

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Before The  
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20268-0001

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POSTAL RATE COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Complaint on Charges for the  
Bulk Parcel Return Service

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Docket No. C99-4

NOTICE OF TECHNICAL AND SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE  
TO EXPLORE RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINT  
(September 8, 1999)

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The Office of the Consumer Advocate ("OCA") hereby gives notice of a technical and settlement conference to discuss resolution of the complaint filed on June 9, 1999, by the Continuity Shippers Association ("CSA"). On September 3, 1999, the Commission issued a Notice of Formal Proceedings to consider the complaint and provided until September 17, 1999, for the parties to explore settlement.<sup>1</sup>

The CSA complaint alleges that the rate for Bulk Parcel Return Service ("BPRS") is excessive. The complaint raises issues concerning the BPRS cost study performed by the Postal Service in October 1998, in compliance with the Commission's recommended decision in Docket No. MC97-4. The complaint also alleges similarities between BPRS service and Special Standard (B) mail

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<sup>1</sup> Order No. 1260, "Order Denying Motion of United States Postal Service To Dismiss Complaint and Notice of Formal Proceeding." Ordering paragraph 4 designated OCA to represent the interests of the general public and to act as

The Commission noted the Postal Service's responses to CSA's allegations, but determined that there was inadequate justification for dismissal of the complaint.

Under the circumstances presented, it is imperative that the parties utilize "appropriate informal inquiry methods to define the issues, further the exchange of information and explanations between the Postal Service and the complainant, and facilitate settlement." Rule 85(a). Because the October 1998 study and the physical operation of BPRS in comparison to other mail services are central to addressing the rate for BPRS service, an informal technical conference is needed as well as an informal settlement conference. Complainant CSA, the Postal Service, and other interested parties are hereby placed on notice that they are expected to have individuals present at the conference who are thoroughly familiar with the BPRS cost study and with the operational characteristics of BPRS service. CSA and the Postal Service are encouraged to discuss the issues raised by the complaint and to share information or proposals in advance of the informal technical and settlement conference

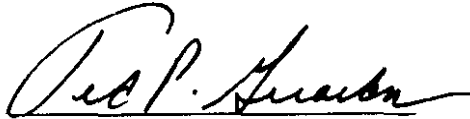
The informal technical and settlement conference will be held September 14, 1999, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in the Commission's hearing room at 1333 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C. All interested persons are welcome to attend the conference, but all such persons are placed on notice that attendance at the conference will not confer party status. Any interested person must file pursuant

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settlement coordinator pursuant to Rule 85 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

to Rule 20 or 20a of the Commission's rules in order to intervene or to obtain limited participation status in the proceeding.

The Secretary of the Commission is requested to arrange for publication of this Notice in the Federal Register.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted P. Gerarden", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ted P. Gerarden  
Director, Office of the Consumer Advocate