

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 INTERROGATORIES OF THE OCA (OCA/USPS-75, 77.d)  
(July 24, 2006)

The United States Postal Service hereby objects to the following interrogatories of the OCA, filed on July 13, 2006: OCA/USPS-75, 77.d.

OCA/USPS-75

The interrogatory reads:

OCA/USPS-75. Please confirm that, in connection with Electronic Postmark (EPM), the Postal Service makes monthly payments to Authentidate.

- a. If this is not confirmed, then explain why not.
- b. Provide a listing of every monthly payment by the Postal Service to Authentidate for the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 year-to-date.
- c. For the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 year-to-date, provide worksheets that present full details of every other operational expense in connection with EPM, including full and/or partial salaries of all Postal Service personnel involved in the marketing and provision of EPM. State the source(s) for the figures used.
- d. Please provide the monthly revenues of EPM for the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 year-to-date.
- e. Provide monthly net loss/net surplus figures for EPM for the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 year-to-date.
- f. Provide monthly volume figures for EPM for the years 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006 year-to-date.

This series of questions essentially seeks monthly data regarding various aspects of USPS EPM, which the Postal Service contends is a non-postal service outside the scope of the Commission's review. That matter, of course, is currently the subject of

another proceeding, Docket No. C2004-1.<sup>1</sup> What is beyond dispute, however, is that USPS EPM is not within the set of services for which the Postal Service has requested a recommended decision on changes in rates and fees in this proceeding. Moreover, the Postal Service has already provided annual revenue and expense information for USPS EPM for FY 2002, FY 2003, and FY 2004 (Docket No. R2005-1, Tr. 8D/4733), and FY 2005 (Attachment G to the Request in this case, page 17 of 46). Breakout of the annual information already provided into monthly data would serve no relevant purpose in this proceeding. Further subdividing expense information between payments to Authentidate and other operational expenses, even on an annual basis, would likewise shed no light on any issue presented for resolution by the Postal Service's instant request for a recommended decision on changes in *postal* rates and fees. Year-to-date information for FY 2006 would be beyond the Base Year, the period of time for which the Postal Service has submitted data even for the subclasses and services which are the subjects of the Postal Service's request. In all respects, therefore, the question lacks the requisite nexus to relevant and material issues in this proceeding. The Postal Service objects to question 75 in its entirety on those grounds.

OCA/USPS-77.d

Question 77 is a lengthy question with a substantial attachment, but it is not necessary to reproduce the complete question in order for the Postal Service to explain its objection to part d. The subject of Question 77 is a program previously under

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<sup>1</sup> One can only presume that the OCA did not pose Question 75 in the EPM complaint case because that proceeding has not (if it ever will) reached the stage in which such inquiries would be relevant to the issues being addressed. Limitations on the current scope of the complaint case, however, provide no justification for seeking to pursue the same matters in an omnibus postal rate proceeding, where any relevant nexus is even more obviously lacking.

consideration by the Postal Service known as In-Person Proofing (IPP). Despite some exploration by the Postal Service of the possibilities, IPP has not developed as a viable operating program. While the Postal Service might consider many of the parts of question 77 potentially objectionable if that were not the case, as the response currently being prepared will indicate, there simply is nothing to report. There would seem to be no point in objecting to these parts of the question. The sole exception is part d.:

- d. Please provide the monthly expenses of IPP since inception. State the source(s) for the figures used.

As explained above with respect to Question 75, monthly data generally constitute an irrelevant level of detail. Even annual data on the expenses associated with an exploratory program, however, would not be relevant in an omnibus rate case. Moreover, because the program is not active, it is not clear what information would be available from prior years. Key personnel may have moved on to other parts of the organization (including the field), and others may no longer be with the Postal Service at all. Unfortunately, the burden of attempting to estimate what the burden of locating information might be is likely to approach the burden of actually tracking down whatever information is available. While that burden might not be huge in the greater scheme of things (particularly if it could be determined relatively quickly that nothing is available anyhow), the entire exercise seems particularly unwarranted in light of the current status of the program. Therefore, the Postal Service objects to OCA/USPS-77.d primarily on

the grounds of relevance, but additionally objects on the grounds of undue burden.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

By its attorneys:

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Eric P. Koetting

### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I have this date served the foregoing document in accordance with Section 12 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure.

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Eric P. Koetting

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