

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

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POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

POSTAL RATE AND FEE CHANGES, 2000

Docket No. R2000-1

OBJECTION OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
TO INTERROGATORY OF DAVID B. POPKIN (DPB/USPS-184) AND MOTION  
FOR LATE ACCEPTANCE  
(April 27, 2000)

The Postal Service hereby objects to interrogatory DBP/USPS-184, filed by Mr. Popkin on April 12, 2000, and directed to the Postal Service. The objection was omitted from the other objections timely filed on April 24th regarding the same set of interrogatories due to the administrative confusion occasioned by Mr. Popkin's strategy of directing large sets of interrogatories to the Postal Service as an institution. The oversight was discovered today, and a copy of this objection is being faxed to Mr. Popkin. Under the circumstances, the Postal Service submits that the three-day delay is not prejudicial.

Interrogatory DBP/USPS-184 reads as follows:

DBP/USPS-184 Please refer to your response to DBP/USPS-110. [a] If a collection box has a 3 PM weekday collection time indicated on it, should a mailer expect that mail placed into the box at 2 PM Monday [not a holiday] will be collected and dispatched on Monday? [b] If a collection box has a 1 PM Saturday collection time indicated on it, should a mailer expect that mail placed into the box at 12 Noon Saturday [not a holiday] will be collected and dispatched on Saturday? [c] If a collection box has a 3 PM holiday collection time indicated on it, should a mailer expect that mail placed into the box at 1 PM on Presidents' Day will be collected and dispatched that day? [d] If your response to subparts a, b, or c is no, please explain why the mailer should not make that assumption. [e] Why should a mailer have any less expectations for a Sunday collection time shown on the box? [f] Confirm that Headquarters directives require if a collection time is shown on a box, the mail must be dispatched on that date. [g] Shouldn't mailers

assume that all window clerks are knowledgeable? [h] If not, please explain.  
[i] In your response to subpart b, are you considering Saturday to be a  
weekday? [j] If not, why is mail processing fully available on Saturday?

The Postal Service objects to responding to this interrogatory because most of it is not appropriate follow-up, and because it seeks information which is not only irrelevant to the material issues in this proceeding, but also largely repetitive of information already provided.

The response to DBP/USPS-110 cited in the question involved mail acceptance issues regarding Priority Mail specifically. In contrast, subparts a.-f. and i.-j. of the instant interrogatory are about collection practices generally. They do not follow up on the earlier response. Only subparts g.-h. have any nexus to the earlier response.

Moreover, to the extent that this interrogatory seeks detailed information about specific scenarios regarding times of mail deposit and collection box labels, information at this level of operational detail is irrelevant and cumulative. The Postal Service has already responded to other inquiries that it is committed to providing dispatch service consistent with its national policies and the collection times indicated on collection box labels. To whatever extent, if any, the Postal Service has isolated collection boxes with labels which are not consistent with national policy (e.g., that indicate a regular Sunday collection), the presence or absence of such situations (the apparent topic of subpart e.) is irrelevant to the rate making process, and information regarding it is not needed to litigate legitimate issues in this proceeding.

The subparts (g.-h.) regarding the knowledge of window clerks are trivial. The reference in the response to DBP\USPS-110 to "knowledgeable" window clerks was to

highlight the possibility that a particular window clerk may be aware of atypical situations and may pass that information along to customers. Under situations in which the clerk does not purport to possess knowledge of any special circumstances (i.e., is not, in that very limited sense, "knowledgeable"), the customer should not have any expectations other than those consistent with standard practice. The intent of this usage was abundantly obvious in the context in which it was presented. Mr. Popkin seems to be stretching to manufacture the opportunity to generate a follow-up to the response, to which he has then added completely unrelated subparts. Once again, however, any response to these subparts would be irrelevant to the issues in this proceeding.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

Daniel J. Foucheaux, Jr.  
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Eric P. Koetting

**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.



Eric P. Koetting

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