

DOCKET SECTION

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

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POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Docket No. R97-1

POSTAL RATE AND FEE CHANGES, 1997

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
TO INTERROGATORIES OF  
DOUGLAS F. CARLSON  
(DFC/USPS-7-8, 10, 13-14)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides responses to the following interrogatories of Douglas F. Carlson: DFC/USPS-7-8, 10, 13-14, filed on October 20, 1997.

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

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

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November 3, 1997

**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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Kenneth N. Hollies

475 L'Enfant Plaza West, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20260-1137  
November 3, 1997

RESPONSES OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
TO INTERROGATORIES OF DOUGLAS F. CARLSON

**DFC/USPS-7:** Please provide all directives, policies, documents, or other information relating to the factors that a postmaster should consider in establishing the time of day by which mail normally should be distributed to post office boxes.

**RESPONSE:**

Since the time mail is distributed to post office boxes, the cut-off time, depends on many local variables, including how much box mail is received when, the number of box customers, and scheduling and staffing considerations, these decisions are necessarily made at the local level. There are no national directives or other documents informing these decisions. Also, if the normal reviews of postal operations reveal a problem with box cut-off times, postmasters may be presented with recommendations regarding, for example, changes in cut-off times, clerk schedules, or work methods.

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**DFC/USPS-8:**

- a. Does the Postal Service require that customers be informed, via signage or otherwise, of the time by which mail normally will be distributed their post-office box?
- b. Please provide all information that the Postal Service has relating to the average or typical cutoff time for distribution of mail to post-office boxes that the Postal Service communicates to customers.

**RESPONSE:**

- a. No. However, the *Postal Operations Manual* (POM) specifies that various signs, including one indicating when **First-Class Mail** intended for boxes is normally distributed, should be posted if necessary space is available. See POM §125.342 and Exhibit 125.342. Depending upon a given office's operations, other mail -- including First-Class Mail -- may be placed in post office boxes at different times throughout the day as well.
- b. The Postal Service does not keep national data of this type. The time at which mail arrives in the facility is often a key factor in determining the cut-off time for First-Class Mail, so there can be substantial variation. A common cut-off time, however, is 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.

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**DFC/USPS-10.**

Does the Postal Service plan to begin producing any stamped cards that, by their design or other characteristics, will be either more expensive or less expensive to produce than the stamped cards that the Postal Service currently sells?

**RESPONSE:**

There are no plans to produce any stamped cards that are more or less expensive to produce than those we are currently producing. In this regard, according to the Government Printing Office the price charged to the Postal Service for printing single-color cards on the printing press used to produce stamped cards would be the same as the price for printing multi-color cards.

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**DFC/USPS-13.**

Please refer to the response to DFC/USPS-5. To the extent that the *characteristics of stamped cards that are described in DFC/USPS-5 facilitate or are otherwise conducive to processing on OCR's and BCS's*, is this compatibility with OCR's and BCS's attributable to mere chance or coincidence? If not, please reconcile this response with the response to DFC/USPS-5.

**RESPONSE:**

Interrogatory DFC/USPS-5 asked whether any of the characteristics of stamped cards were "selected or designed" with the goal of improving their automation compatibility. When the first sentence of the response used the words "related to improving the automation compatibility of stamped cards", the intent was to respond to the question by explaining that stamped card characteristics were not designed or selected in order to improve the automation compatibility of stamped cards. In that sense, any characteristic that might tend to make the cards automation compatible would be a coincidence.

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**DFC/USPS-14.** Please provide all information relating to the number of CMRA's that receive their mail via caller service, firm holdout, or special arrangements that allow them to receive their mail by carrier delivery earlier in the day than they would receive their mail in the absence of these special arrangements. If specific quantitative information is not available, please estimate the prevalence of CMRA use of caller service, firm holdout, or other special delivery arrangements. If necessary, please use descriptive terms such as "rare" or "commonplace" if quantitative data are not available.

**RESPONSE:**

*The Postal Service does not collect or maintain the requested information. Generally, CMRAs obtain their mail via caller service, firm holdout, special arrangement, or carrier delivery; each of these could fairly be described as "not uncommon."*