

BEFORE THE
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

CONFIRM

Docket No. MC2002-1

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
TO INTERROGATORIES OF DAVID B. POPKIN
(DBP/USPS-1-6)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides responses to the following interrogatories of David B. Popkin: DBP/USPS-1-6, filed on May 3, 2002.

Each interrogatory is stated verbatim and is followed by the response.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

Daniel J. Foucheaux, Jr.
Chief Counsel, Ratemaking

Joseph K. Moore

475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260-1137
(202) 268-3078, Fax -5402
May 17, 2002

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DBP/USPS-1 Please advise the approximate time between the time that the actual scan of a mailpiece is made and the time that the data will become available to the mailer.

RESPONSE:

Normally it takes about an hour after the end-of-run process.

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DBP/USPS-2 Please provide information on the permissible locations on the mailpiece that the PLANET code may be placed.

RESPONSE:

See response to OCA/USPS-T1-6.

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DBP/USPS-3 Please confirm, or explain if you are unable to do so, that the decoding of the PLANET code is identical to that of decoding the POSTNET code for the individual digits as well as the check digit after switching the long and short bars. For example, a PLANET code of short-short-long-long-long is the digit zero.

RESPONSE:

The diagram below identifies how each PLANET Code symbol matches to its corresponding digit and POSTNET Code symbol. Each PLANET barcode symbol contains a combination of three tall bars and two short bars, as opposed to the POSTNET barcode symbols which each contain two long and three short bars. As shown below, each PLANET barcode symbol uses a reverse pattern, in terms of long and short bars, to its corresponding POSTNET barcode symbol. This is described in the Confirm Customer Service Guide available on the Confirm web site at www.planetcodes.com.

POSTNET		PLANET
llll	0	llll
llll	1	llll
llll	2	llll
llll	3	llll
llll	4	llll
llll	5	llll
llll	6	llll
llll	7	llll
llll	8	llll
llll	9	llll

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DBP/USPS-4 On lines 9 to 16 of page 5 of USPS-T-2, there is a discussion of the data being reliable and consistent.

- a. What level of reliability and consistency does the Postal Service consider to be acceptable?
- b. What level of reliability and consistency is presently achieved?
- c. If the response to subpart b is not equal to or greater than the response to subpart a, please explain the steps that will be taken to achieve the desired level and the time that it will be achieved by.

RESPONSE:

a. - c. The Postal Service considers reliable and consistent data to mean that, when properly prepared, virtually all PLANET Coded pieces processed on automated equipment are scanned and made available to the subscriber. It is our understanding that this is the case.

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DBP/USPS-5 On page 8 of USPS-T-2, there is a discussion of the uses that the Postal Service will make of this program.

- a. Please advise what steps the Postal Service will take to protect the privacy of the mailer's data.
- b. What uses, if any, will the Postal Service make of information obtained from this program with respect to the destination of mailpieces from specific mailers?
- c. Will the Postal Service make any use of the data with respect to the processing times of mailpieces that can be associated to a specific mailer? If so, please explain.
- d. What access will the Postal Service have to the records that are associated to a specific mailer?

RESPONSE:

a. A system of records is required when an agency has the ability to retrieve a record using a name or some other unique identifier. See 5 U.S.C. sec. 552(a).

Confirm does not create nor store information that is unique to a particular individual.

b.-d. As explained in the testimony of witness Baskshi (USPS-T1), PLANET Code data will be another diagnostic tool at the disposal of postal management to enhance mail processing performance. *Id.* at p. 5. See *also* the response to OCA/USPS-T1-10 for a description of the reports available to Confirm customer and the Postal Service.

To the extent that data generated from a particular Confirm customer assist in improving mail processing performance, it will be utilized. However, the Postal Service does not plan to use customer specific information in any other manner.

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DBP/USPS-6 (a) Please explain the use, if any, that the Postal Service will make of this data to correlate with ODIS data for delivery performance. (b) Same as subpart a except for correlation with EXFC data. (c) Does Price Waterhouse utilize PLANET barcodes for their EXFC mail? (d) If so, please explain and provide information on the use made of the data.

RESPONSE:

- a. The Postal Service does not currently, nor plan to, correlate PLANET Code and ODIS data.
- b. The Postal Service has not performed statistical analyses to correlate PLANET Code data with EXFC results for delivery performance.
- c. Yes.
- d. PLANET Code data are used for diagnostic purposes to determine where, during the processing of the test mailpiece, a deficiency has occurred. This is purely an internal process indicator.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day served the foregoing document upon all participants of record in this proceeding in accordance with section 12 of the Rules of Practice.

Joseph K. Moore

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