

### **Paid suspensions questioned.**

The Grand Rapids (MI) *Press* reports that the Postal Service has been tight-lipped about the circumstances that led to the suspension of dozens of letter carriers last winter.

After hearing allegations that mail was not being delivered, an Office of Inspector General investigation resulted in the suspension of 18 city carriers in Battle Creek (MI) and 59 in Grand Rapids. An OIG spokesperson said that it had been told that mail was being “intentionally discarded or delayed.”

When the OIG finished its review, it returned the matter to the Postal Service “to issue penalties.” But, even though some reports alleged that First-Class Mail was delayed, the agency failed to overcome union grievances defending the suspended carriers, and lost when arbitrators ordered that they be paid for sitting at home, not working.

The carriers’ union was awaiting legal advice before it revealed details, but the Postal Service stayed largely silent, saying only that “the investigation reinforced for carriers [that] every piece of mail is important to someone,” and that “it’s not up to [postal employees] to judge whether every piece of mail is of interest.”

### **“No parking – mailbox.”**

According to *WFAA* (Dallas/Fort Worth), officials in suburban Lancaster (TX) are considering an ordinance that would ban parking in front of a mailbox. The possible legislation was in reaction to residents’ complaints that mail carriers wouldn’t deliver to a blocked receptacle. If adopted, illegal parking in front of a mailbox could cost the offending driver up to \$200.

But not all citizens were supportive of the idea; one was quoted as saying “I would like to see the postman get out and come over here to these boxes if there’s a car blocking and deliver the mail like he should, *like we pay taxes for him to do.*” [Emphasis ours.] Apparently word that taxpayers haven’t supported the Postal Service since the 1970s has yet to reach Lancaster. [TOP](#)

## **USPS Revises ACS, Simplified Address Rules**

In the September 13 *Postal Bulletin*, the Postal Service announced two changes relevant to mailing service providers. Both included revised DMM standards and were made effective immediately.

### **Electronic Service Requested**

In an effort to improve the provision of electronic address correction notices, the Postal Service announced that mailers will be allowed to use a new “Electronic Service Requested” endorsement on mailpieces when either traditional Address Change Service or OneCode ACS is also used.

The Postal Service said the new endorsement would “provide mailers a way to receive more electronic notices of address correction or reasons for nondelivery” by giving USPS personnel “the visual recognition” necessary to direct an undeliverable-as-addressed mailpiece to the appropriate site for processing. In addition, the new endorsement “enhances visual recognition of ACS mail whether the mailer uses traditional ACS (with the participant ID and optional keyline) or OneCode ACS with an intelligent mail barcode.”

Because the “Electronic Service Requested” endorsement can be used only on ACS mailpieces, mailers not enrolled in ACS or using OneCode ACS must continue to use traditional ancillary service endorsements. The announcement included specific DMM revisions:

#### **507.1.5.1 First-Class Mail and Priority Mail**

*[Revise the last sentence in the introductory text of item 1.5.1f:]* \*\*\*The only endorsements permitted for use on First-Class Mail and Priority Mail valid ACS pieces are “Address Service Requested,” “Change Service Requested” or “Electronic Service Requested” subject to the following: \*\*\*\*\*

#### **Exhibit 1.5.1 Treatment of Undeliverable First-Class Mail and Priority Mail**

*[Add between “No endorsement” and “Address Service Requested”:]*

**“Electronic Service Requested” In all cases:** Mailpiece is directed to a Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) or Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS) site for processing. “Address Service Requested” and “Change Service Requested” handling instructions and options are required to be predefined within the ACS mailer profile data. OneCode ACS mailers are also required to insert this service request through a valid service type code in an Intelligent Mail barcode (IMB). The service type code in the IMB will take precedence over the instructions in the mailer account profile.\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Exhibit 1.5.2 Treatment of Undeliverable Periodicals**

*[Add between “No endorsement” and “Address Service Requested”:]*

**“Electronic Service Requested” In all cases:** Mailpiece is directed to a Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) or Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS) site for processing. Handling instructions and options are required to be predefined within the ACS mailer profile data. OneCode ACS mailers are also required to insert this service request through a valid service type code in an Intelligent Mail barcode (IMB). The service type code in the IMB will take precedence over the instructions in the mailer account profile. \*\*\*\*\*

#### **Exhibit 1.5.3 Treatment of Undeliverable Standard Mail**

*[Add between “No endorsement” and “Address Service Requested”:]*

**“Electronic Service Requested” In all cases:** Mailpiece is directed to a Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) or Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS) site for processing. “Address Service Requested” and “Change Service Requested” handling instructions are required to be predefined within the ACS mailer profile data. OneCode ACS mailers are also required to insert this service request through a valid service type code in →

an Intelligent Mail barcode (IMB). The service type code in the IMB will take precedence over the instructions in the mailer account profile. \* \* \* \* \*

**Exhibit 1.5.4 Treatment of Undeliverable Package Services Mail** [Add between “No endorsement” and “Address Service Requested”:] **“Electronic Service Requested” In all cases:** Mailpiece is directed to a Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) or Postal Automated Redirection System (PARS) site for processing. “Address Service Requested” and “Change Service Requested” handling instructions are required to be predefined within the ACS mailer profile data. OneCode ACS mailers are also required to insert this service request through a valid service type code in an Intelligent Mail barcode (IMB). The service type code in the IMB will take precedence over the instructions in the mailer account profile. \* \* \* \* \*

### **Simplified Address**

The Postal Service also revised the standards for use of simplified address “to expand mailers’ options.” Under current standards, mailers can use simplified addresses, such as “Postal Customer,” instead of complete names and addresses, when mailing to all boxholders or all families on rural routes or highway contract routes.

Now, as of the date of the announcement, mailers of enhanced carrier route mailpieces with simplified addresses may place carrier route bundles of flats or irregular parcels directly on 3-digit, 5-digit, or 5-digit scheme pallets or in sacks; prepare bundles without facing slips when the top piece of each bundle bears the correct route number and ZIP Code; and address pieces using “Residential Customer” instead of “Postal Customer” when seeking delivery only to families.

**602.3.2.1 Use – Rural and Highway Contract Routes, P.O. Boxholders** [Revise as follows:] The simplified address format (“Postal Customer”) may be used on mail only when complete distribution is made to each family (household residence) or boxholder on a rural or highway contract route at any post office or to all post office boxholders at a post office without city carrier service. The following also applies:

- a. Mailers may use a more specific address, such as “Rural Route Boxholder,” for mail intended to all boxholders on a rural route, followed by the name of the post office and state. The word “Local,” instead of the post office and state name, is optional; however the Postal Service recommends using the post office and state name for mail not dropshipped directly to a destination delivery unit.
- b. Mailers may use “Residential Customer” to indicate that delivery is desired to residential addresses only on rural route or highway contract routes.
- c. See 703.6.0 for congressional mail.

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**602.3.2.3 Mail Preparation** [Revise as follows:] Mailers must prepare letter-size pieces in trays. Mailers must prepare flat-size pieces and irregular parcels in carrier route bundles in sacks or directly on pallets. Bundles, sacks, or trays may be placed on 3-digit, 5-digit, or 5-digit scheme pallets under 705.8.10. In addition to the required simplified address, each bundle must bear a facing slip showing the desired distribution (for example, 5-digit ZIP Code and route number) or the top piece of each bundle must include the route number and ZIP Code. Mailers may obtain delivery statistics for routes as described in 509.1.0. The following also applies:

- a. All pieces must be in the same processing category.
- b. Mailers must mark pieces according to 102, 202, 302, or 402.
- c. Mailers must prepare all pieces for the same carrier route in bundles of 50, so far as practicable. If the pieces are bundled in quantities other than 50, mailers must show the actual number of pieces on the facing slip or on the top piece of the bundle.
- d. If selective distribution is desired, the mailer must include enough pieces to cover the routes selected. \* \* \* \* \* [\[TOP\]](#)

### **Buy a stamp, win a prize.**

The Postal Service has apparently borrowed a page from other retailers and is offering customers who use an automated kiosk the chance to win prizes for their effort.

As reported by the Greensboro (NC) *News & Record*, patrons who use one of the Automated Postal Centers that have sprouted in post offices nationwide will get a chance to win a \$250 daily cash prize or a grand prize of \$10,000. All that’s needed is the receipt for the APC transaction.

The kiosks enable customers to complete about three-fourths of their routine transactions without having to go to the retail window. This saves patrons time and the Postal Service money, which explains why the American Postal Workers Union, representing window clerks, is unhappy with the devices’ deployment.

### **More machines on the way.**

The Postal Service has awarded Germany’s Siemens AG a \$54.6 million contract for the manufacture and installation of 110 more delivery barcode sorters. The new equipment will be in place by next April. Last November, the company won a \$109.4 million contract for 211 of the same machines. According to the company, the DBCS is “the most widely-deployed mail processing platform for letters within the Postal Service,” with over 6,000 machines in use nationwide.

### **Motive sought in mail theft.**

Investigators in Arkansas are puzzled as to why a man stole a tractor trailer load of mail and set it afire. As reported by Little Rock’s *KATV* and *KTHV*, a postal contract driver was hauling the mail from Dallas to Detroit when he stopped at his company’s yard in North Little Rock. The accused thief took the rig from the yard and drove it thirty miles to Beebe where, according to authorities, the mail was spread around the trailer and set ablaze. The alleged perpetrator was found at a nearby rest stop, asleep in the cab of the tractor, along with stolen mail. Now in custody, he faces up to 25 years in jail and a \$250,000 fine. [\[TOP\]](#)