

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

STATION AND BRANCH OPTIMIZATION AND
CONSOLIDATION INITIATIVE, 2009

Docket No. N2009-1

RESPONSES OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE INTERROGATORIES
PR/USPS-T2-15 AND T2-18 THROUGH T2-22
(September 1, 2009)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides the responses of witness Kimberly Matalik to Public Representative interrogatories PR/USPS-T2-15 and T2-18 through 22, which were filed on July 31, 2009. Each interrogatory is stated verbatim and followed by the response.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

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**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO INTERROGATORY OF THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

PR/USPS-T2-15

Please refer to your response to PR/USPS-T2-2, your July 17, 2009 revised testimony at page 4 lines 8 through 35, and page 5 line 13 through page 6 line 6.

- a. You state that the Postal Service considers “customer concerns” expressed by mail users in response to questionnaires and community meetings.
 1. Please explain how much advanced notification is given, and how and where that advance notification is provided, to postal customers during the prescreening process and during a discontinuance study informing them of:
 - A. the Postal Service’s review of a station or branch for possible closure or consolidation;
 - B. a public meeting sponsored by the Postal Service to receive customer comments concerning the possible closure or consolidation of a station or branch;
 - C. the availability of a Postal Service customer questionnaire concerning the possible closure or consolidation of a station or branch; and
 - D. other methods of receiving public comment.
 2. Does the Postal Service consider written customer concerns that are not expressed on the questionnaire form? If so, how does the Postal Service communicate this potential avenue of expression to mail users?
 3. Does the Postal Service consider customer concerns expressed by e-mail? If so, how does the Postal Service communicate this potential avenue of expression to mail users?
 4. Does the Postal Service consider customer concerns expressed by phone? If so, how does the Postal Service communicate this potential avenue of expression to mail users?
 5. On page 4, line 21, you state that that one of the things the Postal Service examines is “customer concerns as expressed in response to questionnaires or in a community meeting.” You also state on page 5, line 13 that “For purposes of obtaining customer input, either a public meeting is conducted or responses to a customer questionnaire are solicited.”
 - A. Are there circumstances where the Postal Service will only hold a community meeting and not distribute questionnaires?
 - B. If so, if a potential attendee cannot attend the community meeting, but wishes to voice comments, how does that individual share his or her concerns with the Postal Service?
- b. You state that “questionnaires are placed in each customer’s Post Office box and mailed to carrier delivery customers of the station or branch being considered for discontinuance.”

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PR/USPS-T2-15 (continued)

1. Are the questionnaires mailed to all delivery customers of the station or branch being considered for discontinuance?" If not, please explain how the delivery customers are selected to receive a questionnaire. What percentage of delivery customers receive a questionnaire?
2. What are the methods for a mail user to return a completed questionnaire? If one of the methods is by mail, is the postage paid for returning completed questionnaires paid for by the mail user or the Postal Service?
- c. You state that "standard data collection forms and instructions, as well as customer notification letter and questionnaire templates are provided to each District office for use." Please provide copies of these standard data collection forms, instructions, and customer notification letter and questionnaire templates.

RESPONSE

- a. There is no notice or comment during the pre-screening process, since it may result in a determination not to conduct a discontinuance study at all, as has been the true in the overwhelming majority of cases. Accordingly, all discussion below relates to the discontinuance study process
 1. Please see the attached Community Input Field Guidelines. Please also reference USPS-LR-N2009-1/5, pages 18-20 and page 66.
 2. Yes. Lobby notices and other public notices give the title and address of the specific postal official to whom written communications regarding a particular discontinuance study should be mailed, along with information regarding when those communications should be received.
 3. E-mail comments are not solicited or encouraged. E-mails directed to a postal official who has no connection to a particular study and

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RESPONSE to PR/USPS-T2-15 (continued)

no knowledge of whether one is underway, or where it may be in the decision-making process stand the risk of not being forwarded from the recipient to appropriate reviewers in time to be considered before a proposal is acted upon.

4. E-mail comments are not solicited or encouraged for the same reasons as were expressed in response to subpart (3) above. In addition, the Postal Service has set aside no resources to transcribe customer comments in relation to the SBOC Initiative.
5.
 - a. Yes.
 - b. By writing to the official identified on the lobby notice, the public notice or the questionnaire.
- b.
 1. Yes. However, in areas where there are a large amount of carrier delivery customers, districts have the option of soliciting input through a public notice in a local newspaper.
 2. Customers may return a completed questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope that is provided to the recipient. If a public notice in a newspaper is used, customers can provide their comments to the person and address identified in the newspaper, or they may visit the office to complete a questionnaire and return their questionnaire to the person identified as the contact.

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RESPONSE to PR/USPS-T2-15 (continued)

- c. Data collection forms – see USPS Library Reference N2009-1/6, pages 2-2-7, 16-20.

Instructions -- see the attachment accompanying the response to subpart (a)(1) of this interrogatory.

Customer notification letter -- see USPS Library Reference N2009-1/6, page 8 and the response to APWU T2-2.

Questionnaire templates -- see USPS Library Reference N2009-1/6, pages 9-10.

Matalik, Kimberly I - Washington, DC

From: Matalik, Kimberly I - Washington, DC
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2009 3:45 PM
To: Beach, Thomas L - Eastern Area Office, PA; Digiacomio, Nancy A - Eastern Area Office, PA; Doran, William - Windsor, CT; Hatten, Derek F - Gaithersburg, MD; Herrera, Pattie M - Denver, CO; Johnson, Mildred L - Memphis, TN; Miley, Kenneth W - Dallas, TX; Mummy, Judi A - San Diego, CA; Raizada, Max - Denver, CO; Robleski, Robert 1 - Bloomingdale, IL; Rudez, Richard W - Washington, DC; Ryan, Mary L - Windsor, CT; Stillmunkes, Patricia A - Denver, CO; Stubbs, Sarah A - Pittsburgh, PA; Utzinger, Thomas H - Newark, NJ; VanGorder, Alice M - Memphis, TN
Cc: Frey, Greg A - Washington, DC
Subject: FW: Community Input

Attachments: CommunityInputGuidelines.doc; Public Notification SBO.doc

SBOC Coordinators:

Attached are field guidelines for soliciting community input for the Station and Branch Optimization and Consolidation effort. Additionally, also attached is a template with instructions on posting public notices with local newspapers. Your districts should follow existing process for placing public notices in local newspapers. Funding for public notices will be the responsibility of the District. Districts should work directly with local newspapers, classified advertisement department, to publish Public Notices. Please share the attached with your districts.



CommunityInputGui Public Notification
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**Station and Branch Optimization and Consolidation Initiative
Community Input
Field Guidelines-as of July 15, 2009**

As part of the discontinuance process for Classified Stations and Branches, customer input is solicited either through a Community Meeting or Customer Questionnaire (Handbook PO-101, Post Office Discontinuance Guide, Chapter 7).

The community input stage of the process occurs after the Authorization to Study has been approved by the District Manager and the investigative stage where data is collected and service alternatives are analyzed. If it is determined by local management, after reviewing and analyzing the data collected, that the proposed change is warranted and customers have ready access to essential postal services, then customer input will be sought based on one or more of the following from the requirements in the USPS Handbook PO-101:

1. **Mailed Questionnaire with Notice Posted in Lobby:** A letter describing the proposal and a questionnaire from the District Manager (or designee) -be mailed to delivery customers (Post Office Box and Carrier Delivery customers) of that station or branch along with a self-addressed stamped envelope for the questionnaire to be returned. A notice describing the proposal also will be posted in the lobby of that station or branch and questionnaires will be made available to walk-in retail customers upon request. All letters or notices shall specify the date (minimum of 10 business days) by which completed questionnaires or written comments should be received. Sample notices and questionnaires are available in the Post Office Closing Standard Language (POCSL), or Handbook PO 101, and Facilities Database System.
2. **Mailed Questionnaire to PO Box customers with Printed Newspaper Print Notice:** In cases where the station or branch serves as a substantial number of carrier deliveries within the service area of the Post Office to which it reports, the District may elect the option to choose to publish Public Notices in a local newspaper directed at those delivery customers. The Public Notice does not replace notification to the Post Office Box customers. Post Office Box Customers must be sent a letter and questionnaire as stated in #1 above. The local newspaper notice must include information describing the proposal, address(es) of where comments can be sent, a location where questionnaires can be obtained, and the date by which completed questionnaires and written comments should be received. This option would only apply to areas with large carrier delivery customers. Standard Template for Public Notices is attached. The Public Notice must run in the local newspaper for 5 business days. Advertising funds cannot be utilized for this purchase. This can be purchased with local funds using IMPAC card and in most daily papers, is purchased through the classified departments.
3. **Community Meeting with Mailed Notice and with Newspaper Print Notice and Notice Posted in Lobby.** A community meeting may also be held. Notices for the meeting to delivery customers of the station or branch shall contain a description of the proposal and be mailed to delivery customers at least 10 business days before the scheduled date of the meeting. Notice shall be posted in office lobbies at least 10 business days before the scheduled date of the meeting. In cases where the station or branch serves as a substantial number of carrier deliveries within the service area of the Post Office to which it reports, the District may elect the option to choose to publish Public Notices in a local newspaper directed at those delivery customers. Sample notices are available in the Post Office Closing Standard Language (POCSL), Handbook PO 101, and starting next week in the Facilities Database.

In all cases, local Postal Service management must analyze the information received from the customers input before submitting a proposal to Headquarters for review.

Final Customer Notification after Headquarters Decision

After a final decision has been made by Headquarters, Districts should notify delivery customers of the effective date of the consolidation and where postal services can be obtained. Additionally, a copy of the notice should also be posted in the lobby to notify walk-in retail customers. In cases where the station or branch serves as a substantial number of carrier deliveries, a newspaper public notice may be used to announce the discontinuance. However, it is recommended that what ever communication vehicle you used in soliciting input, that you also use the same when sending out final notification to customers on the discontinuance.

**Station and Branch Optimization and Consolidation Initiative
Community Input
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3. **Community Meeting with Mailed Notice and with Newspaper Print Notice and Notice Posted in Lobby.** A community meeting may also be held. Notices for the meeting to delivery customers of the station or branch shall contain a description of the proposal and be mailed to delivery customers at least 10 business days before the scheduled date of the meeting. Notice shall be posted in office lobbies at least 10 business days before the scheduled date of the meeting. In cases where the station or branch serves as a substantial number of carrier deliveries within the service area of the Post Office to which it reports, the District may elect the option to choose to publish Public Notices in a local newspaper directed at those delivery customers. Sample notices are available in the Post Office Closing Standard Language (POCSL), Handbook PO 101, and starting next week in the Facilities Database.

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Instructions Public Notice to Customers

As part of the Station and Branch Optimization and Consolidation (SBOC) initiative, Districts have various options for obtaining customer input.

In cases where the Station or Branch serves a substantial number of carrier deliveries within the service area of the Post Office to which it reports, the District may publish notices in a local newspaper directed at those delivery customers. Note: Public Notices do not replace notification to Post Office Box Customers. Post Office Box customers must be sent a letter and questionnaire as described in # 1 of the Community Input Field Guidelines. The attached template has been developed to facilitate customer notification via local newspaper print ads. Funding for newspaper publication of the Public Notice is the responsibility of the local District. Districts should work directly with local newspapers, classified advertisement department, to publish Public Notices. Public Notices do not require advertising funds or approval from HQ Advertising. Funding for the public notices can be paid via IMPAC along with an approved e-Buy. Public Notices should be posted in local newspapers for five business days.

Key to localizing template

1. Include the ZIP Code Area(s) of the carrier delivery customers impacted by the proposed consolidation.
2. Enter the Station or Branch Name that is proposed for consolidation, and strike through or delete either Station or Branch, as appropriate.
3. Enter the complete address of the Station or Branch being proposed for consolidation.
4. Enter the 5-digit ZIP Code area(s) of the impacted carrier delivery customers.
5. Enter the Name of the Gaining Station or Branch that will absorb deliveries if the office is consolidated, and strike through or delete either Station or Branch, as appropriate.
6. Name of the Station or Branch where accountable mail and/or parcels will be picked-up if the office is consolidated, location's complete address, and strike through or delete either Station or Branch, as appropriate.
7. Name of the Station or Branch proposed for consolidation.
8. Name of the Station or Branch, including address, which will absorb retail services if the office is consolidated, and strike through or delete either Station or Branch, as appropriate.
9. Complete address of the Station/Branch identified in (8)
10. Include a date when responses should be returned. At a minimum, allow customers 10 business days to provide their comments.
11. Include the Name and complete address of the Station or Branch where customers may visit to complete a questionnaire.
12. Include the Name and Address of the Station or Branch where customers may mail or drop off their comments to the proposal, and strike through or delete either Station or Branch, as appropriate.

- Public Notice -

Postal Customers in ZIP Code Areas ____ and ____ (1)

Changes in consumer preference and recession-related declines in mail volume have reduced U.S. Postal Service revenues. Operation of the Postal Service is paid for by postage and fees paid by our customers. The Postal Service receives no operational subsidy from taxes. Current economic conditions require that we review all postal operations for opportunities to streamline processes and provide service more efficiently.

Accordingly, we are considering consolidation of retail and delivery operations at the (2) _____ Station/Branch, located at (3) _____.

If you are currently receiving letter carrier delivery in ZIP Codes (4) _____, and _____, we are proposing to relocate the letter carriers that serve these ZIP Code areas to the (5) _____ Station/Branch.

As a result, there may be slight differences in the time of day during which delivery occurs for some customers. Otherwise, any mail pickup of parcel and signature items would move to the (6) _____ Station/Branch, located at _____ (6).

Retail services, including post office box rental, now provided at the (7) _____ Station/Branch would move to the (8) _____ Station/Branch located at (9) _____.

The Postal Service operates to serve our customers. We value your opinions during this review process.

You may provide your written comments to the address below by (10) _____ or visit the (11) _____ Station/Branch located at _____ (11) to complete a customer questionnaire.

Thanks for working with us to ensure the continuation of reliable, timely, efficient and affordable service.

(12) _____ Station/Branch

Post Office Box 1
Anytown, USA 00000-0000

**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO INTERROGATORY OF THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

PR/USPS-T2-18

Please refer to PR/USPS-T2-4 and your response to that interrogatory. In PR/USPST2-4, the Public Representative asked for an explanation as to how Headquarters identifies stations and branches for review. You responded by pointing to testimony that stated "The immediate focus of this Optimization Initiative is upon stations and branches subordinate to EAS-24 and above Post Offices." Other than directing district managers to review stations and branches subordinate to EAS-24 and above Post Offices, does Headquarters provide area or district managers any guidance as to how to prioritize the review of the stations and branches within a given district or area? If so, please provide such guidance. Is the responsibility on how to best prioritize the review of stations and branches within a given district or area left to the discretion of the district managers or other managers? Please explain.

RESPONSE

Please see the response to PR/USPS-T2-21(a).

**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO INTERROGATORY OF THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

PR/USPS-T2-19

Has Headquarters established deadlines, target dates or any milestones for district managers or other managers with respect to the prescreening process or any portions thereof? If so, please provide those milestones, target dates, and deadlines.

RESPONSE

The pre-screening process, originally scheduled for completion at the end of June is essentially complete.

**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO INTERROGATORY OF THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

PR/USPS-T2-20

Please provide copies of all e-mails and other documents sent or received by you that provide guidance, instructions, or responses to questions about the prescreening process portion of the Initiative to or from area or district managers.

RESPONSE

Please see Library Reference N-20091-LR-1/5, Page 7.

**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO INTERROGATORY OF THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

PR/USPS-T2-21

Please refer to your response to PR/USPS-T2-9 where you state that the “prescreening process responds to a management problem respective Area and District offices face in determining which among the 3200 nominees should be studied first as part of a centrally-directed Initiative.” Please also refer to your response to PR/USPS-T2-10.

- a. How do the Area and District offices determine which among the 3200 nominees should be studied first, second, third, etc.?
- b. Other than communicating to the district offices that they should consider the factors listed in your testimony (from page 8, line 16 through page 9, line 25), please confirm that Headquarters and the area offices provide no guidance or instructions to the district offices for determining which among the 3200 nominees should be studied first as part of the prescreening process. If you do not confirm, please explain and provide the other instructions or guidance that the district offices receive to help prioritize which among the 3200 branches and stations should be studied first, second, third, etc.

RESPONSE

- a. The SBOC pre-screening process, which identifies the facilities deemed worthy of further study, can significantly reduce the number of facilities that will be studied. See USPS Library Reference N2009-1/4. Each of the 74 District teams with facilities remaining for study is then free to use its judgment in determining whether there is a need to study stations and branches in the same Post Office service area in concert because of any relationship or close proximity between the facilities, or whether any local factors might require that particular facilities be studied in some particular order.
- b. Please see the response to subpart (a).

**RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS MATALIK
TO INTERROGATORY OF THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE**

PR/USPS-T2-22

Is there any opportunity for public comment during the prescreening process?
If so, please explain those public comment procedures and how the Postal
Service takes those public comments into account.

RESPONSE

No such opportunity is provided.