

December 24, 2009

Honorable Shoshana Grove  
Secretary  
Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20268-0001

Dear Ms. Grove:

Pursuant to 39 U.S.C. § 407(d)(2), the U.S. Postal Service is providing a copy of the enclosed document, which concerns new rates for delivery of EMS items under EMS Contractor agreements for traffic originating in the United States and delivered by the following postal operators: Posten Norge AS (Norway); Post Danmark A/S (Denmark); and Swiss Post International Management AG (Switzerland).

Rates for postal operators in Germany and the Netherlands were also listed on the original version of the enclosed document, but the U.S. Postal Service has not signed standard EMS Cooperative delivery contracts with these operators; rather such rates are handled through other instruments. Consequently, information concerning these postal operators' rates is excluded from the document submitted in this filing. Additionally, new delivery rates for Austria were listed on the original version of the enclosed document; however, on December 7, 2009, the Postal Service furnished information concerning the new rates for delivery of EMS items from the U.S. to Austria. As such, the U.S. Postal Service has omitted from the enclosed document new delivery rates specific to Austria so as to avoid the need for further third party notice with this operator.

As information, the Postal Service has marked the non-public version of the document as "Confidential" and "Non-Public" because the document contains information considered confidential and commercially sensitive by the affected postal operator and the Postal Service. The Postal Service considers certain portions of the document to be protected by 39 U.S.C. § 410(c)(2) and thereby not subject to mandatory disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Further, the document contains the commercial information of the affected postal operator, and as such, certain portions of the instrument are subject to protection under Exemption 4 of the FOIA. Consequently, we have attached an application for non-public treatment of the document under 39 C.F.R. § 3007.21. In addition, we respectfully request that the Postal Regulatory Commission coordinate with us in the event that the document becomes subject to a FOIA request, so that we can engage in appropriate consultations with the affected postal operator.

Please feel free to contact me if further information would be helpful.

Sincerely,



Anthony F. Alverno

Enclosures



## "Sensitive Business Information--Do Not Release"

### EMS contracts prices for 2010

EMS Contractor	2009 prices		2010 prices	
	Non-EU	EU	Non-EU	EU
[Redacted]				
<b>Posten Norge AS (Norway)</b>				
Rate per item	[Redacted]		[Redacted]	
<b>Post Danmark A/S (Denmark)</b>				
Total number of EMS items received from all Postal Administrations using the services of the Contractor per year:				
[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]
<b>Swiss Post International Management AG (Switzerland)</b>				
Rate per item	[Redacted]		[Redacted]	

## **APPLICATION OF THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE FOR NON-PUBLIC TREATMENT OF MATERIALS**

In accordance with 39 C.F.R. § 3007.21 and Order No. 225,<sup>1</sup> the United States Postal Service (Postal Service) hereby applies for non-public treatment of the enclosed document pertaining to new rates for delivery of EMS items per EMS Contractor agreements with agencies of foreign governments, which the Postal Service is transmitting to the Postal Regulatory Commission (Commission) in accordance with 39 U.S.C. § 407(d). A redacted version of the document is enclosed with the instant transmittal. The Postal Service hereby furnishes the justification required for this application by 39 C.F.R. § 3007.21(c) below.

**(1) The rationale for claiming that the materials are non-public, including the specific statutory basis for the claim, and a statement justifying application of the provision(s);**

Information of a commercial nature, which under good business practice would not be publicly disclosed, as well as third party business information, is not required to be disclosed to the public. 39 U.S.C. § 410(c)(2); 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(4). The Commission may determine the appropriate level of confidentiality to be afforded to such information after weighing the nature and extent of the likely commercial injury to the Postal Service against the public interest in maintaining the financial transparency of a government establishment competing in commercial markets. 39 U.S.C. § 504(g)(3)(A).<sup>2</sup> Because the

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<sup>1</sup> PRC Order No. 225, Final Rules Establishing Appropriate Confidentiality Procedures, Docket No. RM2008-1, June 19, 2009.

portions of materials filed non-publicly fall within the scope of information not required to be publicly disclosed, the Postal Service asks the Commission to support its determination that these materials are exempt from public disclosure and grant its application for their non-public treatment.

**(2) Identification, including name, phone number, and email address for any third-party who is known to have a proprietary interest in the materials, or if such an identification is sensitive, contact information for a Postal Service employee who shall provide notice to that third party;**

In the case of documents such as the one transmitted here, the Postal Service believes that the postal operators whose rates appear on the document are the only third parties with a proprietary interest in the materials. Due to language differences, cultural sensitivities, and the intricacies of the Postal Service's relationship with the affected foreign postal operators, the Postal Service proposes that a designated Postal Service employee serve as the point of contact for any notices to the relevant postal operators.<sup>3</sup> The Postal Service identifies as an appropriate contact person Brian Hutchins, Manager, International Postal Relations. Mr. Hutchins' phone number is (703) 292-3591, and his email address is [brian.hutchins@usps.gov](mailto:brian.hutchins@usps.gov). The Postal Service has already informed each postal operator, in compliance with 39 C.F.R. §

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<sup>2</sup> The Commission has indicated that "likely commercial injury" should be construed broadly to encompass other types of injury, such as harms to privacy, deliberative process, or law enforcement interests. PRC Order No. 194, Second Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to Establish a Procedure for According Appropriate Confidentiality, Docket No. RM2008-1, Mar. 20, 2009, at 11.

<sup>3</sup> The Postal Service acknowledges that 39 C.F.R. § 3007.21(c)(2) appears to contemplate only situations where a third party's identification is "sensitive" as permitting the designation of a Postal Service employee who shall act as an intermediary for notice purposes. To the extent that the Postal Service's response might be construed as beyond the scope of this exception, the Postal Service respectfully requests a waiver that would allow it to designate a Postal Service employee as the contact person under these circumstances, in light of the practical considerations outlined herein.

3007.20(b), about the nature and scope of this filing and about the postal operator's ability to address any confidentiality concerns directly with the Commission.

**(3) A description of the materials claimed to be non-public in a manner that, without revealing the materials at issue, would allow a person to thoroughly evaluate the basis for the claim that they are non-public;**

As required by 39 U.S.C. § 407(d), the Postal Service is transmitting a document relating to contracts with foreign postal operators that are agencies of foreign governments. The nonpublic materials consist of portions of a document that identifies rates for the exchange of Express Mail Service (EMS) items with the relevant operators. The Postal Service maintains that the redacted portions of this document should remain confidential.

**(4) Particular identification of the nature and extent of commercial harm alleged and the likelihood of such harm;**

If the information that the Postal Service determined to be protected from disclosure due to its commercially sensitive nature were to be disclosed publicly, the Postal Service considers that it is quite likely that it would suffer commercial harm. This information is commercially sensitive, and the Postal Service does not believe that it would be disclosed under good business practices.

Competitors could use the information to assess the offers and representations made to customers by the Postal Service and other EMS providers that contract with the Postal Service for any possible comparative vulnerabilities and to focus sales and marketing efforts on those areas, to the detriment of the Postal Service and other EMS providers. Additionally, foreign postal operators or other potential customers could use the information to their advantage in negotiating the terms

of their own agreements with the Postal Service. The Postal Service considers these to be highly probable outcomes that would result from public disclosure of the redacted material.

**(5) At least one specific hypothetical, illustrative example of each alleged harm;**

Harm: Public disclosure of information in the document would be used by the Postal Service's competitors, as well as competitors of the foreign postal operator with which EMS items are exchanged.

Hypothetical: A competing international delivery service obtains a copy of the unredacted version of the document from the Postal Regulatory Commission's website. The competitor analyzes the document to assess the foreign postal operators' prices and the Postal Service's underlying foreign delivery costs. The competitor uses that information as a baseline to develop lower-cost alternatives.

**(6) The extent of protection from public disclosure deemed to be necessary;**

The Postal Service maintains that the redacted portions of the materials filed non-publicly should be withheld from persons involved in competitive decision-making in the relevant market for international expedited and parcels products (including private sector integrators), as well as their consultants and attorneys. Additionally, the Postal Service believes that, except for foreign postal operators that already have access to this information, actual or potential customers of the Postal Service for products related to Inbound International Expedited Services 2, Outbound Express Mail International, or similar products should not be provided access to the non-public materials.

**(7) The length of time deemed necessary for the non-public materials to be protected from public disclosure with justification thereof; and**

The Commission's regulations provide that non-public materials shall lose non-public status ten years after the date of filing with the Commission, unless the Commission or its authorized representative enters an order extending the duration of that status. 39 C.F.R. § 3007.30. The Postal Service believes that the ten-year period of non-public treatment is sufficient to protect its interests with regard to the information it determined should be withheld due to commercial sensitivity.

**(8) Any other factors or reasons relevant to support the application.**

None.

***Conclusion***

For the reasons discussed, the Postal Service asks that the Commission grant its application for non-public treatment of the identified materials.