

United States Postal Service

Quarterly Performance for Standard Mail

Overview

For Standard Mail letters and non-saturation flats, the Postal Service's service performance measurement system uses documented arrival time at a designated postal facility to "start-the-clock," and an Intelligent Mail® barcode (IMb™) scan by an external, third-party reporter to "stop-the-clock". Mail piece tracking from IMb™ in-process scans is used in conjunction with the external data to extrapolate results for this entire volume of mail. However, data collected by the Postal Service are provided to an independent, external contractor to calculate service measurement and compile the necessary reports. The system used for this reporting is called Intelligent Mail® Accuracy and Performance System (iMAPS).

The external contractor determines service performance based on the elapsed time between the "start-the-clock" event recorded by the Postal Service and the "stop-the-clock" event recorded by anonymous households and small businesses that report delivery information directly to the contractor. The service measure consists of two parts: (1) how long mail pieces take to get through processing, and (2) how long mail takes from the last processing scan to delivery. The second portion is used as a delivery factor differential to determine the percent of all Standard Mail delivered on the last processing date versus the percent delivered after the last processing date. Service performance is measured by comparing the transit-time to the service standard to determine the percent of mail delivered on time. The service performance measures weigh the available data to best represent postal district, postal area and national level volumes.

The service performance measure for Standard parcels with Delivery Confirmation™, serves as a proxy for measuring service performance for Standard Mail parcels.

The following service performance results combine the results for letter and non-saturation flats performance calculated through the iMAPS system with the proxy data to represent service performance for all non-saturation Standard Mail.

Limitations

During Quarter 1, a pilot system captured the information from a limited number of Standard mailings testing aspects of Full-Service Intelligent Mail®. Systems were not in place to fully measure end-to-end service performance as is intended when the Full-Service Intelligent Mail® system is implemented. Validity of the start-the-clock event and the scope of system coverage had not met intended rigor.

Processes and systems were not in place to support the intended start-the-clock business rules defined in the Service Performance Measurement plan published in June 2008. For this quarter, the start-the-clock event was based on the very first read on mail processing equipment for a piece of mail within a mailing. To be valid, the first read must have occurred at the expected origin processing facility. No critical entry time comparisons were applied to the data. In cases where the mailing was not processed on mail processing equipment, no data existed upon which to start the clock.

Due to limited pilot mailer participation and to limited automated processing for Standard Mail flats, the service performance results are not representative of Standard Mail flats performance. Significant Destination Delivery Unit entry and carrier route presort volumes were not measured during this quarter.

In Quarter 1, systems were not fully in place to measure the service performance for Standard parcels, which represent a small percent of total Standard Mail. As a result, the following service performance results are based on the data available which is primarily Standard letters.

Due to the limited system coverage in Quarter 1, there was not sufficient data to reliably report service performance at the postal district level. The results below present the service performance measures for postal administrative areas and the nation. Note that the limited number of mailing locations most significantly impacts the statistical reliability of the end-to-end service performance measures.

Quarterly Performance for Standard Mail
Mail Delivered Between 10/01/2008 and 12/31/2008

Area	Destination Entry	End-to-End
	% On-Time	% On-Time
Capital Metro Area	87.8%	79.2%
Eastern Area	82.0%	78.6%
Great Lakes Area	87.2%	63.2%
New York Metro Area	99.4%	55.1%
Northeast Area	88.0%	71.8%
Pacific Area	86.0%	45.3%
Southeast Area	90.2%	74.6%
Southwest Area	83.6%	84.2%
Western Area	90.3%	85.8%
Nation	87.4%	77.2%