

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, 1997)

Docket No. R97-1

OFFICE OF THE CONSUMER ADVOCATE
INTERROGATORIES TO UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
WITNESS MICHAEL W. MILLER
(OCA/USPS-T23-8-11)
September 16, 1997

Pursuant to sections 25 and 26 of the Rules of Practice of the Postal Rate Commission, the Office of the Consumer Advocate hereby submits interrogatories and requests for production of documents. Instructions included with OCA interrogatories 1-7 to the United States Postal Service dated July 16, 1997, are hereby incorporated by reference.

Respectfully submitted,



GAIL WILLETTE

Director

Office of the Consumer Advocate



SHELLEY DREIFUSS

Attorney

OCA/USPS-T23-8. Please refer to LR H-130, the 1997 OCR/RBCS Accept and Upgrade Rates Study. At page 2 it is stated: "For any piece where the OCR cannot read the address, the electronic image is sent to a remote encoding center (REC) where someone working at [a] computer terminal keys in certain information contained in the image. This information is used to determine the correct barcode for the mail piece."

- a. Does the Postal Service have minimum image processing standards that REC workers must meet? If so, please describe. Indicate whether these standards differ for career, transitional, and contract employees. If the standards differ, please explain why they differ.
- b. Do salary incentives exist for REC employees to exceed certain processing levels? If so, please describe. Indicate whether these standards differ for career, transitional, and contract employees. If the standards differ, please explain why they differ.

OCA/USPS-23-9. Does local mail exist which completely bypasses the operations described in H-130, e.g., mail deposited at a local postal facility in a "local box" which is hand sorted and distributed to the route carriers? If so, please describe.

- a. If such local mail exists, please quantify the amount by class of mail.
- b. If such local mail exists, how does the Postal Service costing methodology take it into account?

OCA/USPS-T23-10. Please refer again to page 2 of H-130. It states, in relevant part:

The two pieces of equipment involved in the study are the OCR input sub system (ISS) and the BCS output sub system (OSS).

The ISS is a feature on certain OCRs that will take an electronic image of the address of a mail piece and spray an identifying (ID tag) on the back of the mail piece. For any piece where the OCR cannot read the address, the electronic image is sent to a remote encoding center (REC) where someone working at [a] computer terminal keys in certain information contained in the image. This information is used to determine the correct barcode for the mail piece. The correct bar code is associated with the ID tag and is sent back to the processing facility where it originated. Once the data is received by the processing facility, the mail pieces are run on the OSS. The OSS is a BCS that is able to read the ID tag, find the correct barcode, spray the barcode on the piece, and sort it to the appropriate stacker.

This study is designed to measure the performance of these two operations in several ways. First, for the OCR ISS, this study measures the accept rate, upgrade rate, and encode rate. The accept rate of the machine is simply the percentage of pieces that are fed through the machine that is able to successfully sort to a stacker. The upgrade rate is the portion of accepted pieces that the machine is able to apply a barcode representing the FDOS [Finest Depth of Sort]. The encode rate represents the portion of pieces fed through the machine that it is able to apply a barcode representing the FDOS.

The encode rate, on the other hand, measures the performance of the machine in both accepting and upgrading pieces.

- a. Please now refer to Table 5.1 on page 10. Confirm that the rates listed in Tables 5.1 are percentages, i.e., an accept rate of 0.8735 means that 87.35 of the surveyed mail pieces were accepted. If not confirmed, please explain.

- b. Referring to Table 1, OSS Accept, Upgrade and Encode Rates, please explain why the accept, upgrade and encode rates for Handwritten First-Class collection mail are higher than for all other classes of mail surveyed.

OCA/USPS-T23-11. According to page 7 of H-130, data were collected for ten days, from February 24, 1997 to March 7, 1997.

- a. Why were these dates chosen?
- b. Are the mail flows during this time period representative of the rest of the year? Please discuss.
- c. Would times of increased or decreased mail flows, e.g., the pre-Christmas season, affect the rates shown in the tables? Please discuss. For example, does the efficiency of the machines under examination differ during periods of high mail flow?

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this date served the foregoing document upon all participants of record in this proceeding in accordance with section 12 of the rules of practice.


SHELLEY DREIFUSS
Attorney

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