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

CONFIRM

Docket No. MC2002–1

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
WITNESS BAKSHI TO INTERROGATORIES OF AMERICAN POSTAL
WORKERS UNION
(APWU/USPS–T1–1-8)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides the responses of witness Bakshi to the following interrogatories of American Postal Workers Union:

APWU/USPS–T1–1-8, filed on May 31, 2002.

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

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

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June 12, 2002

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE WITNESS BAKSHI
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APWU/USPS-T1-1. What information on a mail piece can the Advanced Facer Canceller System read? What barcodes is the Advanced Facer Canceller System capable of reading? Is the Advanced Facer Canceller System capable of being programmed to read PLANET barcodes? Has it been programmed to read PLANET barcodes? If not, is it anticipated that the Advanced Facer Canceller System will be programmed to read PLANET barcodes?

RESPONSE:

The basic function of the Advanced Facer Canceller is to face and cancel stamps on letter mail-pieces. The AFCS places letters in stackers in accordance with their facing. FIM bars are detected and grouped together in a separate stacker. There are no plans to program the AFCS to read PLANET codes. *See* answer to APWU/USPS-T1-2.

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APWU/USPS-T1-2. It appears that the Advanced Facer Canceller System is not included as a piece of equipment used to scan CONFIRM mail. Why not? Is it anticipated that the Advanced Facer Canceller System will be used to scan CONFIRM mail in the future? If not, why not. If so, when?

RESPONSE:

Mail volume to the AFCS comes from the collection mail stream. When the AFCS is operated in "image lift" mode the complete image of the address side of the mail piece is available at the RCR. This image contains the PLANET code and all other codes on the face of the mail-piece. Our strategy to read PLANET codes from mail-pieces that are fed through AFCS does NOT involve modifications to the AFCS. The modifications occur at the RCR where recognition logic is used to read and attribute the PLANET code to the mail-piece. This work is currently being done and will become available in future RCR software releases.

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APWU/USPS-T1-3. How many mailers have applied to participate in the CONFIRM trial program? How many have had their PLANET codes approved for use? How many active users are there?

RESPONSE:

As of June 3, 2002, there are 275 mailers that have applied to participate in Confirm. Of those mailers, 124 have completed the certification process and have been activated on the Confirm system.

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APWU/USPS-T1-4. Please provide a distribution of the number of participants in the CONFIRM trial program by type of mailer. For example, how many are first class workshare letter mailers, periodical mailers, standard class flat mailers, resellers of PLANET codes, etc. How were these mailers selected? Were these mailers self-selecting or did the Postal Service solicit the participation of certain mailers in order to collect information about different uses of CONFIRM? Do you anticipate that this distribution is representative of the mailers that will use the program? If not, what do you anticipate to be the distribution of mailers and mail pieces that will use the system and on what do you base this belief

RESPONSE:

The information requested does not exist. Mailers are self-selecting in their

participation in Confirm.

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APWU/USPS-T1-5. How has the Postal Service used the data gathered from the ASN scan? Since the Postal Service began using the ASN scan, what percentage of the pieces in a CONFIRM mailing have actually been scanned? Please provide this information by mail type. For example, first class workshare letter mail, periodical mail, standard class flat mail, resellers of PLANET codes, etc. What percentage of pieces with PLANET codes in a mailing are scanned?

RESPONSE:

The Postal Service uses data generated from the entry scan to: 1) provide notification (via email or FTP) to the mailers as to when and where their mailing was induced into the Postal Service; and 2) determine a location where and date/time when a mailing was dropped so that this mail can be incorporated into service performance measurement for mail pieces that receive a "finalized for delivery" processing scan. Scan rates on mail pieces are not compiled or calculated; mail piece scan data remains on the system for only 15 days. Scan rates on individual mail pieces depend on a number of variables such as presort level, ZIP Code, etc. 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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APWU/USPS-T1-6. What is the average number of times a piece of mail with a PLANET code gets scanned by mail type? For example, f[F]irst c[C]lass workshare letter mail, periodical mail, standard class flat mail, resellers of PLANET codes, etc.

RESPONSE:

From what we understand from Operations, a typical Confirm mail piece would receive about 3 scans. This is for all types of Confirm mail. There is no information specific to mail type.

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APWU/USPS-T1-7. Is the start-the-clock information generated by the ASN Barcode reported to the mailer? Can it be reported to the mailer on request? How is this information used internally by the Postal Service?

RESPONSE:

Yes. The start-the-clock information, generated by the scanning of the Shipment ID Barcode, is reported to the mailer. This information can be used by the Postal Service to determine when the mailing was induced into the Postal Service (*see* response to APWU/USPS-T1-5).

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APWU/USPS-T1-8. In the following situations, what scans should a CONFIRM mailer expect to see?

1) A letter in a FCM 5-digit presort mailing.
2) A letter in a FCM 5-digit presort mailing with an unreadable postnet barcode.
3) A UAA letter in a FCM 5-digit presort mailing that is
   a) Returned to sender
   b) Forwarded.
4) A letter in a non-presorted bulk business mailing.
5) A UAA letter in a non-presorted bulk business mailing that is
   a. Returned to sender
   b. Forwarded.
6) A letter in a non-presorted bulk business mailing with an unreadable postnet barcode.
7) A CRM letter.
8) A BRM letter.

RESPONSE:

The Postal Service has not studied individual mailflows, including those requested in this interrogatory, with respect to the number of PLANET Code scans that will occur. However, a number of factors will affect the number of scans including the geographic deployment of equipment (e.g., whether a delivery area has DPS, and whether that DPS is achieved with CSBCS or DBCS equipment), the origin-destination characteristics of an individual mailpiece, the readability of the Planet code, etc. See responses to OCA/USPS-T1-26-31 and OCA/USPS-T1-1f.

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.

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Joseph K. Moore

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