

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

RETAIL ACCESS OPTIMIZATION INITIATIVE)
)
) Docket No. N2011-1

**RESPONSE OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO PRESIDING
OFFICER'S INFORMATION REQUEST NO. 5**
(October 26, 2011)

The Postal Service respectfully provides its response to Presiding Officer's Information Request No. 5, which was filed on October 7, 2011. The Presiding Officer requested responses by October 14, 2011. The delay in responding was occasioned by ongoing policy review and analysis of the issues raised in the Information Request, together with the need to poll field officials. The Postal Service regrets the delay, but believes that it was important to furnish a response that reflects the conclusion of deliberations on this important matter.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
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October 26, 2011

1. Please refer to the response to interrogatory USPS/NNA T1-5 discussing an example of postal officials prohibiting audio recordings, video recordings and still photographs from being taken at community meetings.

(a) Is it standard Postal Service practice to prohibit audio recordings, video recordings or still photographs from being taken at community meetings?

(b) If so, please describe, explain, and provide any documents related to such practice and the rationale for such activity.

(c) If such practice is discretionary, please identify the level of Postal management that has authority to prohibit audio recordings, video recordings or still photographs from being taken at community meetings.

(d) Please identify the criteria used by Postal Service management to make a determination on whether such a prohibition should occur.

(e) If it is not standard Postal Service practice to prohibit audio recordings, video recordings or still photographs from being taken at community meetings, please describe and explain what steps the Postal Service is taking, or plans to take in the future, to ensure that such activities do not occur.

(f) Please provide a list of discontinuance study facilities where Postal Service representatives have prohibited audio recordings, video recordings or still photographs being taken at community meetings since the inception of the Retail Access Optimization Initiative.

RESPONSE

(a) Postal regulations in Handbook PO-101 preclude taping of meetings by postal officials so as not to inhibit discussion by participants (Handbook PO-101 § 251). There was no standard practice with respect to audio or visual taping practices by other persons until recently; prior to that time, decisions on whether to allow or prohibit such practices were made on an ad-hoc basis by postal officials conducting community meetings, often with a primary focus (driven by PO-101) of ensuring that customer inhibition was avoided. Recent discussion of the role the press, and audio and video recordation, have in discontinuance

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community meetings has led to adoption of an open door policy allowing attendees to conduct non-disruptive photography and audiovisual recording at community discontinuance meetings; however, the policy does not change the need for local personnel to maintain order and preventing disruption of meetings. Any deviations from the open door policy should be approved by the Area Vice President in consultation with the Vice President, Delivery and Post Office Operations.

(b) N/A

(c) See response to (a).

(d) See response to (a).

(e) See response to (a).

(f) By polling field officials, the Postal Service has confirmed fourteen instances where some restriction was imposed. The discontinuance studies involved the following offices:

Dewitt, Kentucky 40930

Allendale, Missouri 64420

Cedarcreek, Missouri 65627

Davisville, Missouri 65456

Graham, Missouri 64455

Pickering, Missouri 64476

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Powersite, Missouri 65731

Rockbridge, Missouri 65741

Success, Missouri 65570

Rena Lara, Mississippi 38767

West Meridian Station, Mississippi 39307

Pocasset, Oklahoma 73079

Blandburg, Pennsylvania 16619

Defiance, Pennsylvania 16633