

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

POSTAL RATE AND FEE CHANGES, 2006

Docket No. R2006-1

OBJECTION OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO  
DOUGLAS F. CARLSON REQUESTS FOR PRODUCTION (DFC/USPS-49-50)  
(July 21, 2006)

The United States Postal Service hereby objects to DFC/USPS-49-50, filed on July 11, 2006.

**DFC/USPS-49**

This request for production reads as follows:

**DFC/USPS-49.** Please provide the electronic files of Collection Box Management System data that the Postal Service provided to me on September 16, 2005, in response to a court order in *Douglas F. Carlson v. United States Postal Service*. The files subject to this interrogatory contain, for every collection box in the database, the location ID number, box address, description of address, service class, type of box, area of box, posted weekday collection times, posted Saturday collection times, and posted holiday collection times.

The Postal Service objects. This question is closely related to other requests Mr. Carlson has made for collection box-specific operation information. Mr. Carlson has indicated (in his July 11 Motion to Compel a Response to DFC/USPS-35) that the instant question is submitted in order to circumvent the Postal Service's burden objection (July 10) to his June 29 Request for Admission (DFC/USPS-RA-1), which concerned the same CBMS material. Nonetheless, the Postal Service maintains its objection on the grounds of relevance and materiality.

As the Postal Service noted with respect to this CBMS material in its objection to the request for admission:

Fundamentally, even to the limited extent that collection service might be considered a relevant factor in pricing, it is only relevant at a national level. Mr. Carlson requests an admission concerning a plethora of detailed information on every individual collection box in the country. Information at this level of *operational* detail is patently irrelevant and immaterial to the issues presented in an omnibus *rate* proceeding.

### **DFC/USPS-50**

This request for production reads as follows:

**DFC/USPS-50.** Please refer to the response to OCA/USPS-T34-4(g). Please provide the 'expchart' file.

The Postal Service objects on the grounds of relevance, commercial sensitivity, and undue burden. As an initial matter, the scope of this request is unclear. Mr. Carlson has phrased this request as if he is seeking a singular file (i.e., "the 'expchart' file"). However, as witness Berkeley discusses in her response to interrogatory OCA/USPS-T34-4, parts (f) and (g), each origin post office has its own "expchart" file, which is generated onsite through a combination of various raw computer data files and system logic used by the Point-of-Service (POS) ONE and the Integrated Retail Terminals (IRTs). The "expchart" file for each office contains the cut-off times and corresponding service commitments for Express Mail from that office to each destination ZIP Code. It is not apparent whether Mr. Carlson is seeking the "expchart" file for a single origin, or whether he is seeking the "expchart" file for every origin; in either event, however, his request is objectionable on the grounds specified above.

Most fundamentally, the requested information is irrelevant and commercially

sensitive. As noted above, the “expchart” files provide Express Mail cut-off times and corresponding service commitments at the level of individual 5-digit origin-destination pairs. Such operational minutiae about the Express Mail network simply have no relevance to the consideration of Express Mail in this proceeding. In addition, disclosure of such localized and highly specific operational information could clearly be used to the Postal Service’s detriment by its competitors in the competitive market for expedited delivery. As such, this request seeks privileged, commercially sensitive information.

Providing the requested information in a form that would be usable by Mr. Carlson would also be immensely burdensome. Generating an individual “expchart” file and burning it to CD-ROM would take an estimated 3-5 minutes; considering there are over 36,000 such files that can be generated, providing each individual “expchart” file to Mr. Carlson would therefore require thousands of hours of dedicated effort by a team of personnel. Even if the Postal Service were to find a contractor who could, within a reasonable amount of time, write a program that generates the files more efficiently, it would still require a highly significant investment of time, money, and personnel.

In addition, the size of an “expchart” file presents formatting issues that could further compound the burden to the Postal Service. An individual “expchart” file is too large to open completely in Excel, and opening the file in a commonly available alternative program such as Wordpad results in misaligned data. Providing Mr. Carlson with the ability to open an entire file in a usable format would therefore require an undetermined, but undoubtedly significant, additional investment of time and personnel on the part of the Postal Service not included in the estimate above.

Overall, if Mr. Carlson is requesting the “expchart” file for every origin, the burden of providing that information is clearly undue. In addition, even if Mr. Carlson is only seeking the “expchart” file for a single origin, providing the data in a form that is usable and understandable to him would still be unduly burdensome, particularly when one considers the fundamental irrelevance of such detailed operational data to this proceeding.

Therefore, the Postal Service objects to the above-referenced requests for production.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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