

ORIGINAL

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

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POSTAL RATE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

POSTAL RATE AND FEE CHANGES, 1997

Docket No. R97-1

RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
TO INTERROGATORY OF
DOUGLAS F. CARLSON
(DFC/USPS-19)

The United States Postal Service hereby provides the response to the following interrogatory of Douglas F. Carlson: DFC/USPS-19, filed on November 26, 1997, 1997. Presiding Officer's Ruling No. R97-1/89, issued January 27, 1998, granted in part Douglas F. Carlson's motion to compel responses to these interrogatory parts, as modified by the Ruling.

The pertinent parts of the interrogatory are stated verbatim, followed by the response.

Respectfully submitted,

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

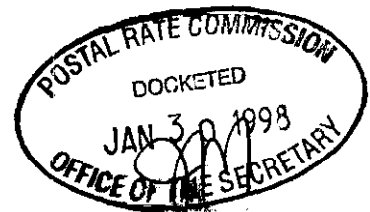
By its attorneys:

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January 30, 1998



RESPONSE OF UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE TO INTERROGATORY
OF DOUGLAS F. CARLSON, DFC/USPS-19

DFC/USPS-19. This interrogatory refers to the response to DFC/USPS-9 and the system revealed in that response that will “monitor whether respective facilities meet their box cut off times.”

- a. When did the Postal Service begin planning this system?
- b. Please provide all documents and other information relating to the reasons why this system was developed.
- c. Please describe the meaning of “in the process of rolling out.” Please provide a timetable for implementation to the extent that one is known.
...
- e. Will this system require all post offices to post a cutoff time for box mail?
- f. If the answer to part (e) is not an unqualified yes, will a post office be able to opt out of or otherwise avoid this new system by removing its signs that indicate cutoff times for box mail? Please explain.
- g. Please explain the difference, if any, between the “scheduled” time for box mail to be finalized and available to customers and the “posted” time.
- h. Will a unit be considered to be on time only if the box mail is *distributed to the boxes* not later than the scheduled and posted cutoff time?
...

RESPONSE:

a-c. The monitoring of box cut off times is part of a larger system that collects information regarding mail delivery in those facilities equipped with the necessary software and hardware. Such facilities tend to be the largest delivery units and now number over 8,000. This system is still being rolled out to additional facilities, with the roll-out constrained by budgetary and business necessities. A theoretical final roll-out would extend to all delivery units, although there is little expectation that a business case can be developed justifying the inclusion of the smallest facilities. Some postal officials believe the system will ultimately be implemented in all delivery offices that are EAS-15 and larger, although no specific timetable has been defined.

The information collected lies at the heart of postal operations, and so is

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treated as commercially sensitive; it is rolled up daily and made available to executives and others as necessary, primarily via queries from desktop computers.

While the system continues to evolve, its creation was requested after the reorganization in 1992. A senior postal official who moved from a regional position before the reorganization to a national one afterwards directed that a system be created which provided data elements he specifically required. An early version of the system was implemented that fiscal year.

- e. No. See the responses to DFC/USPS-7 and 8(a).
- f-g. No. Each delivery unit has a scheduled cut off time for First-Class Mail going to boxes regardless of whether it is posted on a sign in the lobby.
- h. Yes, except that the cut off time does not actually apply to all mail intended for delivery to boxes. See the response to DFC/USPS-8(a).

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.



Kenneth N. Hollies

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