

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

POSTAL RATE AND FEE CHANGES
PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW 108-18

Docket No. R2005-1

OBJECTION OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO
INTERROGATORIES OF DAVID B. POPKIN
(DBP/USPS-250, 255, AND 260-262)
(July 21, 2005)

The United States Postal Service hereby objects to interrogatories DBP/USPS-250, 255, and 260-262, filed by David B. Popkin on July 11, 2005.

DBP/USPS-250

This interrogatory reads as follows:

DBP/USPS-250 Please refer to your responses to DBP/USPS-192 subpart c. Please provide the standing of the New York NY post office as compared to all of the other post office offices in the country in [a] total revenue [b] total mail volume and [c] total Express Mail volume.

The Postal Service objects to this interrogatory, which seeks information with respect to a single post office, on the grounds of relevance. At one time an argument could have conceivably been made that this information was relevant to this proceeding, due to the Postal Service's original response to DFC/USPS-76 (in which the Postal Service provided Express Mail information for a single New York City ZIP Code). However, that response has now been revised, and with that revision any argument that this information is relevant completely disappears.

DBP/USPS-255

This interrogatory reads as follows:

DBP/USPS-255 Please refer to your response to DBP/USPS-168 subpart d. Please reanswer Interrogatories DBP/USPS 73-74, et. al if the words "service performance measurement systems" is taken to include not only service performance measurement systems but also include validation systems.

The Postal Service objects to this interrogatory on the grounds of improper follow-up. In interrogatory DBP/USPS-168(d), Mr. Popkin asked the Postal Service whether "an update or correction" to interrogatories DBP/USPS-73 and 74 was required based on the Postal Service's response to OCA/USPS-113. In its response, the Postal Service explained that an update to those interrogatories was not required since interrogatory OCA/USPS-113 discussed a subject matter different from interrogatories DBP/USPS-73 and 74.¹ Mr. Popkin's attempt here to have the Postal Service "reanswer" interrogatories DBP/USPS-73 and 74 does not in any way seek to "clarify[] or add to the understanding" of the Postal Service's response to interrogatory 168, as required by Rule 26(a).² As such, this interrogatory is improper follow-up.

In addition, even if this interrogatory was timely, the Postal Service would object to providing the detailed data requested in DBP/USPS-74 for EMVS on the grounds of privilege and relevance. EMVS is an external measurement system designed to provide an independent validation of PTS Express Mail service performance data. To maintain the integrity of the system, IBM maintains strict control of all information concerning inductions and plans for inductions, and the Postal Service has no access to that data. As such, disclosing such information would be completely counter-productive, especially when one considers its attenuated relevance to this proceeding.

¹ OCA/USPS-113 discusses EMVS, which is a validation system, whereas DBP/USPS-73 and 74 discussed the service performance measurement systems for First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Express Mail (EXFC, PETE, and PTS, respectively).

² See Presiding Officer's Ruling No. R2001-1/40 at 4.

DBP/USPS-260-261

These interrogatories are both follow-ups on DBP/USPS-203, and read as follows:

DBP/USPS-260. Please refer to your response to DBP/USPS-203. The original interrogatory requested the steps and methods to reduce missed collections as it relates to a minimum of four potential methods. [a] Please specifically discuss collection box tests the Postal Service makes and how it reduces missed collections. [b] Please specifically discuss scanning boxes on collection that the Postal Service does and how it reduces missed collections. [c] Please specifically discuss downloading scanning results that the Postal Service does and how it reduces missed collections. [d] Please specifically discuss follow-ups on missed or early collections that the Postal Service does and how it reduces missed collections. [e] Please specifically discuss any other steps and methods taken by the Postal Service to reduce missed collections other than other than implementing the CBMS and establishing dedicated collection routes [the two items provided in your response to DBP/USPS-203].

DBP/USPS-261. Please refer to your response to DBP/USPS-203. [a] Please advise when the Collection Box Management System was implemented and describe the system that was in place prior to its implementation. [b] Please specifically describe how the implementation of the Collection Box Management System helps the Postal Service reduce missed collections.

Both of these questions relate exclusively to postal operations at levels of detail that have no bearing on the Postal Service's instant request for changes in postal rates and fees. Further details of the procedures by which local officials seek to improve operations, beyond those already identified in response to DBP/USPS-203, are not relevant to this case. Notwithstanding Mr. Popkin's insatiable appetite for postal information, there is no nexus between these questions and the material issues which the Commission must consider. Details sought in DBP/USPS-261, for example, of systems which have been superceded by more recent systems, cannot possibly relate to rate recommendations for a prospective test year. The Postal Service objects on the grounds of relevance.

DBP/USPS-262

This interrogatory reads as follows:

DBP/USPS-262. Please refer to your response to DBP/USPS-208. Please specifically describe the points which field personnel have identified as deficiencies in the on time delivery of Express Mail and the steps that are being taken to correct the deficiencies.

The Postal Service objects to this interrogatory on the grounds of burden, relevance, and improper follow-up. As the Postal Service noted in its response to interrogatory OCA/USPS-135, field personnel are entrusted with identifying Express Mail problems and attempting remedial action, since those personnel are in the best position to identify and correct deficiencies; to the extent the field is unable to correct a service issue, they request a network change through the EMCCB process. Any analyses conducted by managers in the field to isolate and fix local Express Mail processing and problems, to the extent that they are recorded, are not centrally compiled. It is patently unreasonable and overly burdensome for the Postal Service to initiate a survey of thousands of field personnel to compile their individual recollections of network operations fixes, especially when one considers the fundamental irrelevance that such an undertaking would have to the issues in this proceeding.

In addition, this interrogatory cannot be read as constituting proper follow-up to the Postal Service's response to DBP/USPS-208, and is thus untimely. In interrogatory 208, Mr. Popkin advanced his interpretation of interrogatory OCA/USPS-64, asserting that the Postal Service had not answered the question that was asked by the OCA, and requesting that the Postal Service answer the OCA's question. In response, the Postal Service noted its belief that its response to OCA/USPS-64(b) answered the question that was asked by the OCA. This interrogatory does nothing to clarify or expand upon

the Postal Service's simple response to DBP/USPS-208, as is required by Rule 26(a), and is thus untimely.

Therefore, the Postal Service objects to the above-referenced interrogatories.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

Daniel J. Foucheaux, Jr.
Chief Counsel, Ratemaking

Keith Weidner

475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20260-1137
(202) 268-6252, Fax -3084