on next year's budgets, the outlook for postage rates is unclear at best. Here are three main factors you need to take into account. **1. The regular CPI-capped annual increase.** We expect next year's Consumer Price Index cap to be about 2 percent, double last year's. But you cannot count on any specific type of mail being at or even near the cap. The rate announcement will probably come just before mid-October for a late January implementation. **2. Congressional pile-on possibility.** The House Oversight Committee reintroduced a bill this year that will permanently add 2.15 percent to all postage rates. That's a \$30 billion net present value cost to mailers. It would be the first congressional setting of postal rates since 1968. **3. Postal Regulatory Commission rate review.** The PRC 10-year review of the pricing regulatory system set up in 2006 is a huge wildcard for 2018 and beyond. The PRC says it will issue a proposed rule-making this fall and might complete it in spring 2018.

Printing Impressions: PostNet International Franchise Corp. ("PostNet"), a Lakewood, Colo.-based design, printing and shipping franchise with 660 locations in nine countries, has been purchased by MBE Worldwide, one of the largest third-party logistics, printing and communication service retail networks in the world with 1,600 locations globally. Financial terms of the transaction were not announced. The acquisition of PostNet gives Mail Boxes Etc. a strong presence in the U.S., and several other countries where the PostNet brand is well established and will continue to grow. Combined, the two companies will have an extensive reach of nearly 2,300 locations in 33 countries. MBE Worldwide acquired the worldwide Mail Boxes Etc. business — except for the U.S. and Canada locations, which remain under MBE Inc. — in May 2009 from UPS Inc. and its wholly-owned subsidiary, MBE Inc.

myAJC: According to Fredric Rolando, President of the National Association of Letter Carriers, the Postal Service generally operates in the black. USPS revenue exceeded operating expenses by \$610 million in Fiscal Year 2016, for example, bringing its total operating profit the past three years to \$3.7 billion. This is all earned revenue, from selling stamps and other products and services; by law USPS doesn't get a dime of taxpayer money. As the economy gradually improves from the worst recession in 80 years, letter revenue is stabilizing. And as the Internet drives online shopping, package revenue is rising sharply (up 16 percent in 2016), auguring well for the future. There is red ink, but it stems from congressional politics. In 2006, a lame-duck Congress mandated that the Postal Service pre-fund future retiree health benefits. That \$5.8 billion annual charge not only accounts for the "red ink," it disguises the actual profits postal operations have been generating for years. Addressing this elephant in the room — pre-funding — is imperative given the Postal Service's role in so many facets of American life.

GovExec: More than 200,000 U.S. Postal Service employees would be in line for a raise but face a slight decrease in health benefits under a recently unveiled tentative labor contract. The National Association of Letter Carriers, which represents 213,000 city mailmen and women across the country, reached the agreement with USPS management to avoid binding arbitration. NALC members will vote in the coming months on whether to formally ratify the contract, though the union's executive council has unanimously recommended its members do so. The agreement would actually begin retroactively to May 21, 2016, and continue through Sept. 20, 2019.

Post&Parcel: Nominations for the Postal and Parcel Technology International Awards 2017 have opened. The awards are designed to recognize and reward all the hard work currently taking place in the post and parcel industry. The awards cover various areas of the industry and nominations can be put forward by anyone working in the sector. The categories are: Sorting Center Innovation of the Year, Digital Innovation of the Year, Environmental Achievement of the Year, Delivery Innovation of the Year, New Business Diversification of the Year, Supplier of the Year and Service Provider of the Year. For more information on each category, [click here](#).

May 15, 2017

PostalNews: The National Association of Letter Carriers and the U.S. Postal Service have reached tentative agreement on a national labor contract, covering 213,000 active city letter carriers across America. The tentative agreement includes provisions rewarding all letter carriers for their contributions to the Postal Service's extraordinary comeback following the Great Recession; narrowing the compensation gap between city carrier assistants (CCAs) and career letter carriers; creating a formal mechanism to address the problems that have undermined the workplace culture of the Postal Service for much of its history; and preserving the core achievements of our bargaining history, including regular general wage increases and cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), protections against outsourcing and layoffs, as well as other contractual elements that define our standard of living.

OneNewsNow: The U.S. Postal Service continues to report big losses, leading experts to continue saying it's time for a change. The postal service has been losing money for ten years," notes Chris Edwards, director of tax policy studies at the [Cato Institute](#). "The volume of mail has plunged over the last decade." Edwards says any other business that is losing demand and losing customers wouldn't raise its prices. "They would reduce their prices to try to get customers back," he adds. "So here the government monopoly postal service is doing the exact opposite of what private sector companies would do, which is to increase their efficiency and reduce prices to try to win customers back."

May 12, 2017

BLS: The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) increased 0.2 percent in April on a seasonally adjusted basis, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Over the last 12 months, the all items index rose 2.2 percent before seasonal adjustment. Increases in indexes for shelter, energy, tobacco, and food all contributed to the monthly increase in the all items

index. While a smaller increase than the 2.4 percent rise for the 12 months ending March, this is still a larger rise than the 1.7 percent average annual increase over the past 10 years.

PostalNews: According to National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando, today's financial report shows the underlying business strength of the U.S. Postal Service while also indicating the need to address external matters beyond USPS' control. That's impressive for a government entity that earns its revenue and gets no taxpayer money while enjoying strong public and political support. It shows the importance of strengthening the unparalleled postal network—the centerpiece of a \$1.3 trillion national mailing industry that provides 7 million private-sector American jobs. At the same time, two key matters—the pre-funding of future retiree health benefits and the rollback in stamp prices—need to be addressed.

May 11, 2017

InsideLouisville: Former U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge is urging Congress to close a gaping hole in the nation's defenses that allows illicit, lethal drugs to be shipped from overseas into U.S. communities essentially without inspection. Legislation to address the issue has been introduced in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House. The [House bill](#) has gained bipartisan support and has 105 co-sponsors. David Parteneimer, a spokesman for the USPS, would not say whether the service supports the legislation, but told Insider via email that the agency “shares the goal of those calling for expanding efforts to keep illicit drugs and other dangerous materials out of the hands of the American public and maintaining the safety of our nation's mail system.” Parteneimer said the service already “receives data on a substantial amount of inbound shipments” before the packages arrive in the U.S., which helps law enforcement agencies identify and intercept packages with contraband. “The Postal Service is committed to increasing the amount of mail for which it receives this crucial data,” he said. “New regulations that took effect in January 2017 that govern the exchange of international mail will enhance our ability to require foreign posts to send electronic data.”

FederalNewsRadio: Among the hundreds of political executives that the Trump administration must nominate to fill out the ranks of federal agencies, the U.S. Postal Service is calling upon the White House to submit names for its management board. The U.S. Postal Service currently has zero independently appointed governors on its board, and hasn't had a new governor sworn in over seven years, Postmaster General Megan Brennan told reporters Wednesday. Without those governors at the helm, USPS cannot legally make several long-term decisions, like selecting a new postmaster general, introducing new postal products or revamping its business strategies.

May 10, 2017

WireUpdate: Regional overnight parcel delivery company Postal Express (PEX) has been acquired by GLS and has become a sister company to GSO, based in Pleasanton, CA. By combining their resources, network infrastructure and geography, GSO and Postal Express will be able to provide Priority Overnight, Ground and Freight delivery throughout the West Coast starting May 15, 2017. This acquisition will enable both GSO and Postal Express to significantly reduce transit times throughout the West Coast by integrating operations and service areas.

May 9, 2017

LexingtonInstitute: Change is frequently a difficult experience for many people, no matter how necessary or worthwhile they believe it to be. This is certainly proving to be the case with the future of the U.S. Postal Service, one of our most visible, and treasured, American government institutions. The need for change is well documented and easily recognized. The Postal Service announced a \$5 billion operating deficit last year, raising its total, cumulative losses to over \$62 billion since 2007. This vast debt burden amounts to roughly \$250 for every American adult, with no solution in sight. Absent the right details, granting the Postal Service the increased flexibility for pricing its leaders have sought from Congress could escalate these losses. It is also necessary to consider that the Postal Service has largely ignored the requirement Congress placed in federal law that it fund looming healthcare benefits for its retirees. The Government Accountability Office last year estimated the agency's total liability for retiree health benefits to be \$105.2 billion, more than half of which it determined to be unfunded.

Philly.com: In February, members of Congress from both parties introduced the Synthetics Trafficking and Overdose Prevention (STOP) Act, which would require vital security data on all packages shipped by mail from abroad. It has support from across the political spectrum and in our state. Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R.), Ryan Costello (R.), Lloyd Smucker (R.), and Brendan Boyle (D.) are co-sponsors of the bill in the U.S. House, while Pennsylvania Auditor General Eugene DePasquale (D.) has announced his support of the bill. As a candidate, President Trump promised to close the loophole. And Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly agreed in a recent Senate hearing that the STOP Act would help law enforcement keep dangerous drugs out. There is no one solution to the opioid crisis. But to make any real impact, our elected officials must focus not only on treatment and prevention, but also on cutting the deadliest drugs off at their source. Closing the global postal loophole is a bipartisan, commonsense place to start.

FedWeek: Two senators active in oversight of the U.S. Postal Service have asked the GAO to review the accuracy of postal performance reports, including “whether there are formal or informal incentives or directives that may potentially cause postal employees to inaccurately collect or record mail performance data,” what controls are in place to detect possible misreporting and what actions USPS takes if it occurs. Sens. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo., the ranking Democrat on the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and Heidi Heitkamp, D-N.D., said they have received numerous reports of mail delayed to their constituents that call into question the Postal Service's performance statistics.

KMBZ: Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-MO) and Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) are stepping up to address concerns about the accuracy of delivery data from the USPS. Sen. McCaskill released a statement saying they are calling for answers on what the USPS is doing to improve mail delivery throughout the country, especially rural communities. McCaskill also indicated the postal service needs to ensure its delivery data accurately reflect customers' experiences. Too many customers are reporting unreasonable delays, with mail

taking as much as a week longer than its supposed to take, Sen. McCaskill said. Both Senators are requesting a report from the Government Accountability Office that would investigate how USPS holds its employees accountable for accurately scanning the mail at appropriate points in the delivery system. The GAO would also be asked to determine whether there are informal or formal practices that result in employee misconduct.

KHON2: More than 175,000 mail carriers across the nation will lead the U.S. Postal Service's effort to "Stamp Out Hunger" by collecting food donations in cities and towns across the country on Saturday, May 13, in the 25th annual National Association of Letter Carriers' Food Drive. The drive is the nation's largest one-day effort to combat hunger. More than 80 million pounds of food were collected nationwide last year; more than 1.5 billion pounds of food has been collected during the campaign's first 24 years.

May 8, 2017

PRNews: Postal Notice is a patented system developed by Phoenix inventor Anthem Pleasant. Subscribers to Postal Notice can receive an email, text, or recorded phone call when a letter carrier has arrived at the subscriber's mailbox. Pleasant has proposed the Postal Notice system to USPS headquarters as a cost effective subscription service to all postal customers. Postal Notice works in conjunction with the USPS' Informed Delivery service, which scans each letter at the beginning of the day and sends a notice early in the day to its subscribers that a letter is out for delivery. Postal Notice takes it a step further by telling subscribers the exact moment the letter carrier has arrived at their mailbox. Under the proposed plan, the USPS would charge a minimal monthly fee of \$3.00 for individuals and \$7.00 for businesses for the service. Under this plan, the USPS could generate more than \$700 million in revenues annually based on only 10 percent subscriber participation. A companion USPS customer service program named MoverSource allows the organization to receive revenue for additional services. That program generated more than \$300 million for the USPS since it began in 2011.

PrintingNews: The Standard Group, a print marketing and logistics company located in central and eastern Pennsylvania that recently won the 2017 Irresistible Mail Award from the United States Postal Service. The USPS Irresistible Mail Award is a quarterly contest that recognizes innovative and effective mail piece designs. The Standard Group's Holiday Inkling Mystery Game leveraged direct mail, email, social media, and mobile to engage customers, prospects, and employees with an online experience inspired by the board game CLUE. The Standard Group sent out 2,500 personalized invitations featuring 16 customized elements, including a pop-up cube with a picture of the customer's sales specialist dressed as a suspect in the game. Recipients were directed to their own personalized web pages, which acted as the game board. Each day, players were directed to a new room, revealing a new character and new activities. In total, the campaign used six channels: direct mail (including variable data and digital printing), personalized websites, email, social media, mobile, and promotional products.

May 5, 2017

PostalTimes: The US Postal Inspector's Office's response to a Call Kurtis investigation on how easy it is for a scammer to re-route your mail isn't sitting well with a local Congressman. Rep. Jerry McNerney (D-Stockton) is not happy with the Postal Inspector's response to the inquiry and is calling for a hearing on Capitol Hill. A Call Kurtis investigation in November revealed how easy it was to re-route someone else's mail. We filled out a form with a producer's information, changed her address to the CBS13 station, and days later the mail started coming here. McNerney didn't like what we uncovered and demanded answers in November, [sending this letter to the Postal Inspector.](#)

May 3, 2017

Franchising: Postal Connections announced today the launch of a new freight shipping service that delivers customers rapid, multiple job quotes with price choices and carrier service ratings. The new freight service is available in test stores across the country, offering customers free quotes for shipping household goods, vehicles, boats, home and office moves, heavy equipment, less-than-truckload, full truckload, pets and livestock. Postal Connections stores present the job quotes in 48 hours or less.

May 1, 2017

Linns: A pretty significant stamp milestone passed last month with little notice. It was the 10th anniversary of the first United States forever stamp. Postal accounting officials say they celebrated the anniversary last summer when they devised a new formula for calculating how the stamps are used. The new formula "really revolutionized" how the U.S. Postal Service figures how many of the stamps are used, said Maura A. McNerney, USPS vice president and controller. The accounting rules require that the Postal Service cannot count its stamp revenues until the stamp is actually used. This is why postal accountants long have fretted over the number of stamps held by the public. Stamps held by the public are "a liability" against the Postal Service's promise to deliver a letter. These changes added to postal revenues, thus reducing the Postal Service's net losses, but they did not add any cash to postal operations.

DCVelocity: UPS Inc. and FedEx Corp. are offering a new type of pricing for deliveries within a 50-mile radius, according to a person familiar with the companies' strategy, in a move designed to divert local "last mile" business-to-consumer traffic normally moving with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). Short-haul shipments delivered by the two giants would fall under a new "zone 1" rating. UPS and FedEx would price those deliveries cheaply, largely because they wouldn't involve the use of over-the-road, line-haul services that add to the carriers' costs. The pricing has been made available to a select group of large customers that have requested it.

Postal/Industry News

May 31, 2017

Industry Alert: Move Update. The USPS is proposing to change the method for measuring compliance for meeting the Move Update requirement to a Census based approach. Today the USPS measures compliance at an individual mailing level using a MERLIN machine. In the future, the USPS will use scans from Mail Processing Equipment to determine addresses for First-Class and USPS Marketing Mail, letters and flats, have been updated within 95 days of the mailing date, and compliance will be measured across a calendar month. This new process will result in several benefits including enhanced mailing visibility and improved mail quality metrics over all mailings within a calendar month, rather than sampling at an individual mailing level. Results of this census verification are displayed on the Electronic Verification tab of the Mailer Scorecard.

Testing of the data has been completed by an Industry task team and the reports have been declared ready for use. While the date for implementation of this new method is pending, mailers should begin reviewing the results to ensure compliance with the Move Update standards are met.

Business Mailer Support will host weekly Move Update calls for mailers who have questions or want additional information. The webinars will be held at 2:00 pm eastern each Wednesday, beginning Wednesday, June 7, 2017. Webinar information is:

Move Update Webinars

Date/Time: Wednesday, June 7 – August 30, 2017; 2:00 – 3:00 pm eastern

Log on: <https://uspsmeetings.webex.com/uspsmeetings/j.php?MTID=mb196393db64c9ea238020f81860fa9ad>

Conference Code: 563 772 2130

Dial In: -855-8607461

For further information regarding the Move Update Census Method please refer to Publication 6850 found on PostalPro at: <http://postalpro.usps.com/node/581> or the Proposed Federal Register Notice found: <http://postalpro.usps.com/node/3111>

Federal Register: Postal Service - International Mailing Services: Mailing Services Rules Changes , 24913 [2017–11120] [PDF]

May 30, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Social Media and Expectations. The Postal Service’s social media accounts received more than 390,000 posts in fiscal year (FY) 2016. Users now expect responses to their social media inquiries within one hour, seven days a week, according to recent research. Our latest blog discusses a recent audit report that found that the Postal Service is not effectively responding to customer inquiries through social media. The report also examines its response time, when it does respond, and whether it is taking too long. For more details, read the blog at <https://go.usa.gov/xNXk9>

May 27, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Automated Vehicle Utilization System Mileage Use – Southern Area In FY2016, postal-owned vehicles traveled over a billion miles – around 25 percent more than was estimated, even though USPS uses a combination of three IT systems to plan routes as well as to manage daily carrier operations. The latest OIG Audit report examines discrepancies between planned route miles and actual miles driven in the Southern Area. Read the report’s findings: <https://go.usa.gov/xNXNj>

Office of the Inspector General: No-Fee Money Order Refunds for Business Reply Mail – Washington, D.C., Main Office Window. Using data analytics, the OIG discovered that the Postal Service’s Washington, D.C., Main Office Window was issuing higher levels of no-fee money order refunds for Business Reply Mail (BRM), a service provided by USPS that enables senders to give a recipient a prepaid method for replying to their mailing. In this latest report OIG auditors evaluated whether internal controls for such refunds are in place and effective. Read our findings along with our recommendations at <https://go.usa.gov/xNXNy>

May 26, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Facility Condition Reviews – Southern Area The U.S. Postal Service has more than 30,000 leased and owned retail facilities nationwide. Over 5,400 of these facilities are in the Southern Area. We reviewed 71 of them, and in our new audit report, we determined whether Postal Service management adhered to building maintenance, safety and security standards, and employee working condition requirements. Read what we found here: <https://go.usa.gov/xNX9Y>.

Industry Alert: Updates to Mail Direction File CORRECTION: Redirection for 604-605 SCF S Suburban IL 604 Flats. The Mail Direction File published on May 1, 2017 contained redirections for 604-605 SCF S Suburban IL 604 Flats from the default site of South Suburban, IL P&DC to Fox Valley, IL P&DC. The timeframe listed was 6/1/2017-6/30/2017. This change was published in error. All attempts should be made to drop SCF S Suburban IL 604 Flats at the Chicago NDC in Forest Park, IL. Mailers will not be penalized for dropping this mail at the Fox Valley P&DC. Network Operations is working closely with Mail Entry and Payment Technology to ensure that mailers will not be negatively impacted for dropping in either location. We will follow the established

criteria for mandatory dates and expiration dates based on when the data was published. The Mail Direction File that will be published on June 1, 2017 for the July 1, 2017 effective date will not contain the incorrect redirection. Instead, the 604-605 SCF S Suburban 604 Flats will continue to be redirected to the Chicago NDC from 6/1/2017-6/30/2017.

Mail Types Impacted:

Package Services – BPM/Library/Media/Flats-N

Package Services – BPM/Library/Media/Flats-Y

Package Services/Flats-N

Package Services/Flats-Y

USPS Marketing Mail/Flats-N

USPS Marketing Mail/Flats-Y

Periodicals (News)/Flats-N

Periodicals (News)/Flats-Y

Periodicals/Flats-N

Periodicals/Flats-Y

Federal Register: Postal Service: Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 24404 [2017–10796] [\[PDF\]](#), 24404 [2017–10797] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 25, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: [Oral Statement on Stopping the Shipment of Synthetic Opioids-Oversight of U.S. Strategy to Combat Illicit Drugs](#) Acting Inspector General Tammy Whitcomb's [oral statement](#) during the U.S. Senate hearing before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on Stopping the Shipment of Synthetic Opioids: Oversight of U.S. Strategy to Combat Illicit Drugs.

Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission: New Postal Products, 24169 [2017–10747] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 24, 2017

Industry Alert: Postal Service Honors United Health Group with 2017 Partnership for Growth Award The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) today recognized United Health Group (UHG) with the Partnership for Growth award on the final day of the National Postal Forum (NPF), the country's premier mailing and shipping conference. The Partnership for Growth award is given annually at NPF to recognize a strong mailing industry contributor that drives innovation and growth using USPS. [Full Press Release](#).

Industry Alert: U.S. Postal Service Recognizes The Lincoln Motor Company, Hudson Rouge, Structural Graphics for Innovative Use of Mail to Engage Customers. The U.S. Postal Service has recognized The Lincoln Motor Company, Hudson Rouge and Structural Graphics with the Irresistible Mail Grand Champion Award for their ability to create exceptional and innovative mail pieces. The Postal Service also recognized the University of Pittsburgh and Unofficial Cardboard with the first-ever Irresistible Mail Award for Innovative Technology. [Full Press Release](#)

Federal Register:

Postal Regulatory Commission: Proposed Rules - Supplemental Standards of Ethical Conduct, 23758–23765 [2017–10613] [\[PDF\]](#), 23766–23769 [2017–10636] [\[PDF\]](#); New Postal Products, 23850 [2017–10654], [\[PDF\]](#)

Postal Service: Privacy Act; Systems of Records, 23850–23852 [2017–10573] [\[PDF\]](#) Product Changes: First-Class Package Service Negotiated Service Agreement, 23852 [2017–10580] [\[PDF\]](#) Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 23852 [2017–10575] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 23, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: [Internal Controls Over Refunds for Postage, Fees, and Non-Postal Revenue – Eufaula, OK, Post Office](#). Internal controls over issuing certain refunds at the Eufaula, OK, Post Office need improvement, a new OIG Audit Report has found. The OIG uses data analytics to identify post office locations with significant increases in refunds for postage and fees and miscellaneous non-postal revenue. The objective of this audit was to determine whether internal controls for issuing such refunds were in place and effective. When controls are not in place or effective, there is an increased risk of theft and incorrect financial reporting. Read our complete findings along with our recommendations in the full report: <https://go.usa.gov/xN8eB>

May 22, 2017

Industry Alert: Postmaster General Brennan Advances Digital Strategies, Innovation in Mailing and Shipping Industry at 2017 National Postal Forum. A new feature that lets customers see emailed images of their incoming physical mail has attracted more than 2 million users, U.S. Postal Service Postmaster General and CEO Megan J. Brennan announced today, during the opening session of the National Postal Forum, the country's premier mailing and shipping conference. Brennan added that with the offering available in nearly every ZIP Code in the United States, more than 10,000 new people are signing up every day. [Full Press Release.](#)
Office of the Inspector General: Total Eclipse of the Stamp Our latest blog highlights USPS's new solar eclipse stamp released in preparation for a total solar eclipse on August 21. The stamp has been widely publicized, but the U.S. Postal Service always has to strike that fine balance between getting creative to spark an interest in stamp collecting among the younger generation while maintaining the loyalty of the more traditional collectors. This stamp demonstrates how technologies might change the face of stamps, but is that good, bad or irrelevant? Tell us what you think at <https://go.usa.gov/xN82a>

May 19, 2017

Federal Register:

- **Postal Regulatory Commission:** New Postal Products, 23077–23078 [2017–10119], [\[PDF\]](#), 23319 [2017–10337] [\[PDF\]](#)
 - **Postal Service:** Product Changes: Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and First-Class Package Service Negotiated Service Agreement, 23078 [2017–10117] [\[PDF\]](#), 23320 [2017–10315] [\[PDF\]](#), Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 23078 [2017–10115] [\[PDF\]](#), 23078 [2017–10116] [\[PDF\]](#), 23320 [2017–10314] [\[PDF\]](#)
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May 18, 2017

Industry Alert: Mail Service Disruption Over Memorial Day Weekend. Due to scheduled maintenance, the following facilities will experience temporary disruption in mail acceptance over the Memorial Day weekend:

Sunday, May 28, 2017

- North West Rochester Plant (144PM) will be unable to accept Drop Shipments from 06:00 AM - 6:00 PM. Mailers can utilize the Rochester Plant (NASS 144), for scheduling drops during that time frame.
- Seattle P&DC (980) will be unable to accept Drop Shipments from 05:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Mailers can utilize the Seattle NDC (NASS 98Z) for scheduling drops during that time frame.

Monday, May 29, 2017

- Los Angeles NDC (90Z) will be unable to accept Drop Shipments from 06:00 AM – 7:00 PM. Mailers can utilize the Los Angeles P&DC (NASS 900), for scheduling drops during that time frame.

Industry Alert: U.S. Postal Service Recognized as 2017 Top Federal Agency for Supplier Diversity - The United States Postal Service is being honored as the nation's best among the top 25 government agencies for promoting diversity and inclusiveness in business opportunities in America. Over two million businesses voted, and USPS ranked number one for engaging in supplier diversity by providing opportunities to diverse enterprise owners. USPS will accept the top award for the sixth year in a row; this is the 16th consecutive year the agency has ranked among top agencies for this honor. [Full Press Release](#)

May 17, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Consolidation of Mail for Dallas and New Jersey Network Distribution Centers New OIG audit report assesses efficiency of the Postal Service's transportation consolidations of mail (loading, unloading, and trailer utilization) for long-haul Highway Contract Routes (HCRs) for the Dallas and New Jersey network distribution centers. HCRs are competitive fixed-price contracts the U.S. Postal Service awards to contractors to transport mail between post offices, network distribution centers, and other designated stops. In fiscal year (FY) 2016, the Postal Service spent about \$3 billion for about 8,664 HCRs. Read the results in the full report: <https://go.usa.gov/xNZWZ>

Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission - New Postal Products, 22679–22680 [2017–09966] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 16, 2017

Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission - New Postal Products, 22566 [2017–09776], [\[PDF\]](#)

May 15, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Rethinking Assumptions The Postal Service's unfunded liabilities total about \$73 billion and have a huge impact on its long-term financial health. Our latest blog discusses a recent audit report that found that the assumptions used by the Office of Personnel Management have a major impact in calculating future liabilities. For example, the difference between using Postal Service-specific assumptions and federal workforce assumptions decreased liabilities by \$10.2 billion. For more details, read the blog at <https://go.usa.gov/xN4X8>

Office of the Inspector General: Facility Condition Reviews – Eastern Area The U.S. Postal Service has more than 30,000 leased and owned retail facilities nationwide. Over 5,800 of these facilities are in the Eastern Area. We reviewed 51 of them, and in our new audit report, we determined whether Postal Service management adhered to building maintenance, safety and security standards, and employee working condition requirements. Read what we found here: <https://go.usa.gov/xNYfR>

Office of the Inspector General: High Throughput Package Sorter at the Denver, CO, Processing and Distribution Center The U.S. Postal Service installed a pilot High Throughput Package Sorter (HTPS) machine in its Denver, CO, Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC) in 2015 to process more packages, about twice as fast as current package sorters. This latest audit report from the OIG evaluates the performance and functionality of the HTPS at the Denver P&DC. To read our findings, go to <https://go.usa.gov/xNYwX>

Industry Alert: PRC to Hold Open Public Meeting Thursday, May 18. Meeting to focus on a wide-range of Commission activities to date. The Postal Regulatory Commission today announced the agenda for its May 18 Public Meeting. The meeting is open to the general public and will focus on activities undertaken by the Commission over the course of this fiscal year to date. The following agenda items, among others, will be discussed:

- Commission efforts regarding statutory review of the system for regulating rates and classes for Market Dominant products
- Status update on USPS proposed service performance measurement system for Market Dominant products
- Overview of *Analysis of the Postal Service's FY 2016 Annual Performance Report and FY 2017 Performance Plan* (2803/2804)
- *Annual Compliance Determination* results
- Overview of *Financial Analysis of United States Postal Service Financial Results and 10-K Statement for FY 2016*
- Overview of Commission's 5-year strategic plan
- Summary of order concerning UPS, Inc.'s proposed changes to USPS costing methodologies

The meeting will commence at 11:00 a.m. with opening remarks by Chairman Robert Taub followed by detailed discussions of the Commission's actions by its four offices: Accountability and Compliance, Public Affairs and Government Relations, General Counsel, and Secretary and Administration. For the first time, the Commission will live stream its public meeting in real time providing increased access and greater transparency. The Commission invites all interested persons to join its public meeting Thursday, May 18, 2017 at 11:00 a.m. at 901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20268 or via live broadcast at, www.prc.gov. An archive of the meeting broadcast will be made available on the Commission's website.

May 12, 2017

Industry Alert: Seamless Acceptance Update. The Seamless Acceptance program is open and the Postal Service will begin onboarding customers that wish to participate in the Seamless Acceptance. Seamless leverages electronic documentation, Intelligent Mail barcodes and mailpiece scans collected from Mail Processing Equipment (MPE) and hand held scanning devices to automate acceptance processes at both Business Mail Acceptance Units (BMEU) and Detached Mail Units (DMU).

Benefits from the program include but are not limited to:

- Standardized acceptance and verification processes
- Improved feedback on business mail quality issues
- Longer mail production cycles
- Allows for preparation and payment flexibility

Mailers interested in learning more about the Seamless Acceptance program should contact their local Business Mail Entry unit and/or access Chapter 5 of the Publication for Streamlined Mail Acceptance for Letters and Flats.

Local Business Mail Entry unit phone numbers can be found here: <http://postalpro.usps.com/locators/find-bme>

Publication for Streamlined Mail Acceptance for Letters and Flats can be found here: <http://postalpro.usps.com/node/581>.

Industry Alert: PostalPro is Moving to Production! PostalPro is moving from its current location to its final production site. To ensure a smooth transition, new content will not be added to the PostalPro site until Wednesday, May 17, 2017. You will be able to access PostalPro using the current URL at: <https://postalpro.usps.com/> once it moves to the production site. If you experience any issues when you access PostalPro on Wednesday, May 17, contact the *PostalOne!* Help Desk at 800.522.9085 or email postalprosupport@usps.gov.

Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commissions - New Postal Products, 22165 [2017-09615] [PDF]

May 11, 2017

Federal Register: Postal Service - Product Changes: Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 22021 [2017-09547] [PDF], 22021 [2017-09548] [PDF]

May 10, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: [Social Media Customer Inquiries](#). Customers are increasingly turning to social media platforms — including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram — to contact the U.S. Postal Service about service, a retail experience, or for further information on a product. The latest OIG audit report analyzes how customers are using social media to interact with the USPS and how well the Postal Service is responding to customer inquiries via social media. The OIG recommends ways the Postal Service could capitalize on these inquiries to improve overall customer service. Read the OIG's findings and recommendations in the report at <https://go.usa.gov/x5tHF>

Office of the Inspector General: [Mail Collection Box Management Process - Capital Metro Area](#) For over 150 years, the blue mail collection boxes have been a staple of the U.S. Postal Service. But they aren't as visible as they once were. The Postal Service has been removing these boxes in certain areas at an increasing rate over the past decade. At the end of fiscal year 2016, only about 153,000 collection boxes were in service nationwide — down almost 14,000 boxes over the past five years. The latest OIG audit report assesses the process by which postal collection boxes are placed out of service, or removed, in the Capital Metro Area. Read the OIG's findings in the report at <https://go.usa.gov/x5t6f>

Office of the Inspector General: [Internal Controls Over Money Orders - Kendall Green Station Contract Postal Unit, Washington, D.C.](#) The OIG uses data analytics tools, such as TripWires, to identify financial anomalies at postal retail outlets. These tools helped our auditors determine that a lack of internal controls over postal money orders sold at the Kendall Green Station

Contract Postal Unit in Washington, DC, was putting revenues at risk. To find out more about the problems and what the OIG recommended, go to <https://go.usa.gov/x5tfN>

Industry Alert: U.S. Postal Service Reports Fiscal Year 2017 Second Quarter Results: The U.S. Postal Service posted modest controllable income for the second quarter of fiscal year 2017 (January 1, 2017 - March 31, 2017) of \$12 million, short of the \$576 million that it had for the same quarter last year. This reduction was driven by the April 2016 expiration of the exigent surcharge, which would have generated approximately \$500 million in additional revenue during the quarter had it remained in place, and to a lesser extent, a \$69 million increase in controllable operating expenses.

Industry Alert: eInduction Automated Assessment Reminder. Automated eInduction Assessments for Mail Quality Metrics begins May 10, 2017 for April data. The assessments result additional postage on those containers in error above the established thresholds: Undocumented, Payment, Duplicate, Misshipped, Entry Point Discount, Zone Discount. Automated email Assessment notifications will be sent as described below on the 11th day of each month. These automated assessments will be included with the Full-Service assessments. Assessments are generated at the electronic documentation (eDoc) submitter Customer Registration ID (CRID) level when there are errors that exceed the established thresholds for a calendar month. The Postal Service will send automated email notifications to the user associated to the Verification Assessment Evaluator (VAE) service for the eDoc submitters Business Customer Gateway (BCG) profile. The Postal Service strongly encourages all eInduction mailers to request access to the Verification Assessment Evaluator (VAE) service through the BCG. In the event that a VAE user is not identified, the automated email assessment notifications are sent to the associated BCG user roles in the following order of precedence:

- Verification Assessment Evaluator (Business Service Administrator (BSA) or User Role); if no VAE is identified notification is sent to:
- BSA for Manage Mailing Activity if there is no BSA for Manage Mailing Activity notification is sent to:
- BSA for alternate *PostalOne!* service: Audit Mailing Activity, eVS/PRS Customer, Scan Based Payment Customer.

Note: Only users associated to the BSA or user role for Verification Assessment Evaluator or Managed Mailing Activity services can view and take action on Assessments.

Industry Alert: Attention Business Customer Gateway and PostalOne!® Users: *PostalOne!* is experiencing a performance issue preventing access to account information and causing jobs to fail. The issue is under investigation. Mailings will continue to be accepted under the *PostalOne!* Contingency Plan posted on RIBBS at https://ribbs.usps.gov/intelligentmail_latestnews/documents/tech_guides/PostalOneExternalContingencyPlan.pdf. eInduction mailers should follow the eInduction contingency plan.

Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission, New Postal Products, 21836–21837 [2017–09445] [PDF]

May 9, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Update for Measuring Pension and Retiree Health Benefits Liabilities The U.S. Postal Service provides pension and health insurance benefits to its retirees through a number of different programs and funds. The latest report from OIG auditors, *Update for Measuring Pension and Retiree Health Benefits Liabilities*, revises reports issued in FY 2013, looking at how using Postal Service specific assumptions will affect the calculations of future health and pension payments. To read the findings, go to <https://go.usa.gov/x5FY8>.

Office of the Inspector General: Pacific Area P&DC Physical and Environmental Security Controls The U.S. Postal Service uses physical and environmental security controls at its facilities to protect its equipment from unauthorized access and mail. Using data analytics and risk models to identify facilities with a high level of malware incidents, OIG auditors conducted a review of security at the Margaret L. Sellers Processing and Distribution Center in San Diego. For details about their findings, read the report at <https://go.usa.gov/x56ff>

May 8, 2017

Office of the Inspector General: Highway Contract Route Fuel Price Index Program – Eastern Transportation Category Management Team In addition to its own fleet of vehicles, the U.S. Postal Service also manages and pays fuel for almost 14,000 highway contract routes (HCR), which handle mail and equipment sent between postal facilities. In our latest audit report, the OIG examined whether the Eastern Transportation Category Management Teams is handling fuel contracts effectively for its HCRs. To read about the findings, go to <https://go.usa.gov/x5GMV>

Office of the Inspector General: Undeliverable Bulk Business Mail at the Margaret L. Sellers Processing and Distribution Center Undeliverable bulk business mail (UBBM) is business mail – including flyers, newsletters, and advertising -- the U.S. Postal Service cannot deliver because of problems with the addressing and recycles instead of returns. Following a Congressional request, OIG auditors reviewed how employees at the Margaret L. Sellers Processing and Distribution Center in San Diego, CA, process UBBM. To read the findings, go to <https://go.usa.gov/x56Ne>.

Office of the Inspector General: Riding Out Fuel Fluctuations Our latest blog discusses a newly-released OIG audit report that found the Postal Service is not prepared to withstand the sharp fluctuations of diesel fuel prices. For example, a \$2.03 per gallon increase not long ago resulted in a \$341 million spike in USPS's fuel costs. In fiscal year 2016, USPS paid \$570 million for diesel fuel. For more details, read the blog at <https://go.usa.gov/x5Gys>

Industry Alert: Postmaster General and CFO Host Media Call on U.S. Postal Service FY 2017 Second Quarter Financial Results. Wednesday, May 10, 2017 10:00 a.m. ET. Postmaster General & CEO Megan Brennan and Chief Financial Officer Joseph Corbett will host a media conference call to discuss the FY17 Quarter Two financial results in more detail. The call is open to the

news media and all other interested parties. To participate: To ensure your computer is set up to join the event, click on the link: <https://www.webex.com/ip/jointest/>. US/Canada Attendee Dial In: 855-293-5496 Conference ID: 5197473. Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?MTID=eec937c52117a7a9628a1c47d74902cbb>

May 6, 2017

Industry Alert: FAST Message Board Northwest Rochester Power Outage. Due to a scheduled power outage for maintenance at North West Rochester (144PM) on Sunday May 28, 2017, the plant will be unable to accept Drop Shipments from 6:00 AM – 6:00 PM. Please utilize the Rochester Plant (NASS 144), for scheduling drops during that time frame.

Federal Register:

- **Postal Regulatory Commission:** Meeting Sunshine Act, 21434 [2017–09330] [\[PDF\]](#)
- **Postal Service: Product Changes:** Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement , 21434 [2017–09220] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 5, 2017

Federal Register: Postal Regulatory Commission: New Postal Products, 21278 [2017–09136] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 4, 2017

Industry Alert: IMb Planning Tool Data Now Sourced from IV. Beginning May 5, 2017 the data source for the IMb Planning Tool will be the Informed Visibility (IV) system. With this change, data will be available in near real-time to assist mailers in planning their mail entry and post mailing activities. The IMb Planning Tool offers insight into how mail is moving at USPS facilities. Check out the tool today at <http://postalpro.usps.com/tools/imb-planning-tool>. We are planning a refresh of the tool’s user interface in future enhancements.

Industry Alert: Portia, Arkansas Post Office Closed Due to Flooding. The Portia, AR Post Office (72457) is closed due to local flooding in the area. Customers are being serviced through the Post Office in Walnut Ridge, AR (72476). Customers can call 1-800-ASK-USPS or go to the Postal Service’s Website www.usps.com to get the location of other nearby Post Offices and approved postal retail service providers.

Office of the Inspector General: The Profit Is in the Mail Mail has remained profitable for many international posts, even as volumes have dropped. We analyzed five posts — Australia Post, Belgium’s bpost, Swiss Post, Germany’s Deutsche Post DHL, and the UK’s Royal Mail — to determine the main drivers of mail profitability. For more about the paper, read our latest blog at <https://go.usa.gov/x5NXD>

May 3, 2017

Industry Alert: Southern Area Storm Impacts. Below is the latest status of offices that were impacted by recent storms: **Oklahoma District-** Kinta OK Post Office and **Arkansas District-** Success AR RMPO. **Oklahoma District:** The Kinta Post Office at 301 W. Broadway, Kinta Ok 74552 remains closed due to storm damage that occurred in the area. The alternate Post Office for retail services is Quinton Post Office at 911 E. Main St., Quinton OK 74561.

<u>Impacted PO/ZIP Code</u>	<u>Alternate PO</u>
Kinta RMPO 301 W. Broadway Street Kinta OK 74552	Quinton Post Office, 911 E. Main. St., Quinton OK 74561. Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-4:30pm, Sat-Sun Closed.

Arkansas District: Success AR RMPO 72470 located at 511 Front St. is inaccessible due to local flooding in the area. The Post Office remains closed and customers will be served through the Corning Post Office, 700 Bobcat Ln, Corning AR, 72422.

Industry Alert: Great Lakes Area Storm Impacts. The Great Lakes Area has reported the following updated impacts due to storms and flooding: Rockwood, PO, IL 62280 is inaccessible and customer mail is available at the Chester Post Office, 1321 Swanwick St, Chester IL, 62233. Catawissa, PO, MO 63015 is inaccessible and closed due to flooding. Customers will be served through the Villa Ridge Post Office, 461 Highway M, Villa Ridge MO, 63089. Eureka, PO, MO 63025 is inaccessible and customers can use the Washington Post Office, 1777 Washington Xing, Washington Mo, 63090 until further notice. Morse Mill, PO, MO 63066 is closed due to flooding and customer’s mail is available through the Cedar Hill Post Office, 7050 State Rd BB, Cedar Hill MO, 63016. Robertsville, PO, MO 63072 is closed due to flooding and customers will be served through the Villa Ridge Post Office, 461 Highway M, Villa Ridge MO, 63089. Valley Park, PO, MO 63088 is inaccessible and closed due to flooding. Customers will be served through the Sacred Heart Church, 17 Ann Ave, Valley Park, MO, 63088. Chamois, PO, MO 35024 is closed due flooding. Rural delivery will be made were it can be completed safely for customers and employees.

Industry Alert: Congratulations to Porsche®, Cramer-Krasselt and HM Graphics for Winning the 4th Quarter of the 2017 Irresistible Mail™ Award. It is our great pleasure to announce that Porsche’s “*It Takes Something Amazing*” campaign is our newest Quarterly Winner. Congratulations to **Cramer-Krasselt** for designing and **HM Graphics** for printing the winning campaign. The judges would also like to recognize the following submissions as Honorable Mentions:

- “A Warranty This Good Campaign” designed by *Epsilon* and printed by **Specialty Print Communications**
- “BMW M4™ GTS Invitation” designed by *Ritta & Associates* and printed by *Hatteras*
- “Home Sweet Home personalized mailers” designed and printed by *Marquis*
- “HP® It’s Your Business” designed by *Oliver Russell* and printed by *HM Graphics*
- “Pitt® Honors Admits Cardboard” designed by the **University of Pittsburgh** and printed by **Unofficial Cardboard**
- “Pitt® Scholarship Profiles and Sticker” designed by the **University of Pittsburgh** and printed by **Heeter**
- “Take a Step Mailing” designed and printed by the **F.P. Horak Company**
- “Trending Yacht Video Brochure” designed by **Newspeed** and printed by **Mediafast**

Federal Register:

- **Postal Regulatory Commission:** New Postal Products, 20642 [2017-08948] [\[PDF\]](#)
- **Postal Service:** Priority Mail Express, Priority Mail, and First-Class Package Service Negotiated Service Agreement, 20642–20643 [2017–08883] [\[PDF\]](#); Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 20643 [2017–08884] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 2, 2017

Industry Alert: The Great Lakes Area has reported the following impacts due to storms and flooding: Makanda PO, IL 62958 is inaccessible and closed due to flooding. Rockwood, PO, IL 62280 is inaccessible and customer mail is available at the Chester Post Office, 1321 Swanwick St, Chester IL, 62233. Catawissa, PO, MO 63015 is inaccessible and closed due to flooding. Eureka, PO, MO 63025 is inaccessible and customers can use the Washington Post Office, 1777 Washington Xing, Washington Mo, 63090 until further notice. Fletcher, PO, MO 63030 is inaccessible and customer mail is available at the DeSoto Post Office, 630 Boyd St, DeSoto MO, 63020. Morse Mill, PO, MO 63066 is closed due to flooding and customer’s mail is available through the Cedar Hill Post Office, 7050 State Rd BB, Cedar Hill MO, 63016. Richwood, PO, MO 63071 is closed due to flooding and customer mail is available at the DeSoto Post Office, 630 Boyd St, DeSoto MO, 63020. Stanton, PO, MO 63079 is inaccessible and closed due to flooding.

Industry Alert: Western Area Storm Impact. The Western Area reports the Devils Elbow Post Office at 12175 Timber RD, Devils Elbow MO, 65457 is closed due to weather impacts. Customer’s mail will be available through the **Waynesville Post Office at 301 North St, Waynesville MO, 65583**. Updates will be available through the USPS Service Alerts page on USPS.com.

Industry Alert: Southern Area Storm Impacts. Below is the latest status of offices that were impacted by recent storms: **Oklahoma District-** Kinta OK Post Office and **Arkansas District-** Success AR RMPO.

Oklahoma District The Kinta Post Office at 301 W. Broadway, Kinta Ok 74552 is currently closed due to storm damage that occurred in the area. The alternate Post Office for retail services is Quinton Post Office at 911 E. Main St., Quinton OK 74561.

<u>Impacted PO/ZIP Code</u>	<u>Alternate PO</u>
Kinta RMPO 301 W. Broadway Street Kinta OK 74552	Quinton Post Office, 911 E. Main. St., Quinton OK 74561. Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30am-12:00pm, 1:00pm-4:30pm, Sat-Sun Closed.

Arkansas District Success AR RMPO 72470 located at 511 Front St. is inaccessible due to local flooding in the area. The Post Office is currently closed and updates will be provided as service is restored.

Industry Alert: Attention Business Customer Gateway and FAST Users: Please be advised that the phone system at the National Customer Support Center will be down tonight, 5/2/2017, from 7 PM to 8 PM, Central, for maintenance. If you are unable to reach the help desk via the 800 number, please email the FAST Help Desk at: fast@usps.gov

Federal Register:

Postal Regulatory Commission - New Postal Products, 20501–20502 [2017–08826] [\[PDF\]](#)

Postal Service - Product Changes: Priority Mail Express and Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 20502 [2017–08791] [\[PDF\]](#) Priority Mail Negotiated Service Agreement, 20502 [2017–08794] [\[PDF\]](#)

May 1, 2017

Industry Alert: The Temporary Emergency Committee of the Board of Governors of the U.S. Postal Service (“TEC”) will meet May 10 in open session at Postal Service headquarters, 475 L’Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC. The public is welcome to observe the meeting beginning at 8 a.m. ET in the Ben Franklin Room on the 11th floor. The TEC is expected to discuss the following items:

1. Call to order
2. Remarks of TEC Chairman/Postmaster General & CEO
3. Approval of previous minutes
4. Committee Reports
5. Quarterly Report on Financial Performance
6. Quarterly Service Performance Report
7. Tentative agenda for the June 20 meeting
8. Adjourn

Open session meetings of the TEC of the Board of Governors are available on live audio webcasts

at <http://about.usps.com/news/electronic-press-kits/bog/welcome.htm>. Three hours after the conclusion of the open session meeting, a

recorded audio file will be available for listening. In compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the audio webcast will be open-captioned.

Financial Briefing - Following the TEC's open meeting on May 10, Postmaster General & CEO Megan J. Brennan and Chief Financial Officer Joe Corbett will host a telephone/web conference call to discuss the financial results in more detail. The call will begin at 10 a.m. ET and is open to the news media and all other interested parties.

How to Participate: Important Notice: *To ensure your computer is set up to join the event, click on the link www.webex.com/lp/jointest/; US/Canada Attendee Dial-in: (855) 293-5496 Conference ID: 5197473 Attendee Direct URL: <https://usps.webex.com/usps/onstage/g.php?MTID=eec937c52117a7a9628a1c47d74902cbb>. If you cannot join using the direct link above, please use the alternate logins below: Alternate URL: <https://usps.webex.com> Event Number: 991 463 781*

Office of the Inspector General: Mail Profitability in International Posts Despite years of declining volumes, mail remains profitable for the majority of 13 international postal systems that the Postal Service Office of Inspector General examined in a new white paper. In fact, mail accounted for an average 60 percent of the posts' total profits. Contributing factors include less restrictive legal and regulatory environments, greater cost efficiency, and robust governmental support. Read Mail Profitability in International Posts <https://go.usa.gov/x5EX4>.

Industry Alert: Attention eVs Users: eVS is experiencing delays in receiving manifest files from PTR due to PTR performance issues. There is no action required from eVS users to resubmit any files. Once the performance issues are resolved, files will be processed. An update will be provided in 3 hours or when file processing is resumed.

International News

May 31, 2017

NORWAY: *Post&Parcel*: Posten Norge has reported that profits for both its mail and logistics segments were up in the first quarter (Q1) of 2017. The company said the improvement was partly due to more business days compared to the first quarter of last year, but added that it had also made “significant cost reductions” in operations which “more than compensated” for the negative financial impact of fewer addressed deliveries. According to Posten Norge: “This was mainly due to more business days, new sales, cost reductions and the phasing out of unprofitable freight operations in Sweden. High growth in online shopping volume and increased home delivery in Sweden and Denmark also contributed to profitability improvements. The Group’s e-commerce volume was up 15%.”

May 30, 2017

BELGIUM: *IPC*: CEOs and senior executives from leading postal operators from America, Asia Pacific and Europe, gathered on 19 May in the Rode Hoed Conference Centre in Amsterdam for the 2017 International Post Corporation Annual Conference. This year, the conference speeches and debates explored the options posts have to cost-effectively deliver lightweight, low-value packets, which account for the majority of the cross-border e-commerce market. Posts looked at key delivery requirements for large e-retailers and insisted on the need to listen to customers and innovate.

CANADA: *CanadaPost*: Canada Post’s focus on innovative, convenient delivery and returns experiences is helping Canadian businesses grow through e-commerce – and maintaining Canada Post’s position as the country’s No. 1 parcel company. The growth in Parcels volumes – which were 12.5 per cent higher in the first quarter of 2017 than in the first quarter a year earlier – continues the positive momentum Canada Post achieved by competing to win business and deliver record-breaking parcel volumes in 2016, particularly during the peak holiday season. The Canada Post segment’s \$44-million profit before tax for the first quarter, ended April 1, 2017, is consistent with the \$44-million profit before tax in the first quarter of 2016.

CHINA: *DigitalJournal*: It has been four years since Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos introduced us to the company’s newest innovation, a drone that would deliver packages to our doorsteps within 30 minutes of ordering. China’s Amazon clone, JD.com has beaten them to it. JD.com got the go-ahead from the Chinese government last year to begin drone delivery in the outskirts of Beijing and four other provinces. Since then, dozens of drones have made thousands of deliveries. JD.com does not deliver goods to your doorstep, as Amazon plans on doing. Instead, JD.com has fixed routes the drones automatically fly along from their warehouses to fixed landing pads in rural villages. Once there, the packages are delivered to the customer by company contractors.

NIGERIA: *AllAfrica*: House of Representatives and stakeholders in the communication sector yesterday proposed financial autonomy for Nigeria Postal Service (NIPOST) to meet international best practices. At a public hearing on the bills to repeal the Nigerian postal service Act and to amend the stamp duties Act, conducted by the House Committee on Telecommunications, participants also seek to give NIPOST the enabling environment to measure up with the advanced postal administration.

SPAIN: *Post&Parcel*: UPS is increasing its air cargo capacity from Vitoria and Seville to its European air hub in Cologne, Germany. The company said that the new flights will allow UPS to offer later pick-up times for export shipments in northern and southern Spain. According to UPS: “As a result of the new flight, UPS customers in the north and south of Spain will now benefit from later pick-up times, and 85% of the Spanish population can benefit from having their packages exported on the same day they are picked up. UPS is now offering customers up to four-and-a-half hours of additional production time with pick-up times as late as 19:00 for UPS Express shipments.”

May 26, 2017

CANADA: *GlobalNewsCA*: Fentanyl is a lethal opioid that has made its way to Canada from overseas. But how it’s being distributed puts thousands of unknowing postal workers at risk every day. Fentanyl is being shipped from countries, primarily China, and traffickers are using Canada’s postal service like a drug pipeline. In 2014, Canadian law enforcement seized 894 fentanyl samples at the border. In 2016, that number jumped to 4,009. “Any mail or parcels arriving from outside Canada must first be cleared by Canadian Border Services Agency before being handed to Canada Post for sortation and delivery,” Canada Post media spokesperson Sylvie Lapointe said in an email. “We have long-standing processes in place to handle any potentially suspicious items in the mail.” But they can’t catch it all. Postal workers are concerned about being exposed especially when letters and packages break open.

NIGERIA: *ThisDayLive*: The House of Representatives is currently considering financial autonomy for Nigeria Postal Service (NIPOST) to enable it cope with emerging realities, and operate on global standards. At a public hearing organised by House Committee on Telecommunications, Chaired by Hon. Saheed Akinade-Fijabi thursday, stakeholders commended the move by the National Assembly to reposition the moribund agency. The hearing had considered and debated bills for an Act to repeal Nigerian Postal Service and establish the Nigeria Postal Commission to make comprehensive provisions for the development and regulation of postal services; as well as a bill for an Act to amend the Stamp Duties Act, to ensure compliance with current realities and for related matters.

NORWAY: *NewsEnglish*: Norway’s postal service (*Posten Norge*) has been the subject of lots of customer irritation in recent months, following the closure of post offices, rising postal rates and declining service, episodes of slow delivery or no delivery at all. On Friday the postal outlets now set up in local grocery stores to replace closed post offices, were in trouble, after the computer system they use for distributing packages to recipients completely broke down.

May 25, 2017

ARMENIA: *NewsAM:* Haypost, the national postal service of Armenia, and Armenfilm (Hayfilm) film studio will be privatized. This is noted in the 2017-2020 privatization plan, which was approved at Thursday's Cabinet session of the government. 47 state-owned companies have been submitted for privatization. The state expects to receive Armenian drams equivalent to approximately US\$74 million from the sale of these companies.

INDIA: *DNAIndia:* Prime Minister Narendra Modi today reviewed the handling of grievances related to the postal services and asked what action had been taken against the officers responsible for lapses. Modi underlined that the importance of postal services is on the rise again and stressed on the importance of human resource management, systemic improvement, and infrastructure strengthening in the Department of Posts.

NIGERIA: *NTA:* The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Yakubu Dogara, has expressed confidence that efforts by the National Assembly to reposition the Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST) to boost its revenue generation by upgrading its operations to latest standards will yield desired results. He said the postal service will benefit greatly from latest technological innovations which will widen its reach, create more customer base and ultimately, lead to more revenue generation for the federal government. He said, "Today's world is constantly being shaped by advancements in the field of ICT and we are confident that given the right environment, NIPOST could benefit from such technological feats and improve its resource base through the provision of improved Postal Services to the people irrespective of geographical locations."

RUSSIA: *Nasdaq:* Russia's postal service was hit by Wannacry ransomware last week and some of its computers are still down. Wannacry compromised the post office's automated queue management system, infecting touch-screen terminals which run on the outdated Windows XP operating system, one of the workers said. Terminals were still blank in some parts of Moscow this week but it was not clear exactly how many branches had been affected. A spokesman for Russian Post, a state-owned monopoly, said no computers were infected, but some terminals were temporarily switched off as a precaution. "The virus attack did not touch Russian Post, all systems are working and stable," he said.

May 24, 2017

AUSTRALIA: *XinHuaNet:* American online retail giant Amazon is a step closer to making its long-awaited Australian debut, after Australia Post revealed it was in "advanced talks" to secure the lucrative contract to deliver goods to millions of Australian consumers. Earlier this month, Amazon confirmed to the Australia market that it was actively pursuing land on which to house its goods storage and distribution center. Australia Post chief operating officer Bob Black told News Corp that his company, and its express delivery subsidiary StarTrack, has an 82 percent share of the local goods delivery market, and said Amazon was close to signing a deal which would open the door to a revolution in online shopping for Australian consumers. In the United States, Amazon currently uses postal companies UPS and Fedex, but it is reportedly pursuing the option to set up its own delivery service, something which could save the company more than a billion U.S. dollars per year.

INDIA: *Chandigarh:* Chandigarh Postal Division has launched the Postman Mobile Application at the General Post Office, Sector-17, Chandigarh. The android-based app will directly upload the details of a delivery on a server which will send information to customers. The department has given smart phones to all postmen asking them to get the signatures digitally. The project was for the city, but soon it would be launched in all cities under the Chandigarh postal division like Mohali, Ropar and Zirakpur.

May 23, 2017

AFRICA: *Post&Parcel:* Universal Postal Union (UPU) Director General Bishar A. Hussein has called on postal operators in Africa to diversify their services in order to develop products that meet the changing needs of customers. Speaking at the Pan African Postal Union's (PAPU) 36th Administrative Council meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, Hussein said: "We are all aware that the postal sector is undergoing unprecedented changes, characterised by rapid technological development, globalisation of postal markets and increased competition. "These are factors that are making us seek new ways of doing business in order to remain relevant for our customers. The new shift calls for greater innovation and diversification of products to march the changing needs and expectations of customers."

CHINA: *SCMP:* Cainiao Network, the logistics arm of Alibaba, said it will strengthen the deployment of artificial intelligent (AI) technology in its courier network by putting 1 million smart logistics vehicles into the market to cope with exploding delivery volumes in the future – expected to reach 1 billion a day within a decade. The smart logistics vehicles, co-manufactured with other automobile companies including SAIC Motor Corp and Dongfeng Motor Corp, will optimize the delivery route for the couriers based on Cainiao's advanced big data and algorithms. According to Cainiao, the new smart vehicles have been introduced in Shenzhen and Chengdu as part of a trial programme, where they reduced travel distance and air travel rates. The logistics industry could see savings of as much as 10 billion yuan (US\$1.4 billion) annually after all the vehicles are put in services within the next decade, the company estimates.

NETHERLANDS: *Post&ParcelTechnology:* PostNL is to replace 100 diesel delivery vans with 60 sustainable e-cargo bicycles in Amsterdam, Netherlands, next month. The expansion of e-bike use follows a successful trial run in the city. PostNL opted for e-cargo bicycles as the company wants to make its transportation greener, and because traffic density in cities is increasing. E-cargo bicycles are emission-free and trials showed that in the center of Amsterdam, delivery by e-cargo bicycle is sometimes even faster than by delivery van. Eight bike transfer points will be added to the existing network, where mail and parcels can be loaded into the e-cargo bikes.

May 21, 2017

SIERRA LIONE: *SierraExpressMedia:* Sierra Leone Postal Service (Salpost) workers past Wednesday demonstrated peacefully, displaying placards and demanding that the Managing Director, Samuel Koroma, account for the lumpy sum of seven billion Leones,

which the protesting workers alleged, he has misused. Speaking to Journalists, the apparently disgruntled workers and retirees who are also crying for end of service benefit said government gave the money to the Salpost management to pay long standing salary backlogs and retiree benefits but the money was not used accordingly. The demonstrating workers pleaded with government, through the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) to intervene by mounting a thorough investigation into the use of the seven billion Leones.

May 19, 2017

AUSTRALIA: *Government Recruiting*: The Australian postal service has announced it will be partnering with the federal government to provide its identity technology to a solution for accessing online services in the country. In a statement, Australia Post said it would be working with authorities to develop a proof of concept to enhance existing systems to gain secure access to services both online and over a counter. The solution will seek to integrate the postal service's Digital ID platform with the government's existing Commonwealth Digital Identity Framework that outlines standards and partnerships to underpin a federated system of ID providers. With a growing number of governments investing and putting weight behind in-house digital transformation bodies and planning, identity assurance is among key challenges facing efforts to handle a growing number of online transactions.

IRELAND: *Post&Parcel*: Ireland's Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) has reported that in 2016 the national postal operator An Post delivered 91% of single piece priority mail on the next working day following the day of posting. This was the same result as for 2015 and is 3% short of the 94% standard. ComReg also found that An Post delivered 99.1% of single piece priority mail within three working days following the day of posting, which is also the same result as for 2015 and just slightly below the 99.5% standard. The regulator noted that An Post's performance dipped significantly at the end of the year, during the busy Christmas season. An Post's performance was also below the required standard on "postal packets", which currently the growth area in postal service.

SWITZERLAND: *Post&Parcel*: Swiss Post has announced that it is looking to "constantly expand its range of services" to maintain its top spot on the Universal Postal Union's (UPU) Integrated Index for Postal Development (2IPD). The 2IPD study compared 170 postal organizations' performance in 2016 using four criteria: reliability, relevance, reach and resilience. The top 3 performers in 2016 were Switzerland (with 100 points), France (94.7) and Japan (94.1). The UPU summed up why these three made the podium: "All of them offer either high or very high quality of service across their postal products portfolio, as well as great global connectivity for their customers. They also benefit from strong demand for their diversified portfolio of services and are all relatively resilient to changes and transformations in the postal environment. Switzerland has consistently been the best performer in terms of reliability, relevance and resilience with its diversified offer of postal services. There is only one area in which it is outperformed: reach, or global postal connectedness. In that category, China comes first."

May 18, 2017

UNITED KINGDOM: *IBTimes*: Royal Mail hiked its full year dividend and said it remains on track to save approximately £600m in the current financial year, but warned business uncertainty in Britain hampered its main UK business. The group's UKPIL division, which operates in the UK collecting and delivering parcels and letters through two main networks, reported a 2% drop in revenue to £7.66bn. This was attributed to a 5% decline in total letter revenue, which was itself due to a 6% drop in the volume of total letters on the back of business uncertainty in the UK. The decline, however, was offset by a strong performance from the company's GLS division, which delivers parcels across Europe and which saw revenue rise 9% year-on-year.

May 17, 2017

FINLAND: *Post&Parcel*: Finland's K Group has reported that the volume of parcels and postal transactions taking place in its K-food stores more than quadrupled in 2016 from 3m to 14m. Currently, parcel and/or postal points can be found in approximately 800 K-food stores across Finland. In addition to national postal operator Posti's postal service points and parcel collection lockers, K-food stores also include UPS pick-up points, DHL packstations and the Matkahuolto delivery network, which continues in the K-Markets that were previously Siwa and Valintatalo stores.

May 16, 2017

CROATIA: *TotalCroatiaPost*: Croatia Post will invest 345 million kuna in a new sorting centre in Velika Gorica near Zagreb, at the site which is located near the Zagreb Airport. Croatian Post says the importance of this project is the fact that the establishment and construction of the new sorting centre as a logistics postal centre will improve quality and speed of meeting the requirements for postal market processes.

JAPAN: *Asia.Nikkei*: Japan Post Holdings booked a 28.9 billion yen (\$254 million) net loss for fiscal 2016 after absorbing a massive impairment charge on its 2015 acquisition of Australian logistics provider Toll Holdings. The postal business environment is bleak both in Japan and abroad. Japan Post handled 17.7 billion pieces of mail such as post cards and letters last fiscal year, down about 30% from the peak in fiscal 2001. Although package delivery has gained steam in recent years amid the rise of online shopping, pressure to raise wages has boosted costs. The postal unit had an operating profit of just 12 billion yen in fiscal 2016. Japan Post Bank's net profit shrank 3.9% to 312.2 billion yen. Ultralow interest rates have eroded the banking unit's investment returns on Japanese government bonds. Returns on foreign exchange trading grew but this was not enough to absorb the negative impact. Meanwhile, Japan Post Insurance enjoyed a 4.4% net profit increase to 88.5 billion yen. Annual premiums on new policies for individuals rose 4.7%.

SINGAPORE: *TechinAsia*: A major acquisition deal struck in 2015 by Singapore's national post and logistics company SingPost has turned sour, dealing a blow to its ecommerce ambitions. An analyst with UOB told *The Straits Times* he believes SingPost could need until 2018 or 2019 to recover. The firm was badly hit by a S\$185.0 million impairment charge for TradeGlobal – the US ecommerce

firm it bought in 2015 for US\$168.6 million. SignPost acquired firms like TradeGlobal as part of efforts to transform itself into a global ecommerce player, as its traditional line of business – postal services like snail mail – became less relevant.

May 15, 2017

FRANCE: *ConnexionFrance*: French postal workers are offering a new service – they will pop in and chat to elderly people living alone and then inform their children living far away if there are any problems. The postmen and women pop in to have a chat for between five and 10 minutes while on their daily rounds. They have a list of questions such as “Are you well?”, “Do you need any shopping?” and “Do you need a doctor?”. For La Poste, it is a way to diversify as the amount of mail diminishes and to use their unique position of making daily visits to a large proportion of the population. It is also hoped that it will help keep elderly people in their own homes for longer. The postal workers have had special training to help them manage the different situations they might come across. There are contracts for between one and six visits a week, costing from €39.95-€139.95 a month.

INDIA: *PinkCityPost*: You will no longer have to be worried about the status of your parcel, letters and money orders sent using the government postal service. The postal department will keep you updated with the status of the delivery. The department has launched a Postman mobile app that will be available to postmen in the city. The postmen will now have to keep the customers updated with the status of their parcels. Customers will receive a SMS on their mobile phones as soon as the parcel is delivered. They will also be provided information about the name of the postman who is supposed to make the delivery, expected date and time of delivery and its status. Customers will know who received the parcel, when and where.

May 13, 2017

THAILAND: *NationMultimedia*: Thailand Post has introduced Automated Postal Machine (APM) service at Suvarnabhumi Airport to enable air travellers to dispatch by post any items prohibited from being carried on board. Travellers can send items weighing up to 500 grams per package, select the delivery destination, and pay for the service at the machine.

May 12, 2017

EUROPE: *UPSPressRoom*: UPS Express Critical service launched in Europe for urgent, time-critical shipments that require special handling such as aircraft parts or surgical tools. Such services are vital to the healthcare, manufacturing and aerospace sectors when speed of delivery matters most. A UPS team assesses the shipping request through a round-the-clock contact center, identifies transportation alternatives and implements a delivery solution that meets time and cost requirements. UPS Express Critical® options include air, charter, surface and a personal courier who can carry the shipment by hand from origin to destination on a commercial flight.

NEPAL: *HimalayanTimes*: Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri on Thursday said the development projects running in Nepal under Indian support would soon be completed. At a felicitation programme organised by Nepal-India Friendship Youth Association here in Janakpur, the Indian envoy shared that the postal highway – the most important among the running projects – would be completed within a year.

May 10, 2017

NIGERIA: *DailyPost*: Relying on the importance of Nigeria Postal Services which was once the most vibrant means of conventional communications, the Senate on Wednesday vowed that NIPOST must be brought to life. In his ruling, Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu stressed that NIPOST was still relevant despite the revolution of social media that tends to take away some of its services. He added that the reform would generate jobs for young Nigerians as well as its financial benefits, while it passed through second reading. “I want to congratulate Nnaji for the bill, I think that NIPOST is still very relevant despite the advent of social media and more so that it will generate jobs and revenues,” Ekweremadu maintained.

UNITED KINGDOM: *BedfordshireNews*: POSTIES at five Bedfordshire delivery offices walked out in an unofficial strike on Monday - over the suspension of two union reps. The workers in Bedfordshire, along with those at four Buckinghamshire offices, marched for the doors after charges of misconduct were laid at the feet of two Communication Workers Union (CWU) representatives in connection with overtime pay. The 24-hour strike affected delivery offices in Bletchley, Brinklow, Kiln Farm, Dunstable, Leagrave, Luton, Bedford, Newport Pagnell and Leighton Buzzard.

May 9, 2017

KENYA: *FootPrint2Africa*: The Information, Communications and Technology Cabinet Secretary of Kenya, Joe Mucheru said government, policy makers and international organizations can use postal networks as a platform to design strategies to foster financial inclusion in Africa. He added that posts are better positioned to bank women, the poor, the less educated and those in the informal sector that are underserved by other financial institutions. The Universal Postal Union’s 2016 *Global Panorama on Postal Financial Inclusion* report found that two billion people globally have no access to financial services. Mucheru also called for increased adoption of e-commerce on the continent to unlock socio-economic transformation.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: *Post&Parcel*: Emirates Post Group has opened its first “Customer Happiness Center” in Al Bada’a off Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai. In addition to the usual postal and non-postal services, the centre will provide VIP services, a recreation area for the elderly and a fun corner for kids. As previously reported, Emirates Post Group has embarked on a project to give its post offers a more uniform and “customer-friendly” look under the theme ‘We Deliver Happiness’.

UNITED KINGDOM: *Post&ParcelTechnology*: DHL Supply Chain has purchased four Sawyer robots as the first step of its UK and Ireland (UKI) robotics deployment program. Sawyer robots are some of the most advanced collaborative robots on the market and can support production and warehouse staff by automating repetitive tasks. The four robots will allow DHL to leverage automation

flexibly, moving the robots between different sites in support of seasonal demands. The robots will be used across its 19 contract packing and Production Logistics centers nationwide. The four Sawyer robots have been bought following successful trials packing pet food, confectionery, aerosols and canned drinks. Following this initial investment, DHL plans a strategic investment of over £1m (US\$1.3m) in the next 12 months to enhance its commitment to robotics and automation.

May 8, 2017

AFRICA: [newsxihuanet](#): The UN specialized agency for the postal sector will assist Africa to set up a continent-wide e-commerce platform to expand the region's enterprises. Director General of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) Bishar Hussein told a regional telecommunication forum in Nairobi that the platform dubbed Ecom@Africa will unlock the potential of African business globally. According to Hussein, e-commerce is the future for global trade and business and a sure route for the African post to finding relevance as a critical national infrastructure.

INDIA: [AsianNews](#): The postal department of India is designing facilities like cash delivery at doorstep, mini ATMs, post payment banks and withdrawal of cash over mobile for its lakhs of customers all over India. The department is also planning to start core banking facilities that will allow customers to carry out a safe and secured transaction. This move is likely to help the independent functioning of every sub-office. Also, devices akin to mini-ATMs will soon be at people's service. This will not only help in the development of the postal department, but will also help in providing services to the senior citizens and the disabled.

KENYA: [BusinessDayAfrica](#): Kenya is set to host a regional postal hub for distribution of parcels as African governments seek to grow e-commerce as an alternative source of revenue for State-owned postal authorities. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has selected Nairobi as one of six African regional hubs for Ecom@Africa, a project which is supposed to drive the adoption of e-commerce on the continent. UPU will build a virtual e-commerce platform as well as a smart package distribution centre in each of the six countries. "Kenya would become a hub so that anything coming in would be distributed locally by Posta or connected to other countries in the region," said postmaster general Mr Dan Kagwe.

NETHERLANDS: [EcommerceNews](#): AliExpress, the business-to-consumer ecommerce marketplace of Alibaba, has selected Dutch postal service PostNL as the delivery partner for the majority of its packages to the Netherlands. Sellers on AliExpress will get direct access to PostNL's distribution network, while Dutch consumer no longer have to wait for weeks to get their package. The Netherlands have become one of the key destinations for orders placed on AliExpress.com.

PHILIPPINES: [OpenGov](#): The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) of the Philippines is working with a Singapore-based Filipino startup through its Philippine Trade and Investment Center (PTIC) in Singapore, to fix shortcomings of the postal code system in the Philippines and make deliveries more efficient. The startup by four Filipinos from Cebu has developed an app called Geopik, which uses geohashing and geolocation technologies, similar to that used by apps such as Waze or Google Maps, to create a digital address system, with exact, customisable and easy-to-remember single codes. The developers plan to map the address of every residential or commercial establishment in the country.

UNITED KINGDOM: [FinancialTimes](#): In an update on Monday, Royal Mail said its latest valuation of the pension plan showed the annual cost of funding the plan would be £1.3bn, compared to current annual contributions of £400m. The company had previously estimated that the cost of maintaining its scheme could grow to over £1bn a year, and said last month that it would close the "unaffordable" scheme at the end of this financial year. The decision has raised the prospect of the UK's first national postal strike since Royal Mail was privatised four years ago. The Communication Workers' Union last month rejected a new pension offer from Royal Mail, and has vowed to ballot for strike action if the company attempts to impose its plans.

May 6, 2017

IRELAND: [TheJournal](#): Security around Ireland's postal depots has been heightened after Greek terrorists attempted to send a letterbomb to a financial firm in Dublin in March. Additional security measures are being implemented at various postal depots nationwide following the interception of a viable device at a Parisienne postal depot in March of this year. It was to be delivered to a company in Dublin.

May 3, 2017

CANADA: [Post&Parcel](#): The Canada Post segment has reported a profit before tax in 2016 of \$55m, bolstered by "solid growth" in parcels. In a statement issued yesterday (2 May) Canada Post said that 2016 year-end results were still "a positive sign considering the significant challenges facing the company". Canada Post explained: "With declining mail volumes, less than half of the segment's revenue in 2016 was generated by Transaction Mail, or letters, bills and statements. In addition to that issue, the Corporation is faced with the challenges of significant pension obligations, labour costs and the need to invest in network capacity to keep up with growing parcel volumes." The bright spot for Canada Post was the parcels business, where revenue has grown \$521m since 2011 on the back of e-commerce.

GERMANY: [Post&Parcel](#): DPD has become the first parcel delivery firm in Germany to provide an app for Amazon's digital personal assistant Alexa. Michael Knaupe, director customer experience and communications, said, "Intelligent systems for voice control provide an extremely simple possibility for organizing our everyday activities. Amazon's Alexa is an ideal opportunity for DPD of enhancing the customer experience in parcel shipping even further, and extending DPD's market leadership in terms of digital innovations." To enable consignees to identify with specific parcels the DPD app is linked with the company's Parcel Navigator, an online platform for the management of parcels. In addition to Alexa, DPD also intends to use other forms of artificial intelligence and voice recognition in future.

SOUTH AFRICA: [ItWeb](#): Following a period of instability at leadership level, the Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services (DTPS) plans to steady itself by filling deputy director-general (DDGs) vacancies. The leadership crisis led to the exit and suspension of some high-profile officials. Over a period of six months in 2015, the department saw an exodus of three DDGs under

hostile circumstances. These leadership challenges negatively impacted the department's ability to execute functions timeously, as previously admitted by telecoms and postal services minister Siyabonga Cwele.

TURKEY: *DailySabah*: Within the framework of Decree Law No. 690, the Post and Telegraph Organization (PTT), which was transferred to Turkey's Sovereign Wealth Fund, has been added to the list of electronic money issuing organizations. Within the framework of the regulations in the law on Payment and Security Settlement Systems, Payment Services and Electronic Money Organizations, the PTT is now included among electronic money issuers.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION: *Post&Parcel*: Bell and Howell, represented by its CEO Ramesh L. Ratan, has been elected non-postal vice chair of the Universal Postal Union's Direct Marketing Advisory Board (DMAB). The DMAB aims to foster the growth of direct marketing through the mail.

May 2, 2017

NIGERIA: *TeleCompaper*: Nigerian payments service provider Paga and the Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST) have signed a deal aimed at making financial services available to the public through post offices nationwide as service points. This will be done through a Shared Agent Network framework approved by the Central Bank of Nigeria. Paga will expand its mobile money agent network to include post offices in all the Local Government Areas of Nigeria, while giving priority to areas where banking services are limited or otherwise difficult to access. Initially, it will offer deposits and withdrawals from bank accounts and mobile money wallets, utility bill payments and airtime recharge for all telecom networks. Other services such as savings and loans are scheduled for launch in partnership with banking partners.

April 28, 2017

NEPAL: *HimalyanTimes*: Minister for Information and Communications Surendra Kumar Karki on Friday launched Mobile Postal Services operated by the General Post Office, Sundhara and urged all to make the postal service reliable and qualitative. The Office began the Services aimed at providing fast and prompt services and disseminating the information to the doorsteps of the locals in the Kathmandu Valley. Minister Karki added that the Ministry was working out to make the postal service attractive and the first choice of employees, adding that such services would be extended to other parts of the country in the future. It is stated that three vehicles will be mobilised for the Mobile Postal Services.

SOUTH AFRICA: *BusinessLive*: The South African Post Office is putting together a business case to transform it into an "e-commerce hub for Africa", says CEO Mark Barnes. The state-owned postal service was in discussions with the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a UN specialised agency for the postal sector, Barnes said this week. The unveiling of the Post Office's e-commerce strategy comes as the entity has struggled to return to profitability. It is seeking to secure the government's multibillion-rand social grants contract, which would solve its revenue concerns and would keep this money within the fiscus.

UNITED KINGDOM: *FinancialTimes*: Royal Mail's latest pension offer has been rejected by the union representing front-line staff, pushing the postal operator closer to its first national strike since it was privatised four years ago. The company announced earlier this month that it would close its £7.4bn defined benefit pension scheme to future accruals from March 2018, prompting the union to obtain advance approval for a strike ballot. Royal Mail on Friday rejected a package put forward by the union last month, which it said created "inherent risks to the company". It set out a new plan that it described as a "fair proposal that compares favourably with the retirement benefits offered in our industry", adding that it "includes elements" of the union plan.

UNITED KINGDOM: *Reuters*: Britain's Royal Mail said on Friday it was looking at ways to replace the defined benefit pension scheme it plans to scrap at the end of March 2018, after a backlash from unions over the closure of the older scheme. Royal Mail, the British postal service privatised in 2013, said it was one of only a few major companies that still has employees in a defined benefit scheme, a type of pension that pays out according to employees' final salary and length of service. The Communications Workers Union (CWU) opposes Royal Mail's move to close the defined benefit plan and says it would result in employees in the plan losing on average up to a third of their future pensions. Around 90,000 Royal Mail workers are in the defined benefit scheme, whose closure to new members in 2008 resulted in about 40,000 workers joining a less generous defined contribution plan.
