

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

EXPERIMENTAL PREMIUM
FORWARDING SERVICE

Docket No. MC2005-1

RESPONSES OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
WITNESS ARNETTA L. COBB TO INTERROGATORIES OF
THE OFFICE OF THE CONSUMER ADVOCATE (OCA/USPS-T4-23-24),
REDIRECTED FROM WITNESS KOROMA
(February 11, 2005)

The United States Postal Service hereby files the responses of witness Arnetta L. Cobb to the following interrogatories of the Office of the Consumer Advocate: OCA/USPS-T4-23-24, redirected from witness Koroma and filed on January 27, 2005.

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

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

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TO OCA INTERROGATORY, REDIRECTED FROM WITNESS KOROMA

OCA/USPS-T4-23. Please refer to your testimony, Attachment A, the “MC2005-1 Data Collection Plan,” and your response to OCA/USPS-T4-15, where it states, “Some complaints would end up in the existing system for collecting, analyzing and responding to customer complaints that is overseen by the Postal Service’s Consumer Advocate.”

- (a) Please describe “the existing system,” including the organizational relationship between any component parts, such as the Consumer Advocate at postal headquarters, the USPS Call Center, the “email Us” at http://hdusps.esecurecare.net/cgi-bin/hdusps.cfg/php/enduser/ask.php?_sid=IXcRMAwh&p_lva= on the Postal Service’s website, and consumer affairs managers and officials in field/district/local facilities and offices.
- (b) Please explain the process by which consumer complaints are collected, analyzed and responded to under “the existing system,” and any component parts described in subpart (a), above. Will this process be applicable to PFS customer complaints? Please explain.
- (c) Please identify and describe the types of information or data collected from customer complaints by “the existing system,” and any component parts described in subpart (a), above. Will the same or similar types of information or data be collected from PFS customer complaints? Please explain.
- (d) Please describe and explain in what form the information and data collected from customer complaints under “the existing system,” and any component parts described in subpart (a) above, are recorded, organized, managed and maintained. Will the information and data collected from PFS customer complaints be recorded, organized, managed and maintained in the same form? Please explain.
 - (i) Please explain how persons collecting information and data under “the existing system” generally, and for PFS customer complaints, would record such information and data. Provide examples of physical and electronic forms or pages used.
 - (ii) Please explain in what form the information or data at the time of collection is recorded under “the existing system” generally, and for PFS customer complaints, i.e., in narrative or text form, or grouped or categorized, etc.
 - (iii) Please provide the name of each program or data base in which the information and data collected under “the existing system” is recorded, organized, managed and maintained, and the relationship between each program and data base.
 - (iv) Please explain whether each program and data base is “searchable” so as to permit research by specific class of mail, problem, etc., including PFS, if recommended and approved.

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- (v) Please explain how long information and data that is collected and recorded in electronic form are retained under “the existing system.” Specifically, how long would customer complaint information and data collected in FY 2004 be retained by “the existing system?”
- (e) Please identify and describe the types of reports, summaries, or other compilations that are routinely generated under “the existing system?” Will the same or similar types of reports, summaries, or other compilations based on PFS customer complaints be generated under “the existing system?” Please explain.
- (f) Please identify and describe the types of information that are made public with respect to customer complaints under “the existing system?” Will the same or similar types of information be made public with respect to PFS customer complaints under “the existing system?” Please explain.

RESPONSE:

(a)-(b) The Consumer Advocate oversees Headquarters staff, the USPS call centers, the Postal Service website “email Us” function, and field consumer affairs managers and staff. Customer complaints coming in through the call centers and requiring research are entered into the Corporate Customer Contact (CCC) database using the Service Issue Report (SIR) system. Other customer complaints requiring research are entered into the CCC database using the Customer Activity Response and Exchange (CARE) system. Complaints from a wide variety of sources are tracked: Internet (USPS.com), customer service agents (field or headquarters), Congressional inquiry, USPS call centers, walk-in, and letter or correspondence. The Postal Service tries to resolve most inquiries within 48 hours, except that Congressional inquiries and complaints received by letter or correspondence are afforded a longer response window.

The handling of PFS complaints under this existing system is now being considered. Decisions on the appropriate handling would be made only when

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and if PFS is recommended or approved. Without any changes to the existing system, PFS complaints could be categorized under existing categories, such as Priority Mail, hold mail, address changes, and delivery problems. I am confident that I would be able to learn about any PFS-related complaints collected by the Consumer Advocate's system.

(c) The following information is collected from customers: name, address(es), contact number, nature of complaint, and whether a call back is desired.

(d) The complaint system tracks and retrieves historical data and provides reports on all customer issues processed by the Consumer Advocate.

The data are stored and reports are generated from the Corporate Customer Contact (CCC) Database. The development of reports to track PFS complaints is under consideration.

- i. For call center complaints, the customer service agent uses the SIR system to enter the complaint into the CCC Database. Other complaints are entered into CCC using CARE. Both SIR and CARE are electronic systems; I do not have examples of electronic forms, and any PFS-related forms have not been developed.
- ii. The data are captured electronically. Demographic data are captured in fixed fields and complaints are captured in fixed and narrative fields.
- iii. The CCC Database houses all of the complaint information. The CARE and SIR systems are front-end applications for entering, tracking, and retrieving customer complaints. Additionally, a reports

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module that provides trend data for evaluating complaints is contained in the CCC database.

- iv. The database is searchable by contact number, complaint/confirmation number or by type of problem.
- v. The current policy, which is under review, is to retain all complaints for reporting purposes.

(e) Reports, summaries, and evaluations can be based upon location, source, or type of complaint, but specific plans for PFS reports have not yet been developed.

(f) No information about customer complaints is routinely made public, although the Postal Service has provided counts of complaints in Postal Rate Commission proceedings. The complaint system generally is used internally to evaluate trends and to improve service.

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OCA/USPS-T4-24. Please refer to your testimony at page 2, lines 4-7, which refer to “temporary forwarding, permanent forwarding, and hold mail.” For FY 2003 and FY 2004, please provide the number of temporary forwarding requests, permanent forwarding requests, and requests for hold mail.

RESPONSE:

To the best of my knowledge, Hold Mail numbers are not tracked or rolled up nationally. While Hold Mail requests by phone and via USPS.com are documented, manual requests made at local Post Offices are not. In FY03, the Postal Service received 989,022 Hold Mail requests by phone and 651,590 online. In FY04, the Postal Service received 1,057,682 Hold Mail requests by phone and 1,227,831 online. The following are the permanent (P) and temporary (T) forwarding figures for FY03 and 04:

P	2003	42,427,361
P	2004	43,209,412
T	2003	3,210,000
T	2004	3,443,941