

Before The
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

Experimental Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box)

Docket No. MC2004-2

OFFICE OF THE CONSUMER ADVOCATE
INTERROGATORIES TO UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
WITNESS L.PAUL LOETSCHER (OCA/USPS-T3-1-6)
June 24, 2004

Pursuant to Rules 25 through 28 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 OCA/USPS-T1-1-16 dated June 18, 2004, are hereby incorporated by reference.

Respectfully submitted,

SHELLEY S. DREIFUSS
Director
Office of the Consumer Advocate

Kenneth E. Richardson
Attorney

1333 H Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20268-0001
(202) 789-6830; Fax (202) 789-6819

OCA/USPS-T3-1. Library Reference USPS-LR-2 indicates at page 1 that the sample design for the data collection was based on the selection of ten sample sites selected at random, with probability proportional to total destinating Priority Mail volume in FY2002.

(a) What was the statistical basis for determining the number of sites to be selected, in this case ten? Please provide references to the sampling literature and/or textbooks.

(b) The study indicated that potential stratification variables were not *a priori* thought to be correlated with the density characteristics. Was there any test of this assumption or, alternatively, was there any previously obtained information to substantiate this assumption?

(c) The Library References USPS-LR-2 states at page 3 that 5,368 sample pieces were obtained as a result of the sampling effort. Please provide the statistical analysis that determined the desired sample size as well as associated levels of confidence and/or any other available relevant statistical information.

(d) Please discuss whether and/or how the distribution of the 5,368 sample pieces among the 10 collection sites was related to the statistical accuracy and precision of the sampling effort.

OCA/USPS-T3-2. The Library Reference USPS-LR-2 presents the special study that was initiated to gather the data on the characteristics of Priority Mail. Please provide copies of training manuals, procedural instructions, and other relevant material distributed to data collection personnel.

(a) Please enumerate the training procedures and information provided to the data collection personnel for the data collection.

(b) Please delineate the quality control procedures.

OCA/USPS-T3-3. The Library Reference USPS-LR-2 mentions on page 3 “data processing and cleaning.” What steps were involved in these efforts?

(a) Please indicate the number of pieces of Priority Mail and the characteristics of the pieces eliminated from the analysis as a result of the implementation of these processes.

(b) Given that a special study was implemented to gather the data, please denote the reasons for needing to implement a cleaning process, if in fact the process involved any major amount of elimination of data from the study.

(c) Please indicate if the cleaning process was perfunctory, involving the elimination of only a small amount of data.

OCA/USPS-T3-4. On page 2 of the Library Reference USPS-LR-2, is the statement “Sample selection was determined by how best to sample for the selected SCF while not interfering with operations and retaining sufficient time to select and record sample pieces for the sample site.”

(a) Please expand on this statement.

(b) Please indicate whether this procedure biased the sample. If the answer is “No”, please explain why such a procedure did not bias the sample.

OCA/USPS-T3-5. The Excel workbook file “Cubic Feet Distribution LR.xls” listed in Library Reference USPS-LR-2, Appendix A, has no headings for other than column A, although one would assume that the headings in “cubic ft dist txt” is related to the data.

Since there is not a one to one match between the headings of the two files, please provide the headings for "Cubic Feet Distribution LR.xls".

OCA/USPS-T3-6. Please explain your understanding of the Commission's requirements for the development of a statistical sample and how the sample presented in this case fulfills the requirements.