

Glossary of Postal Terms — Contents

Publication 32, May 1997

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TRANSMITTAL LETTER

GLOSSARY OF POSTAL TERMS

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS



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Publication 32

May 1997

- A. Purpose.** This glossary defines words and phrases that are unique to, or have special meanings within, the U.S. Postal Service. Automatic data processing terms that are specific to the Postal Service have also been incorporated. This glossary does not provide comprehensive or precise legal definitions. In any contradiction between a term in this glossary and a Postal Service directive, the directive supersedes the definition.
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- D. Cancellations.** All previous issues of Publication 32 and Publication 32-A are obsolete.
- E. Effective Date.** This publication is effective May 1997.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard D. Weirich".

Richard D. Weirich
Vice President
Information Systems

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Glossary of Postal Terms

Publication 32, *Glossary of Postal Terms*, defines words and phrases that are unique to, or have special meanings within, the U.S. Postal Service. This glossary does not provide comprehensive or precise legal definitions. In any contradiction between a term in this glossary and a current USPS directive, the directive supersedes the definition. Publication 32-A, *USPS Glossary of ADP Terms*, is now obsolete. Postal-specific automatic data processing terms have been incorporated into this version of Publication 32.

This glossary was first published in 1974 and has been updated several times since then to reflect the changing terminology and technology within the USPS. Most obsolete terms have been deleted, but others that might still appear in print are retained and cross-referenced to the current term. Moreover, many new terms have been added.

If you wish to suggest a term to be included in future editions, send the term and definition to:

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Capitalization

Terms that are the equivalent of proper names or represent code words are capitalized; terms that are general — applying to a group or category — are not capitalized. For example, the proper names of specific systems, services, and computer programs are capitalized herein, as are the names of specific committees and boards. However, most entries

ending in office, center, facility, or unit, and various descriptive terms ending in delivery and mail, are considered general and are not capitalized.

Position titles are not capitalized, whether the position is held by many (such as clerk) or by few (such as vice president). Organizational unit names, however, are capitalized to distinguish them from the same function (compare Finance with finance).

Trademarks and terms whose registration is pending are always capitalized when used as nouns. (Check *Domestic Mail Manual* G013 for a current list.) Moreover, the abbreviated or acronym form is always capitalized; for example, COD for the term “collect on delivery.”

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Commonly used acronyms are found in parentheses next to the term they represent. In addition, a list of acronyms and the respective terms are found on page 129.

Forms

Forms referenced herein are U.S. Postal Service forms unless otherwise noted.

absentee balloting materials — Postcard applications, ballots, voting instructions, and envelopes sent through the mail without postage prepayment. This public service enables U.S. expatriates, members of the Armed Forces in active service, and the U.S. Merchant Marine (and their spouses and dependents) to apply for registration and to vote when absent from the place of voting residence.

accelerated reply mail (ARM) — Origin caller service provided for reply mail at a postal facility other than the one to which the mail is addressed. Reply mail from the caller's customers is captured by the USPS for either immediate delivery to the caller or reshipment by Express Mail to the caller's address.

accepts — The total number of mailpieces processed by an optical character reader and assigned to the correct stacker (that is, open bins).

accountable mail — Mail that requires the signature of the addressee or addressee's agent upon receipt to provide proof of delivery or indemnification for loss or damage. This includes Express Mail and special service mail such as certified mail, collect on delivery, insured mail for more than \$50, registered mail and return receipt for merchandise.

accountable materials — Certain items of inherent monetary value. These include postal items such as aerogrammes, international reply coupons, postage stamps, philatelic products, stamped envelopes and postal cards, blank postal money order forms, or any unsold item awaiting destruction. These also include service items provided to the general public in behalf of certain federal agencies such as migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamps. (Also see *stamp credit*.)

accountbook — A batch of forms (Form 1551), one for each week of the postal fiscal year. The forms are used to record the daily transactions of post offices and financial reporting units. Moreover, they serve as a single-source document by post offices to accumulate financial data for periodic reporting on the statement of account.

account identifier code (AIC) — A three-digit code that assigns financial transactions to the proper account on the general ledger. Each AIC is assigned a corresponding general ledger.

accounting period (AP) — A 4-week period that forms one thirteenth of the postal fiscal year. It begins on a Saturday and ends at the close of business on the Friday 4 weeks later.

A

accounting service center (ASC) — An accounting, disbursing, and data processing facility that provides accounting support for postal activities. Each ASC is specialized for one or more functions: Minneapolis, MN, payroll; San Mateo, CA, accounts payable and travel vouchers; and St. Louis, MO, postal money orders. (Also see *Consumer Service Card* and *National Air and Surface System*.)

account management — The planning, implementation, and measurement of customer service activities for assigned customer accounts. This is required to realize postal volume and revenue potential for these accounts.

account representative — A USPS employee who establishes and maintains communications with customers to improve service, sell postal products, implement programs, and represent customer viewpoints to postal management. (Formerly *customer service representative*.)

Accounts Payable Accounting and Reporting System (APARS) — A software system that provides for processing and reporting of payments made at the San Mateo and St. Louis Accounting Service Centers. APARS supports transactions generated by other ASCs, USPS field operations, and Headquarters.

activity — A named process, function, or task that occurs over time and has recognizable results. Activities use up assigned resources to produce postal products and services. Activities combine to form USPS business processes.

activity analysis — The breakdown of the USPS enterprise into manageable segments for detailed analysis of cost and performance.

activity-based management — A system of management that seeks to optimize the value added activities performed by the USPS enterprise while at the same time minimizing or eliminating the non-value added activities, resulting in overall improvements in the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Postal Service in serving its customers.

activity code — A one-digit number that indicates the functional area in which a USPS employee is assigned; it is usually joined to the two-digit designation code as a second element. (Also see *labor distribution code*.)

activity model — A graphical representation of a USPS business process that exhibits the activities that make up the postal business process to any desired level of detail. An activity model reveals the interactions between postal activities in terms of inputs and outputs while showing the controls placed on each activity and the types of resources assigned to each activity.

activity model (AS-IS) — An activity model that portrays how a USPS business process is currently structured. It is used to establish a baseline for subsequent postal business process improvement actions or programs.

activity model (TO-BE) — An activity model that results from a USPS business process redesigned action or program. The TO-BE model shows how the postal business process will function after the improvement action is implemented.

activity, non-value added — Any activity that provides a negative return on the investment or allocation of resources to that activity. Within broad limits, the enterprise benefits by allocating less resources to non-value added activities.

activity, value added — Any USPS activity that contributes directly to the performance of a mission, and could not be eliminated without impairing the mission.

actual count (AC) — The exact numerical count of all mail classes worked.

additional entry (AE) — A post office other than the office of original entry where a publisher is authorized to mail a Periodicals publication.

additional mailing office — A post office, other than the original mailing office, used to mail Nonprofit Standard Mail.

address — The location to which the USPS is to deliver or return a mailpiece. It consists of certain elements such as recipient name, street name and house number, and city, state, and ZIP Code as required by the mail class.

A

Address Change Service (ACS) — An automated process that provides change-of-address information to participating mailers who maintain computerized mailing lists. The information is captured in the Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) units and sent to mailers on electronic media, which reduces the volume of manual change-of-address notices.

address correction service — A system of ancillary service endorsements that allows mailers to obtain the addressee's new (forwarding) address or the reason for nondelivery.

addressee — The person or organization to whom a mailpiece is addressed as shown in the delivery address.

Address Element Correction (AEC) — A process that identifies and revises incomplete or incorrect computerized address files and then attaches ZIP+4 and carrier route codes. It involves computer matching address records that cannot be coded using CASS-certified address matching software.

Address Information System products — USPS addressing products and services used to obtain the correct USPS ZIP Code, ZIP+4, or carrier route number for mailing list addresses. These include computerized products such as the City State File, Five-Digit ZIP Code File, Line-of-Travel (LOT) information, Z4CHANGE File, ZIPMOVE File, Carrier Route Information System, and ZIP+4 tapes. They also include printed ZIP Code and ZIP+4 directories and microfiche products. (Also see *Address Management*.)

address list service — (See *mailing list service*.)

Address Management (AM) — An organizational unit that provides USPS policy and systems on mailing list service, address correction service, forwarding, and other related services. (Also see *forward*.) (Formerly known as *Address Information Systems*.)

address sequencing service — A USPS service whereby address cards are sequenced in order of delivery for city routes, rural routes, highway contract routes, and post office box sections. For a qualifying mailer, address cards with either blank cards added (for missing addresses) or cards containing missing and new addresses may be added. (Compare with *mailing list service*.)

A

à découvert — (French) Universal Postal Union term for open transit mail (mail that crosses U.S. borders while en route from one foreign country to another) that is in unsealed containers.

adjustable platform stool — A stool with a heavy base, adjustable for height and angle, used by clerks doing manual distribution. (Also called *leaner* and *rest bar*.)

Adjustment Processing System (APS) — A software application used to make payroll adjustments for employees other than rural carriers and their replacements for data obtained from Form 2240, *Pay, Leave, or Other Hours Adjustment Request*. (Compare with *Rural Adjustment Processing System*.)

administrative support facility (ASF) — A single-function organization that typically serves the entire USPS and reports directly to Headquarters (for example, an accounting service center, material distribution center, and facilities service office).

Administrative Support Manual (ASM) — This directive contains policy and procedures for various USPS administrative and support functions. These include postal organization, the Inspection Service, corporate relations, facilities and equipment, legislative affairs, support services, purchasing and materials, and information systems. It is one of the six USPS policy manuals.

advance deposit account — A debit account into which a mailer deposits funds that are maintained by the USPS and from which postage is later deducted at the time of mailing. (Also called *trust account*.)

advanced facer-canceler (AFC) — A machine that faces, cancels, and sorts incoming letter-size mail to one of seven stackers (bins). Depending on the type of mail, the sorted letters are taken to an optical character reader, barcode sorter, or multiposition letter sorting machine for further processing. (Also see *incoming mail*, *letter-size mail*, and *mail processing*.)

aerogramme — (French) A letter-size sheet of lightweight paper that folds into an airmail envelope for correspondence to other countries. (Also see *letter-size mail*.)

A

Air Contract Data Collection System (ACDCS) — A network of equipment at airport mail facilities that collects information on weight, destination, and routing of air shipments.

air contract transportation tag (ACT) — A printed barcoded tag that bears barcoded information for routing mail containers to be transported by contracted air carriers.

airlift — The movement of mail by air taxi operators and air carriers. (Also see *Managed Mail Program*.)

airmail — A service by which international mail receives First-Class Mail service domestically, is dispatched by the most expeditious transportation, and receives air or priority handling in the destination country.

airport mail center/airport mail facility (AMC/AMF) — A postal facility at an airport that receives, concentrates, transfers, dispatches, and distributes mail transported by air.

A-label service — (informal) Express Mail Post Office to Post Office Service, so called because this service uses Label 11-A. (Compare with *B-label service* and *C-level service*.)

all-purpose dating stamp — A handstamping device for imprinting (in red ink) the date, the name of city, and the post office branch or post office station on registered mail and nonmail items such as receipts. (Also called *round-dater stamp*.)

alternate delivery services — A delivery method that does not require a letter carrier. This includes caller service, firm holdout, post office box service, and general delivery.

Alternate Mailing System (AMS) — A procedure, authorized by the RCSC, that provides methods for accepting permit imprint mail to ensure proper postage payment and mail preparation without verification by weight.

alternative addressing format — One of several formats authorized by the USPS as an alternative to the standard delivery address format. These include simplified address, occupant address, exceptional address, and congressional franked mail. (Compare with *delivery address format*.)

alternative delivery — A nonpostal method to distribute or deliver mail matter. For example, facsimile and electronic funds transfer in place of First-Class Mail; freight forwarding in place of Standard Mail (B), Priority Mail™, or Express Mail; private carriers in place of Periodicals or Standard Mail. (Also see *Private Express Statutes*.)

ancillary service — Forwarding, return, or address correction service included within a mail class. Depending on the mail class, these services are performed at a charge or at no additional charge, if and when the service is actually rendered. (Also see *forward*.)

ancillary service endorsement — A marking used by a mailer to request the new address of an addressee and to provide the USPS with instructions on how to handle mail that is undeliverable as addressed. (Also see *address correction service*.)

Annual Staffing and Resource Management Simulator (ASRMS) — A computer program that balances and tracks work load and workhours by accounting period. It is used to simulate staffing changes and to develop hiring plans.

application program interface (API)— Communicates POS ONE applications with USPS information systems as well as with specific service providers such as the bank card processor.

area — One of ten administrative field units that are divided into customer service support, operations support, finance, human resources, and sales. Each area is responsible for airport mail centers/facilities, bulk mail centers/facilities, customer service districts, mail transportation equipment centers, post offices, processing and distribution centers/facilities, remote encoding centers, and vehicle maintenance facilities. (Compare with *headquarters*.)

area distribution center (ADC) — A mail processing facility that receives and distributes mail destined for specific ZIP Codes under the Managed Mail Program (MMP). An ADC is one of the points within the national MMP distribution network.

area mail processing center — (obsolete) (See *processing and distribution center/facility*.)

area maintenance office (AMO) — A postal unit that services postal-owned equipment and buildings where there is no local maintenance capability.

A

army post office (APO) — A branch of a designated USPS civilian post office, which falls under the jurisdiction of the postmaster of either New York City or San Francisco, that serves either Army or Air Force personnel. (Also see *military post office*.)

aspect ratio — The dimension of a mailpiece expressed as a ratio of length (the direction parallel to the address) divided by height. For example, a postcard 5-1/2 inches long by 3-1/2 inches high has an aspect ratio of 1.57. An aspect ratio between 1.3 and 2.5, inclusive, is required for automation compatibility. For some First-Class Mail, aspect ratio is used to determine whether a nonstandard surcharge applies.

associate office infrastructure (AOI) — The server and related equipment that houses the centralized data bases and network software required for POS ONE in sites with six or more windows and all sites with three or more windows that have carrier activity. The AOI server is not a POS ONE terminal, but is in addition to the POS ONE terminals needed for IRT replacement. All POS ONE terminals at an AOI site will be connected to the server, which will eventually support delivery unit computers, CTT scanners, and other computer equipment.

associate post office (AO) — (obsolete) A post office that reported to a larger post office or that was within the service area of a sectional center facility (SCF). It usually received and dispatched all mail classes from and to the SCF. (Also called *associate office*.)

authorized pouch — A mailbag scheduled to be prepared for dispatch regularly.

automated area distribution center (AADC) — A distribution center that uses multiline optical character readers (MLOCs), barcode sorters (BCSs), and other equipment designed for processing automation-compatible mail. (Also see *area distribution center*.)

Automated Barcode Evaluator (ABE) — A computerized program used by business mail entry units to check barcode readability using reverse barcode lookup to translate the barcode into the address it represents.

Automated Business Mail Processing System (ABMPS) — A system in which the address on a customer's business reply mail is translated into a barcode — that is, a series of small vertical bars printed in the lower right corner of the mailpiece. The system permits identification and sorting by high-speed automated equipment.

Automated Enrollment System — A computer-based training enrollment network with links between the Technical Training Center in Norman, OK, and the material distribution centers and the postal employee development centers.

automatic container unloader — A machine that automatically unloads mail from a container onto a mechanized conveyor system. (Also called *parcel automatic unloader* or *sack automatic container unloader*.)

Automatic Density Analysis Profile Technique (ADAPT) — A computerized program that counts the amount of mail (by volume and bin destination) processed on letter sorting machines. Densities are calculated for each bin, based on the accumulated volume processed, to determine sort schemes.

automation-compatible mail — Mail that can be scanned and processed by automated mail processing equipment such as a barcode sorter.

automation discount — A postage reduction offered to mailers who prebarcode their mailpieces and meet addressing, readability, and other requirements for processing on automated equipment.

aux — The abbreviation for the term auxiliary assistance, which is provided to a letter carrier, most often, because of unusually heavy mail volume. The term also applies to the carrier who provides the assistance.

auxiliary route — A carrier route that is regularly scheduled for completion in less than 8 hours and is not up for bid by full-time carriers.

auxiliary service facility (ASF) — A mechanized facility, usually part of a general mail facility (GMF), that has its own service area and serves as a satellite processing hub for a particular bulk mail center (BMC).

auxiliary truck schedule — A scheduled vehicle trip that augments and supplements regular trips.

B

backstamp — To mark the back of a mailpiece with a postmarking or canceling device to show that the piece was received, dispatched, or missent. (Also see *postmark*.)

backtrack — To deliver mail to a point that the letter carrier has mistakenly bypassed.

bag rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

Baldrige Award — Named after the late Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige, the official title is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. The purpose of the award is to encourage organizations to examine their current state of quality and to become more involved in the movement toward continuous quality improvement.

balloon — (informal) A huge sack or pouch of mail.

balloon rate — A rate charged for Priority Mail and Parcel Post items that weigh less than 15 pounds and measure more than 84 inches but no more than 108 inches in combined length and girth.

barcode (BC) — A series of vertical bars and spaces that represent any numerical series, most often a correct ZIP Code for the delivery address on a mailpiece. The barcode facilitates automated processing by barcode readers and scanners. Barcodes that may be used for postal processing are POSTNET, Interleaved 2-of-5, Code 39, Code 128, and UCC/EAN Code 128. (Also see *delivery point barcode* and *Postal Numeric Encoding Technique*.)

barcode clear zone — A rectangular area in the lower right part of a letter-size mailpiece that must be kept free of printing and symbols, except for the barcode itself. This requirement allows automated processing machines to read or apply a barcode. (Also see *FASTforward* SM.)

barcoded container label — A tray or sack label that has a barcode that can be read and processed by an automated tray or sack handling system. The barcode is an Interleaved 2-of-5 code.

barcode read area — A small area within the barcode clear zone in which the barcode must be printed. This area is defined by the position of the leftmost bar of the barcode and the bottom edge of the bar.

barcode reader (BCR) — A component in certain mail processing equipment that reads and interprets the barcode applied to a mailpiece.

B

barcode sorter (BCS) — A computerized machine that sorts letter-size mail by using a barcode reader to interpret an imprinted barcode. This machine consists of a mail feed and transport unit, barcode reader, stacker module, and associated electronic equipment that can sort into a large number of separations.

barcoded discount — Available for certain Standard Mail (B) machinable pieces that bear a correct barcode and meet minimum volume requirements.

bargaining unit employee — A USPS employee who is represented by a labor organization (union) that negotiates with the USPS for the wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment. These employees include city carriers, clerks, mail handlers, rural carriers, special delivery messengers, maintenance employees, and motor vehicle operators.

basket — A canvas container used for hauling and distributing all mail classes. (Also called *cart*, *gondola*, *gurney*, or *hamper*.)

batch — To gather or stack mail on edges for machine feeding. (Also see *edger-feeder*.)

bedloaded bundles — Bundles of mail that are not containerized (not placed in a sack, tray, or mail transport equipment) but stacked directly onto the floor of a vehicle trailer. (Compare with *loose-loaded parcels*.)

bedloaded sacks — Sacks of mail that are not containerized but stacked directly onto the floor of a vehicle trailer.

benchmarking — A method of measuring USPS processes against those of recognized leaders. It helps establish priorities and targets leading to process improvement. It is undertaken by identifying processes to benchmark and their key characteristics; determining whom to benchmark; collecting and analyzing data from direct contact, surveys, interviews, technical journals, and advertisements; determining the “best of class” from each benchmark item identified; and evaluating the postal process in terms of the benchmarks set and the improvement goals.

best practice — A method of accomplishing a postal business function or process that is considered to be superior to all other known methods.

B

bin — A separation (such as a pigeonhole) on the sweepside of a letter sorting machine or similar mechanized or automated mail distribution equipment. (Formerly called *pocket*.)

B-label service — (informal) Express Mail Post Office to Addressee Service, so called because it uses Label 11-B. (Compare with *A-label service* and *C-label service*.)

black bag — A reusable overnight pouch for transmitting postal documents, reports, and workpapers.

block face — For the assignment of ZIP+4 codes, one side of a street, from one intersection to the next. (Also see *segment*.)

Board of Governors — The group that directs the exercise of the powers of the USPS. Nine Governors are appointed by the President of the United States, with the advice and consent of the Senate. The remaining members are the postmaster general (appointed by the Governors) and the deputy postmaster general (appointed by the Governors and the postmaster general). The Board directs and controls the expenditures and reviews the practices and policies of the USPS.

Bound Printed Matter (BPM) — Standard Mail (B) weighing at least 1 pound but not more than 15 pounds that consists of permanently bound sheets of which at least 90% are printed with advertising, promotional, directory, or editorial matter (or a combination of such matter).

brace — An entry (connecting written bracket) in a sort scheme that shows one or more post offices having the same mail supply.

branch — (See *post office branch*.)

bread tray — (informal) (See *tray cart*.)

bricklay — To stack parcels or trays one over the other with overlap, like bricks, to achieve a stable load in a trailer or van.

buck slip — An informal, written communication used to transmit papers and information. (Also called *routing slip*.)

budget authorization — A two-character code used in reporting systems to group performance clusters and Headquarters organizational units in groups.

B

bulkie — (informal) A regular-size envelope that contains an object making the mailpiece nonmachinable (such as a pen, film roll, or thermometer). The envelope must be culled to protect both mailpiece and machine. (Also see *slug*.) (Also called *heavy*.)

bulk mail — Mail that is rated for postage partly by weight and partly by the number of pieces in the mailing. The term is generally used to refer to Standard Mail (A).

bulk mail center (BMC) — A highly mechanized mail processing plant that distributes Standard Mail in piece and bulk form. (Also see *auxiliary service facility*.)

bulk mail center container — A tall, four-sided container made of steel or aluminum with wheels. This type of mail equipment is used to transport parcels and bulk mail between postal facilities. It is used in automated processing systems at bulk mail centers.

Bulk Mail System — (See *National Bulk Mail System*.)

Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS) — A service by which high-volume mailers may have undeliverable-as-addressed Standard Mail (A) machinable parcels returned to postal facilities for bulk pickup by the mailer, or delivered by the USPS to the mailer in bulk. A BPRS fee is paid for each piece returned.

bulk rate — The postage rate for mailpieces that are part of a large-volume mailing and that meet minimum volume and preparation requirements. The term is most often applied to Standard Mail (A) mailings, which usually consist of a per piece rate plus a per pound rate.

Bulletin de Vérification — (See *Verification Note/Bulletin of Verification*.)

bum — (informal) A bundle of empty sacks or pouches.

bump — (informal) Auxiliary assistance provided to a letter carrier because of unusually heavy mail volume. The term can also be used as a synonym for *aux*, *hit*, or *relay*.

bundle — Two or more packages secured together into a single piece or unit. (Also see *package*.)

B

business case — A structured proposal for USPS business process improvement that functions as a decision package for USPS leadership. A business case includes an analysis of business process needs or problems, proposed solution, assumptions and constraints, alternatives, life cycle costs, benefits/cost analysis, and investment risk analysis. In some government agencies, a business case is called a functional economic analysis (FEA).

business mail entry unit (BMEU) — The area of a postal facility where mailers present bulk, presorted, and permit mail for acceptance. The BMEU includes dedicated platform space, office space, and a staging area on the workroom floor.

business process focus — A view of the USPS as an enterprise that exists to create value for our customers and stakeholders via use of a cross-functional process orientation to our work.

business process improvement (BPI) — The betterment of the Postal Service's business practices through the analysis of activities to reduce or eliminate non-value added activities or costs, while at the same time maintaining or improving quality, productivity, timeliness, or other strategic or business purposes as evidenced by measures of performance. (Also called *functional process improvement*.)

business process reengineering (BPR) — is a radical improvement approach that critically examines, rethinks, and redesigns mission product and service processes within the Postal Service's political environment. It achieves dramatic mission performance gains from multiple customer and stakeholder perspectives. It is a key part of a process management approach for optimal performance that continually evaluates, adjusts, or removes processes.

business reply mail (BRM) — A domestic service that allows a mailer to receive First-Class Mail back from customers and pay postage only for the pieces returned to the mailer from the original distribution of BRM pieces. These pieces must have a specific address and format. Postage and fees are collected when the mail is delivered back to the original mailer.

business route — A city delivery route on which at least 70 percent of the deliveries are to businesses. (Compare with *residential route*.)

B

bypass mail — Metered mail, permit imprint mail, and official mail arriving at a post office that does not require preparation before outgoing distribution. Also, mail improperly entered into the mailstream without verification of postage or preparation. (Also see *backtrack* and *Presort/presorted mail*.)

bypass mailings — Mailings that enter the mailstream without proper acceptance through a business mail entry unit or a detached mail unit. Postage is not collected.

C

cachet — In philately, a printed decoration on mail matter (such as a design or inscription), often referring to the new postage stamp on a first day cover. The design can be hand-created, printed, rubber-stamped, or pasted, usually on the front left side of the envelope.

caddy cart — (See *satchel cart*.)

cage — A secure, enclosed area in a post office, separated from the rest of the workroom, where registered mail and other accountable mail is kept.

caller box — (See *caller service*.)

caller service — An optional delivery service provided for a fee at all post offices to customers with large volumes of mail, to customers needing multiple separations, or to customers who need a post office box number address when no post office boxes are available.

cancel — To render a postage stamp (except a precanceled stamp) unusable, usually at the point of original entry into the mailstream. This is done by using a facer-canceler or a handstamp (for bulkie, fragile, or odd-shaped mail). (Also see *mail processing* and *revenue assurance*.)

canceled machine — A mail processing machine that cancels a postage stamp and places a postmark on a letter. (Also see *facer-canceler*.)

cancellation — A postmark that contains the post office name, state, ZIP Code, and month, day, and year that the mail matter was canceled. (Also see *hand-stamped cancellation*.)

carrier — An individual contractor or private company (airline, trucking company, railroad, etc.) that transports the mail from one postal facility to another. (Also see *contact point*; compare with *letter carrier*.)

Carrier Alert — A community service program in which a letter carrier attempts to detect possible illness or accident suffered by the customer (for example, elderly persons or persons with disabilities). When alerted by an accumulation of mail, the carrier reports the matter to local social service agencies for appropriate follow-up. This service is provided jointly with private agencies (that is, the National Association of Letter Carriers and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association).

carrier associate — (See *rural carrier associate*.)

carrier route (CR) — The addresses to which a carrier delivers mail. In common usage, carrier route includes city routes, rural routes, highway contract routes, post office box sections, and general delivery units.

Carrier Route File — The official listing of all city and noncity delivery post offices, available to mailers in a standardized format. It contains schemes for city routes, rural routes, highway contract routes, post office box sections, and general delivery units. The data are formatted by ZIP Code, street name, and ranged street numbers.

Carrier Route Information System (CRIS) — The official city delivery scheme that lists all city and noncity delivery post offices, which is available to mailers in a standardized format. It contains schemes for city routes, rural routes, highway contract routes, post office box sections, and general delivery units. The data are formatted by ZIP Code, street name, and street number range. Delivery statistics (possible deliveries) for each carrier route are also included in the file. (Also see *Coding Accuracy Support System*.)

carrier route presort mail — Mail sorted by carrier route to qualify for discount postage rates. The mail requires no primary or secondary distribution. The term is a general descriptor of the available rates for this type of preparation, which includes Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail, automation carrier route First-Class Mail, carrier route Periodicals, and carrier route Bound Printed Matter. Unless mailed at automation rates, carrier route mailpieces usually do not bear a barcode. (Also called *Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail*.)

carrier route sack — A sack labeled to a specific carrier route when there are 125 mailpieces or 15 pounds (or more) destined to the same route. Certain low-density routes may permit exceptions to the volume/weight requirement.

carrier route scheme — Identification of the street names and numbers that are assigned to a specific carrier route for delivery of mail. (Also see *scheme*.)

carrier sequence barcode sorter (CSBCS) — An automated machine that sorts an individual carrier's mail, allowing the mail to go directly from the automation equipment in delivery sequence to the carrier for delivery to postal customers. The CSBCS is a smaller BCS designed for delivery units with 10 or more routes.

C

carry-by — Surface mail carried beyond the point of scheduled dispatch.

carry-out — Surface mail for the first delivery stops of a foot carrier's route. The carrier takes it out of the office in a satchel, and the rest of the mail is deposited by a motorized carrier into relay boxes along the route.

case — A piece of equipment that contains separations into which clerks or letter carriers sort letters, flats, or irregular parcels. To sort mail into a case. (Also see *irregular parcels and pieces*.)

Case Analysis System (CAS) — A computer system that analyzes mail volume and density in manual distribution cases to determine the best arrangement of separations.

case label — A long strip of heavy paper, cardboard, or other material that shows names or numbers and individual addresses assigned to a carrier route. It is placed below the separations on the carrier case. Also, a tag of heavy paper or cardboard on a clerk distribution case that shows post office, state, or ZIP Code. It is placed above the case separation or box as a distribution guide. (Also called *header*.)

catalog — Bound Printed Matter consisting entirely of advertising.

cc:Mail — The Lotus electronic mail application used by USPS.

Center for Leadership Development — The William F. Bolger Center for Leadership Development provides managerial, supervisory, technical, and functional training. The academy is located in Potomac, MD.

centralized mail delivery — Delivery and collection services to a number of office buildings or residents from a centrally located delivery point or place.

Centralized Postage Payment System (CPP) — A postage payment system that allows publishers of authorized Periodicals publications entered at three or more post offices to pay postage at a single postal facility rather than through individual accounts maintained at each entry post office.

central point delivery — A residential service that provides delivery to several addresses at one delivery point (for example, a neighborhood delivery and collection box unit). (Compare with *sidewalk delivery* and *single point delivery*.)

Central Repair Facility (CRF) — A national center reporting to Headquarters that manages maintenance and repair of self-service equipment.

certificate of mailing — A supplemental mail service that provides a receipt prepared by the mailer as proof of mailing.

certified mail — A service that provides the sender with a mailing receipt. A record of delivery is kept at the post office of address. This type of mail must be sent at First-Class Mail or Priority Mail rates. Certified mail may be combined with return receipt service and restricted delivery service.

change management facility (CMF) — USPS facility from which the distribution of changes to POS ONE field units is controlled.

change-of-address (COA)— A customer move from one mailing address to another.

change-of-address order — A customer's notification to the post office of a permanent or temporary change of address (COA) by using Form 3575, *Change of Address Order*, or other written or personal notice.

channel sorter — (See *optical character reader/channel sorter*.)

check errors — To note, record, and report errors in mail distribution and dispatch made by other clerks.

Christmas casual — A temporary USPS employee appointed during the Christmas holiday period.

chunk — (informal) A small parcel.

circ — An abbreviated form of the word circular.

circular — Standard Mail (A) that consists of printed or reproduced materials (such as advertising) sent to many customers. (Also see *direct mail*.)

circular sorting rack — A stationary circular rack used in offices other than bulk mail centers. (Also see *rotary sorting rack* and *sorting rack*.)

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee — A group of individuals (non-USPS employees) appointed by the USPS to review suggestions for postage stamp subjects and to recommend those subjects to be adopted for postage stamps and postal stationery. The Committee, which meets several times a year, includes artists, historians, educators, and philatelists with backgrounds related to the subjects and stamp design.

C

city carrier — A letter carrier who provides city delivery service. This includes delivery and collection of all mail classes to residences and businesses within an area authorized for city delivery service.

city delivery establishment — The initiation of city delivery service in an area currently not receiving it.

city delivery extension — The initiation of city delivery service in an area outside current city delivery boundaries but in which city delivery service has already been established.

city delivery service — Delivery by city carriers of mail addressed to residences and businesses within an area that has a population of at least 2,500 residents or more than 750 possible deliveries. The area must have paved or improved streets; street signs and house numbers displayed; and 50 percent of the building lots developed with residences and other structures. (Also see *business route* and *residential route*.) (Compare with *rural delivery service*.)

city mail — Mail prepared (made up) for a particular city for distribution to firms, carrier routes, post office stations, or post office branches.

city route — A delivery route served by a city carrier.

City Time and Attendance Processing System (CTAPS) — A payroll software application for city timecard data via Forms 1230-A, 1230-B, and 1230-C, *Timecard*, and Form 1377, *Request for Payment of Postmaster Replacement and/or Postmaster CAG L Overtime*.

C-label service — (informal) Express Mail Same Day Airport Service, so called because it uses Label 11-C. (Compare with *A-label service* and *B-label service*.)

class — (See *mail class*.)

classification — The grouping of mailable matter into mail classes and subclasses by rate categories, according to content, weight, size, and preparation standards.

classified unit — Post office stations and post office branches operated by USPS employees in quarters owned or leased by the USPS. (Compare with *contract postal unit* and *finance unit*.)

Classroom rate — A Periodicals rate that is available to an authorized mailer of educational, scientific, or religious publications for scholastic or religious instruction.

clearance time — The latest time that a type of mail (either class or destination) can pass through an operation to make the proper dispatch or delivery.

closed transit dispatches — Sealed bags of international mail that travel through the USPS from one country to another country. These bags are not opened for redistribution.

cluster box unit — A centralized unit of individually locked compartments for the delivery of mailpieces. (Also see *neighborhood delivery and collection box unit*.)

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) — A codification of the rules published in the Federal Register by executive departments and agencies of the federal government. USPS regulations found in the *Domestic Mail Manual*, *International Mail Manual*, and *Procurement Manual* are incorporated by reference in title 39 of the code. (Also see *Domestic Mail Classification Schedule*.)

Coding Accuracy Support System (CASS) — A service offered to mailers, service bureaus, and software vendors that improves the accuracy of matching to delivery point codes, ZIP+4 codes, 5-digit ZIP Codes, and carrier route codes on mailpieces. CASS provides a common platform to measure the quality of address matching software and to diagnose and correct software problems.

coil — A roll of postage stamps (usually in quantities of 100, 500, 3,000, or 10,000).

colis postaux (CP) — (French) International parcel post.

collect — To pick up mail from collection boxes or customers.

collection — The pickup of mail from street collection boxes, businesses, or customers on the street. This operation is usually scheduled to meet mail processing and dispatch requirements.

C

collection box — A blue-painted street box with the USPS logo used by the public to deposit mail. Each box is equipped with a security lock. It has a uniform appearance and a nationwide identification system that distinguishes the type of service provided at each box.

collection box insert — A plastic or fiberboard four-sided tub placed in an empty collection box to receive deposited mail.

collection mail — Mail deposited into a collection box or lobby drop, as well as mail collected by letter carriers on their delivery rounds.

collection route — In city delivery service, a motorized carrier route for picking up mail deposited into collection boxes or lobby drops and picked up from large companies.

collect on delivery (COD) — A service for mailers who need to mail an article for which they have not received payment. The amount due the sender is collected from the addressee, and the USPS returns the amount due to the sender.

collector — A letter carrier who gathers mail from street collection boxes and building boxes and then takes it to the post office for processing.

combination route — A motorized route that combines the functions of collection, relay, Parcel Post, or inter- or intracity routes.

combined mailing — A mailing in which individually addressed mailpieces are merged and sorted together, usually using two or more postage payment methods.

commemorative stamp — A postage stamp that depicts the cultural and historical heritage of the United States (for example, important people, events, places, or special subjects of national appeal or significance). This type of stamp is usually issued at the prime (or common current) rate, is printed in limited quantities, is typically large and colorful, and is sold for a limited time. (Compare with *definitive stamp* and *special-issue stamp*.)

commercial mailing agent (CMA) — A private third party that engages in a principal-agent relationship to mail bulk mail.

commercial mail receiving agency (CMRA) — A private business that acts as the mail-receiving agent for specific clients.

C

commingle — To integrate dissimilar mail (such as subscriber and nonsubscriber copies, machinable and irregular parcels) into the same mailing.

committed space — The specific amount of space (in cubic feet) set aside for transporting mail aboard an aircraft or flight.

community post office (CPO) — A contract postal unit that provides service in small communities where independent post offices have been discontinued. A CPO bears its community's name and ZIP Code as part of a recognized address.

complex post office — A post office that has its mail totally processed at a processing and distribution center/facility.

Comprehensive-Interactive Information Strategy (CIIS) — The enterprise-wide architecture that supports the end-to-end business processes, optimized IT investment, eliminates stovepipe application development, and shapes the future of IT initiatives at USPS.

computer-assisted keyboard training (CAKT) — A method of using computer simulation to teach machine mail sorting.

computer-assisted scheme training (CAST) — A means of providing scheme training to and testing of manual distribution clerks through computer graphic representation of sortation items.

Computerized Forwarding System (CFS) — A centralized, computerized address label-generating operation that performs address correction and forwards or returns undeliverable-as-addressed mail to customers.

Computerized On-Site Data Entry System (CODES) — Automation of major USPS statistical programs that are designed to attribute costs to each mail class. Data and voice communications are used for data collection and associated field administrative functions.

Computerized Meter Resetting System (CMRS) — An electronic system that permits users of approved postage meters to reset such meters at their places of business.

computer operations service center (COSC) — A data processing facility that provides computer support for postal activities. COSCs are located in San Mateo, CA, and Minneapolis, MN.

C

concentration center — A postal facility that receives international mail from designated low-volume origins and dispatches it to the appropriate international exchange office.

CON-CON — The concentration (amassing at specific points) and convoy (transport) of registered mail under controlled conditions. CON-CON is a USPS trademark.

console — A complete work station on the multiposition letter sorting machine at which the operator keys ZIP Code or assigned numbers found on addresses of letter-size mail. This station includes a feed table, a vacuum pickoff arm, an inserter trough, and a keyboard.

consolidation point — (See *gateway*.)

consumer advocate — A USPS officer appointed by, and serving under the direction of, the postmaster general. This officer represents the interests of the individual mail user, recommends policy changes to improve service, responds to consumer concerns, and informs consumers about postal products and services.

Consumer Service Card — A multipart form (Form 4314) that is used by customers and USPS employees to record service complaints or compliments. A postmaster or designee replies directly to complaints and submits them to the St. Louis Accounting Service Center for tabulation and follow-up. The form is available both in English and Spanish. (Also see *accounting service center*.)

contact point — A specific area or point designated for the exchange of mail between the USPS and a transportation company or agency. (Also see *carrier*.)

container — Any equipment used to hold more than one mailpiece. The term includes a sack, pouch, hamper, nutting truck, basket, letter tray or flat tray and a variety of boxes and carts. Mail transport equipment used to move mail in plant or between authorized postal facilities. These include the Amtrak container, bulk mail center over-the-road (BMC-OTR) container, BMC in-house container, CON-CON container, multipurpose containers (eastern region mail container and general purpose mail container), and wire container.

container cart — A small four-wheeled cart used by city carriers to deliver mail on their routes.

containerized office — A postal facility designated to send and receive bulk mail in bulk mail center containers, general purpose mail containers, flat trays, and letter trays.

container pouch — A pouch that contains several small or lightly loaded pouches — all dispatched to the same downstream point for delivery to individual destinations. It reduces handling and prevents loss between origin and delivery points.

Container Transport System — An electromechanical system for the movement of full or empty mail containers within a bulk mail center. It uses programmed commands or guides to save manual labor. (Also called *towveyor*.)

content identifier number (CIN) — A code number that represents and identifies the level of tray or sack and class of mail for sorted mailpieces.

contracting officer representative (COR) — A person authorized to monitor contracts on behalf of the USPS. (Also see *quality assurance*.)

contract postal unit — A postal unit that is a subordinate unit within the service area of a main post office. It is usually located in a store or place of business and is operated by a contractor who accepts mail from the public, sells postage and supplies, and provides selected special services (for example, postal money order or registered mail). (Compare with *classified unit*.) (Also called *contract branch*, *contract station*, and *community post office*.)

conventional adhesive — (See *water-activated adhesive*.)

conversion — A change in an employee's status or tenure, usually from a casual, temporary, or excepted status to another type of employment.

conversion rate — The factor used for specific types and classifications of mail when converting weight, containers, or feet of mail to number of pieces.

conveyor — The mechanical or gravity-operated belt or rollers for transferring mail between car or vehicle and platform, or from one location to another in a post office. (Also see *gravity roller conveyor*, *loading conveyor*, and *surge conveyor*.) (Also called *sorting conveyor*.)

convoy — To escort and guard registered mail or other accountable items.

C

cooperative mailing — A mailing made jointly by one or more organizations authorized to mail at Nonprofit Standard Mail rates at the same post office.

copalletize — To combine and present together on pallets mail from two or more different or separately produced mailstreams. (Also see *palletization*.)

cord fastener — A label holder with attachment that fastens the cord that closes the mouth of a sack.

Corporate Call Management Program — A program to provide customers telephone access to information about USPS services via 800 telephone number, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

corporate champion — Reengineering efforts require a postal corporate champion to sponsor the effort, promote it among his or her high-level corporate peers, and support the charter for the effort at the corporate level.

Corporate Data Base (CDB) — A collection of information from major financial and operating systems, used for the allocation, management, and control of postal resources. It contains data on revenues and expenses, pricing and costing, volume and productivity, service performance, and workhours and benefits.

cost ascertainment grouping (CAG) — A method that classifies post offices according to volume of revenue generated. Each year, the *Postal Bulletin* publishes the number of revenue units for each classification. CAG A–G — offices with about 950 or more revenue units. CAG H–J — offices with about 190, but fewer than 950. CAG K — offices with about 36, but fewer than 190. CAG L — offices with about fewer than 36. Formerly, post offices were classified as first-, second-, third-, and fourth-class offices.

courtesy box — (See *snorkel collection box*.)

courtesy reply mail (CRM) — Envelopes or postcards that a mailer provides to its customers to expedite delivery of their responses. The customer affixes the reply postage before mailing.

cover — In philately, an envelope on which all the postal markings or cancellations have been applied. (Compare with *mail cover*.)

craft employee — (See *bargaining unit employee*.)

critical entry time — The latest time a particular class of transported mail can arrive at the destination post office to meet the service standard for mail processing, dispatch, and final delivery.

cross boundary — Mail shipments from one bulk mail center (BMC) or auxiliary service facility (ASF) area to a facility in another BMC or ASF area. The shipment bypasses the parent BMC of the originating or destinating facility.

cull — To remove nonletter mail (such as small parcels, rolls, and odd-shaped material) from letter mail (and nonmachinable mailpieces from automation rate pieces) by hand or machine. During culling, specials (such as special delivery and accountable mail) and flats are segregated from other letter mailpieces. (Also see *bulkie* and *mail processing*.)

culling and facing conveyor — A mechanized letter-facing conveyor with a collection sack shakeout hopper and a conveyor belt top for culling, combined with a two-channel edger-feeder to dual stackers.

curbside delivery — A method of city delivery service where the letter carrier (walking or in a vehicle) delivers to customer mailboxes located at the curb. (Compare with *sidewalk delivery*.) (Also called *curbline delivery*.)

curtailed — The mail that the letter carrier cannot case before scheduled delivery-route leave time and is authorized to leave for casing the next day. Also, the nondelivery of mail to a customer in cases where the premises are hazardous (for example, when a customer does not restrain a dog).

CustomerPerfect! — Establishes processes to monitor the marketplace, create business plans, conduct work monitor results, initiate improvements, and acknowledge employee contributions. (Also see *Voice of the Business*, *Voice of the Customer*, and *Voice of the Employee*.)

Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) — A survey of randomly selected residential postal customers that, along with unsolicited consumer complaints, offers feedback on consumer services.

customs mail — Mail originating in other countries and most U.S. possessions and territories that is subject to examination and is sometimes charged a customs duty.

C

cutoff time — A time set by the unit manager at which a letter carrier makes a final withdrawal of mail from the distribution case before preparing to leave for the assigned route. Also, the latest time that mail can be accepted for processing to meet service standards for the specific mail class.

D

daylight container — Mail transported at a specified transportation rate in containers (owned by carriers) on airline flights scheduled to depart between 6:01 a.m. and 8:59 p.m.

deadhead — A vehicle that travels without mail. To retrace part of a route without delivering mail, such as along a street with houses on one side only.

dead letter office/dead parcel branch — (See *mail recovery center*.)

dead mail — Mail that is undeliverable as addressed and cannot be returned to the sender (usually because there is no return address on the piece).

defective — (informal) A damaged pouch, sack, lock, or key.

definitive stamp — A regular postage stamp issued in unlimited quantities or often as part of a thematic series. These stamps vary in denomination and remain on sale for an indefinite period. (Compare with *commemorative stamp* and *special-issue stamp*.) (Also called *regular-issue stamp*.)

deliver — To take mail from the post office to the customer or to provide customer pickup — whether post office box, window, or dock.

delivery — The act of taking mail from the post office to the customer. The mail itself taken to the customer's business or residential delivery address or picked up at a post office — whether post office box, window, or dock.

delivery address — The location (destination) to which the USPS is to deliver a mailpiece. Except for mail prepared with a detached address label, the piece must show the address of the addressee (intended recipient) on the side bearing the postage. It is usually placed in the lower right. (Compare with *return address*.)

delivery address format — Address elements required by the USPS on all mailpieces — that is, the intended recipient's name; either general delivery, a house or building number and street name (plus apartment/suite number, if applicable), or a post office box number or rural route or highway contract route designation with a box number; and city, state or state abbreviation, and ZIP Code or ZIP+4. Placement of this information on the mailpiece determines the dimension considered the length of letter-size mail. (Compare with *alternative addressing format*.)

D

delivery point barcode (DPBC) — A POSTNET barcode that consists of 62 bars with beginning and ending frame bars and 5 bars each for the nine digits of the ZIP+4 code, the last 2 digits of the primary street address number (or post office box, etc.), and a correction digit. The DPBC allows automated sortation of letter mail to the carrier level in walk sequence.

delivery point code — In mail processing, the finest depth of code to which a mailpiece can be sorted by its address. It is usually the 11-digit numeric code formed from the ZIP+4 and represented by the delivery point barcode (DPBC).

delivery sequenced mail — Mail that is arranged by a mailer in delivery order for a particular carrier route. This mail requires no primary or secondary distribution.

delivery unit — A post office, post office station, or post office branch that has mail delivery functions.

Density Analysis System (DAS) — A computerized system that collects and analyzes information on mail volume by ZIP Code. It is used to increase the efficiency and productivity of a facility's automated mail sorting and manual distribution equipment.

Department of State mail — Certain types of domestic mail transmitted to U.S. citizens who are employees of the federal government stationed abroad.

deploy — Second step in *Customer Perfect!* planning process (establish, deploy, implement, review). Once overall corporate goals are established, Headquarters, area, and performance cluster teams negotiate on specific targets and budgets to ensure that each level is making an optimum contribution toward achieving the corporate goals.

depredation — The term used by the Inspection Service for robbery or pilfering of funds from the mail.

deputy postmaster general (DPMG) — A member of the Board of Governors, jointly appointed by the postmaster general and the Board of Governors.

D

designated post office (DPO) — A post office at which a Centralized Postage Payment (CPP) system mailer maintains the account from which postage for mailings is withdrawn. (Also see *Centralized Postage Payment System* and *entry post office*.)

designation code — A two-digit number that indicates the type of position and workforce designation (such as full-time or part-time) to which a USPS employee is assigned; it enables the proper salary account to be charged. (Also see *labor distribution code*.)

destinating mail — Incoming mail arriving for its point of final delivery. (Compare with *originating mail*.)

destination bulk mail center (DBMC) rate — A rate available for Standard Mail (A) and Standard Mail (B) Parcel Post that is properly prepared and entered by the mailer at the BMC or other designated postal facility that serves the delivery address on the mail.

destination delivery unit (DDU) rate — A rate available for Periodicals and Standard Mail that is properly prepared and entered by the mailer at the delivery unit that serves the delivery address on the mail.

destination sectional center facility (DSCF) rate — A rate available for Periodicals (except In-County) and Standard Mail that is properly prepared and entered by the mailer at the sectional center facility (SCF) (or, for certain Parcel Post, at the BMC) that serves the delivery address on the mail.

detached address label (DAL) — Paper or cardboard stock used to carry address information when preparing a mailing of unaddressed Periodicals flats, Standard Mail (A) flats or merchandise samples, or unaddressed Bound Printed Matter.

detached label delivery — A delivery method that uses a detached address label with postage that is separate from, but delivered with, an unaddressed merchandise sample, magazine, or newspaper.

detached mail unit (DMU) — An area in a mailer's facility where postal employees perform mail verification, acceptance, dispatch, and other postal functions.

diagram — An official plan either for labeling letter cases and sorting racks or for loading mail onto a vehicle, airplane, or rail container.

D

direct — A package, pouch, sack, or other mail container with each piece addressed to the same address, company, postal unit, or post office. A direct, referred to on the secondary case or optical character reader, indicates a high-volume recipient of mail who is assigned, sometimes temporarily or seasonally, a unique separation in the case. (Also see *firm direct*.)

directive — A USPS policy statement; regulation; set of guidelines, procedures, or standards; reference work, or similar material issued by the appropriate functional department. It serves to direct or guide Headquarters, field organizations, or the public. USPS directives include the six policy manuals, the *Postal Bulletin*, and any numbered handbook or publication, as well as kits, labels, management instructions, notices, posters, signs, and tags.

direct mail — Another name for advertising mail sent to targeted markets. It can be any mail class, but it is usually Standard Mail (A).

direct runoff — In mechanized mail sortation, a conveyor that transports sacks and parcels from discharge chutes on the sorting machine directly to van doors. Additional conveyors may be added at the discharge point to help load the van.

DIS — An internal code for “distribution at” used to label mail for two or more post offices that receive mail through another post office or general mail facility that sorts incoming mail for a defined service area.

dismount delivery — The method of delivery in which a letter carrier leaves a vehicle for one or several deliveries and then returns to move the vehicle to the next delivery point.

dispatch — Mail readied and loaded for transportation. To ready the mail for loading.

dispatch of value — The last dispatch of the day that is loaded on transportation in time to meet the service standard for the mail class or destination.

dispenser — (See *stamp vending machine*.)

distribute — To sort mail in order to group pieces according to a plan or scheme.

D

Distributed Data Entry and Distributed Reporting (DDE/DR) — A group of software applications used to process payroll and payroll-related transactions by remote video display terminals, which are linked to the mainframe at the Minneapolis Accounting Service Center (ASC). The sites are also equipped with printers for transmitting system-generated application reports, replies to local inquiries, and reports normally mailed from the ASC.

distributing unit — The area in a post office, post office station, post office branch, and airport mail center/facility where distribution clerks sort mail.

distribution — The sorting of mail into pigeonhole cases, trays, sacks, machine bins, or pouches in order to group pieces with a common destination for transportation to the post office of address. It may be done by manual, mechanized, or automated means. The term is also applied to the distributed mail itself.

distribution networks office (DNO) — A postal unit that prepares all authorized National Air and Surface System (NASS) dispatch and routing instructions and coordinates USPS transportation operations within a geographic area. (Also see *route*.)

district — An administrative field unit that oversees most operational and support functions for post offices in a defined geographic area.

divider — A vertical or horizontal separator for letter carrier or clerk distribution cases.

dock transfer — The movement of mail on a dock from one van to another without further sorting or changing the packing form. A split of mail can be done.

domestic mail — Mail transmitted within, among, and between the United States; its territories and possessions; army post offices (APOs) and fleet post offices (FPOs) ; and mail for delivery to the United Nations, NY. Mail exchanged between the United States and the Freely Associated States is also treated as domestic mail. It is classified by size, weight, content, service, and other factors.

D

Domestic Mail Classification Schedule (DMCS) — The basic framework for classifying domestic mail categories (mail classes) and postal services and for setting postal rates and fees. It represents the recommendations of the Postal Rate Commission as adopted by the USPS Board of Governors, under the classification and rate-setting mechanism prescribed by the Postal Reorganization Act (39 U.S.C.). (Also see *Code of Federal Regulations* and *rate setting*.)

Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) — The USPS manual that contains the basic standards governing domestic mail services; descriptions of the mail classes and services and conditions governing their uses; and standards for rate eligibility and mail preparation. Domestic mail is classified by size, weight, content, service, and other factors.

doubles — In mechanized and automation sorting, two or more mailpieces moving as one and thus causing a distribution error.

dress the rack — To hang empty sacks or pouches on a sorting rack. (Also called *hang the rack*.)

drive-out agreement — An arrangement between a letter carrier and the USPS in which the carrier provides and is reimbursed for the use of his or her personal vehicle for mail delivery. (Also see *vehicle hire contract*.)

driver — An activity or condition that has a direct influence on the operational performance or cost structure of other activities.

drop — A lobby slot or opening where customers deposit mail.

drop box — The olive green noncollection receptacle where city carriers leave mail on the line of travel for later pickup and delivery by another carrier. (Also called *relay box*.)

drop day — (informal) A scheduled day off for an employee.

drop letter — A letter mailed for local delivery at a post office that has neither city delivery nor collection and delivery by a rural carrier or highway contract route carrier. Letters are picked up by the addressees.

drop shipment — Typically the movement of a mailer's product on private (nonpostal) transportation from the point of production to a postal facility located closer to the destination of that product.

D

dual address — A delivery address with both a street address and post office box number. Delivery is made to the address on the line immediately above the city, state, and ZIP+4 line.

duck stamp — (informal) (See *migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp*.)

dumping table — A worktable where sacks or pouches are emptied.

dump up — (informal) To empty sacks and pouches on a worktable or other sorting surface.

duty — A charge collected by the U.S. Customs Service on imported goods entering the United States by mail.

E

eastern region mail container (ERMC) — A wheeled multipurpose mail container for smaller, bulk-loaded items. Unlike the general purpose mail container, it is equipped with an interior plastic liner, a full-height web door, and a coupler pin. (Compare with *general purpose mail container*.)

Easy Stamp Service — (obsolete) Formerly referred to as a method for consumer purchase of postage stamps other than direct sales at a post office window unit. This includes Stamps by Mail, Stamps by Phone, Stamps on Consignment, Stamps by Prodigy, and Stamps by Automated Teller Machine.

edge — To position large quantities of letter-size mail on their edge for feeding into automated equipment. (Also see *edger-feeder* and *jog*.)

edger-feeder — A machine that receives culled mail and extracts thick mail and flats, aligns edges, and automatically feeds letter mailpieces into a facer-canceler. (Also see *batch* and *edge*.)

edger-stacker — A machine that receives culled letter mail for edging and stacking, usually for feeding into a facer-canceler. Also a component of a barcode sorter.

elbow and eyeball — (informal) To open and examine the interior of a presumably empty sack to ensure that it does not contain mail trapped inside.

Electronic Marketing Reporting System (EMRS) — A national computer system that compiles data for sales and service reports on USPS services such as Express Mail, Priority Mail, International Priority Airmail, and International Air Lift (ISAL).

electronic sort processor (ESP) — A modification to the multiposition letter sorting machine/ZIP mail translator that makes the machine quieter and more accurate.

eligibility — Qualification standards such as content, mail processing category, and preparation applied to mail for a specific rate or discount.

Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) — A directive that contains USPS personnel policies and regulations affecting organization management, job evaluation, employment and placement, pay administration, employee benefits, employee relations, training and development, safety and health, and labor relations. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) — A voluntary program that assists USPS employees to recover from substance abuse and to cope with mental, emotional, family, financial, and legal problems. Evaluation, counseling, or referral is provided by professional counselors contracted by the Public Health Service. (Formerly called *Program for Alcoholic Recovery*.)

Employee Involvement/Quality of Work Life (EI/QWL) — A USPS participatory management style that involves employees at all levels in decisions affecting their work and work environment.

empty equipment — All empty sacks, pouches, and other mail transport equipment used to hold mail.

encoded mail — Mail processed on a multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) that has a barcode representation of its ZIP+4 printed on the lower right corner of the mailpiece. USPS optical character reader or remote encoding equipment can barcode the piece, or the customer can preprint the barcode on the piece.

encumbered route — A rural route with a regular rural carrier assigned. The term is used in rural route consolidation studies.

end case — (See *hot case*.)

endorsement — An authorized marking on a mailpiece that shows handling instructions, a special service, or a request for an ancillary service. (Also see *marking*.)

Engineering Change Board (ECB) — A group of designated postal managers who must review and approve all changes to standard configurations of designated and controlled USPS equipment.

Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail — Two subclasses of Standard Mail (A) (Regular and Nonprofit) for mailpieces weighing less than 16 ounces and prepared in carrier route sequence.

E

entry BMC — A bulk mail center (BMC), including its satellite auxiliary service facility (ASF) unless specified otherwise, at which mail is entered by the mailer. (Also see *bulk mail center* and *auxiliary service facility*.)

entry facility — The USPS mail processing facility (e.g., BMC, SCF) that serves the post office at which the mail is entered by the mailer. (Also called *origin facility*.)

entry post office (EPO) — A post office at which a Centralized Postage Payment System (CPP) mailer deposits mailings to be paid for through an account maintained at the designated post office (DPO). (Also see *Centralized Postage Payment System* and *designated post office*.)

entry SCF — The sectional center facility (SCF) at which mail is entered by the mailer or that serves the post office where the mail is entered. An SCF can have responsibility for an area covering either single- or multi-3-digit ZIP Codes.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) — A federal program and USPS policy that provides equal opportunities for all personnel in employment, training, assignment, promotion, and job security without discrimination owing to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or physical or mental disability.

error — A missorted piece or unit of mail that must be rehandled within the post office before dispatch, as opposed to missent mail actually transported to another post office. (Compare with *missent/misdirected mail*.)

examined equipment — Empty sacks and pouches checked to determine reusability and to ensure that they contain no mail.

exceptional address — An alternative addressing format that indicates that the mailpiece should be delivered to the current resident if the addressee has moved. (Compare with *occupant address* and *simplified address*.)

exceptional dispatch — The delivery of a Periodicals mailing by the publisher to a post office other than offices of original entry or additional entry.

exchange — To dispatch mail to, or receive mail from, another country.

exchange office — (See *international exchange office*.)

executive and administrative schedule (EAS) — A salary structure that applies to most managerial and administrative USPS employees.

Executive Committee — A committee that assists the postmaster general in establishing management policy and objectives and approving major plans, programs, and budgets. It is composed of several senior officers, including the postmaster general and the deputy postmaster general.

Executive Leadership Program — Advanced management training for selected, experienced postal managers offered by specified universities.

executive sponsor — Supplies, supports, guides, and directs a postal reengineering project core team. The executive sponsor seeks funding for the effort, creates the management review board, and picks the project manager.

expanded ZIP Code — (See *ZIP+4*.)

expedited plant load shipment — An authorized verification and receipt of postage payment for mailable matter at the mailer's plant, prior to the mailer's transport of the shipment to a destination postal facility.

Expedited Preferential Mail Program — A program in which a letter carrier cases preferential mail before leaving the delivery unit, and nonpreferential mail after returning from the route. This provides earlier mail delivery to residential areas, with consistent delivery times.

expediter — A clerk in a large mail processing facility who at the cutoff times ensures the on-time dispatching and routing of all mail classes to the correct trucks.

exprès — (French) UPU term for an international service featuring special priority handling of letters and small packets weighing up to 4 pounds.

Express Mail — A mail class that provides expedited delivery service for mailable matter subject to certain standards. It is available in five basic domestic service offerings (Same Day Airport Service, Custom Designed Service, Next Day Service, Second Day Service, and Military Service). Express Mail International Service is available between the United States and most foreign countries. Express Mail is a USPS trademark.

Express Mail collection box — A specially marked white collection box for the public deposit of properly prepared and prepaid Express Mail items.

E

Express Mail International Service (EMS) — A service available to nearly 200 countries and territories, providing delivery to foreign cities in most cases within 1 to 3 days. This is the fastest, most reliable way to send letters, documents, merchandise, and merchandise samples abroad. Express Mail International Service is a USPS trademark. (Also see *Postal Union Mail*.)

Express Mail Military Service (EMMS) — An Express Mail service available between the United States and designated APO and FPO addresses that provides Department of Defense and other authorized personnel stationed overseas with an expedited delivery service to or from the United States.

extended managed mail tray (EMM) — 2-foot letter trays that measure 21-3/4 inches long by 11-1/2 inches wide (inside bottom dimensions) by 6-1/8 inches high. Must be used for letter-size mail that does not fit in regular MM trays.

External First-Class Measurement — A system whereby a contractor performs independent service performance tests on certain types of First-Class Mail (that is, letters, flats, postcards) deposited in collection boxes and business mail chutes. It provides national, area, performance cluster, and city estimates, which are compared with USPS service goals. The results are released to the public quarterly by the consumer advocate.

F

face — The side of a mailpiece with the delivery address. Also to arrange mail in a uniform orientation; that is, with the delivery address facing forward and the postage stamp, meter stamp, or permit imprint positioned in the upper right corner.

facer-canceler — Mail processing equipment that automatically faces letter-size mail in a uniform orientation and cancels the postage stamps. (Also see *canceling machine*, *facing identification mark*, *postmarking stamp*, *roller-canceler*, and *tagging*.) (Called *Advanced Facer Canceler System (AFCS)* and *Mark II Facer Canceler/Edger Feeder*.)

facilities service office (FSO) — An office reporting to headquarters that manages facility activities such as real estate and building planning for a geographic area.

facility bypass — Presorted mail from or to any post office within a facility service area that does not require handling at the facility. For example, plant-loaded mail, turnaround mail at other offices within the facility service area, and mail sent directly to a bulk mail center. (Also see *plant loading*.)

facing identification mark (FIM) — A series of five or six vertical bars used by automated postal equipment to identify, orient, and separate reply mail.

facing slip — A paper label attached to the top of a bundle that shows where the mail is to be distributed, the class and type of mail, and the country or military post office. (Also see *optional endorsement line*.)

facing table — A table on which letters are gathered and faced in the same direction before being run through a canceling machine. Some tables are fitted with conveyors to carry faced letters to one end of the table and stack them automatically. (Also called *pickup table*.)

false representation — (See *mail fraud*.)

F

FASTforwardSM — A USPS-licensed automated system that updates addresses by matching names and addresses with current change-of-address orders on file. A piece updated with *FASTforward* can be delivered directly to the new address rather than forwarded from the old address. *FASTforward* systems interface with USPS-approved automation systems such as multiline optical character readers (MLOCs) and remote video encoding (RVE) operations. *FASTforward* is available in two applications. The Mailing List Correction application updates computerized name and address mailing lists before mailpiece creation. The MLOC/RVE application provides an “on-piece” address correction during mail processing before deposit into the mailstream.

Federal Register (FR) — A daily weekday publication distributed by the Office of the Federal Register in which certain U.S. government documents must be published.

FEDSTRIP (Federal Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures) — A system of processing government agency requisitions for supplies from the General Services Administration. The FEDSTRIP address is a six-character code identifying the agency to which goods and billings are sent. Items to be requisitioned are identified by a 13-digit National Stock Number (NSN).

field — A general designation for postal locations other than Headquarters and its related units. These include 10 areas and 85 districts.

field maintenance offices (FMO) — An office that performs maintenance work, which is not the responsibility of the GSA or a lessor, at associate post offices and other facilities.

final case — (See *hot case*.)

finance number — An assigned six-digit number that identifies an installation for processing its financial data. The first two are a state code; the next four are uniquely assigned from 0001 through 9999 to each installation in alphabetic order.

finance unit — A nondelivery post office branch or post office station that accepts mail from customers and provides services to customers and handles their mail. (Compare with *classified unit*.)

Financial Management Manual (FMM) — The directive that summarizes USPS financial policies, including accounting, accounts receivable, accounts payable, and operational planning, budgeting, and control of funds. Detailed USPS financial procedures are in various USPS handbooks. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

fine cull machine— The equipment installed between the rough cull belt and the facer-canceler to remove odd-shaped items before the mail arrives at the canceling machine.

fingering the mail — Checking the addresses on mail between delivery stops on a carrier route before selecting mailpieces for the next stop.

firm direct — Mail to a company or business that, because of volume, justifies a separation on the primary or secondary sortation of incoming mail. (Also see *direct*.)

firm holdout — A service for customers who receive 50 or more pieces on the first delivery trip on a carrier route. These customers may pick up their mail at the post office once a day. (Compare with *caller service* and *post office box service*.)

First-Class Mail (FCM) — A class of mail that includes all matter wholly or partly in writing or typewriting, all actual and personal correspondence, all bills and statements of account, and all matter sealed or otherwise closed against inspection. First-Class Mail comprises three subclasses: postcards, letters and sealed parcels, and Priority Mail. Anyailable matter may be sent as First-Class Mail. First-Class Mail is a USPS trademark.

first day cover (FDC) — In philately, an envelope with a newly issued postage stamp and a cancellation showing the date the postage stamp was first sold.

first-day-of-issue office — A post office (or offices) authorized to sell a new postage item on the first day of sale. (Also see *hand-stamped cancellation*.) (Also called *first-day-of-sale office*.)

first flight cover — (obsolete) A philatelic cover carried on the airplane inaugurating a new airline flight. The cover was postmarked with the date of the flight. (Also see *first day cover*.)

F

first handling pieces (FHP) — Letters, flats, and parcels sorted in a local post office for the first time.

fiscal periods — (1) Postal quarters consist of three designated accounting periods, except the fourth quarter of the postal fiscal year, which consists of four designated accounting periods. (2) Postal fiscal year consists of 13 designated accounting periods divided into postal quarters. The fiscal year number is the calendar year in which the postal fiscal year begins.

five-minute leeway rule — A deviation of up to 5 minutes (.08 hour) from an employee's established work schedule, allowed when congestion at the time clock or other conditions necessitate. The daily sum of deviations from the established work schedule may not exceed 5 minutes. Some employees who are allowed the 5-minute deviation for clocking purposes are paid on the basis of actual clock rings.

fixed conveyor — A lift for moving mail from floor to floor or a system of conveyors for an entire post office.

fixed cost — A cost that does not vary with the amount or degree of production. The costs that remain if an activity or process stops. (Also see *variable cost*.)

flag pole — (informal) An overseas military post office that performs the functions of a domestic sectional center facility.

flat — The general term for flat-size mail, so called because the large mail is sorted without bending it so that the mail remains flat.

flat case — (See case.)

flat-size mail — A mailpiece that exceeds one of the dimensions for letter-size mail (11-1/2 inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, 1/4 inch thick) but that does not exceed the maximum dimension for the mail processing category (15 inches long, 12 inches high, 3/4 inch thick). Dimensions are different for automation rate flat-size mail eligibility. Flat-size mail may be unwrapped, sleeved, wrapped, or enveloped.

flat sorting machine (FSM) — (See *multiposition flat sorting machine*.)

flat tray — A four-sided tray used in both mechanized and nonmechanized offices for flat-size mail. (Compare with *letter tray*.)

F

fleet post office (FPO) — A branch of a designated USPS civilian post office, which falls under the jurisdiction of the postmaster of either New York City or San Francisco, that serves Coast Guard, Navy, or Marine Corps personnel. (Also see *military post office*.)

fletter — An industry term used to describe a mailpiece that can be classified as letter-size mail but could also meet the standards for and be mailed as automation flat-size mail.

flexi-employee — A part-time USPS career employee who works a varied schedule and is not guaranteed 40 hours of work in a service week.

float — (See *tram*.)

FLTS — An abbreviation used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as flat-size mail.

foot carrier — A city carrier who delivers mail on foot.

foot route — A city route on which the letter carrier walks to deliver the mail rather than drive a vehicle as done on a mounted route.

forward — To redirect mail to the intended recipient's new delivery address in cases where Form 3575, *Change of Address Order*, or other written or personal notice has been filed with the local post office. (Also see *Address Change Service*, *address correction service*, and *ancillary service*.)

400 bin — A receptacle on the multiposition letter sorting machine that accumulates letters keyed to an unacceptable code, including letters for which the operator depressed more than three keys.

fourth-class mail — (obsolete) (See *Standard Mail (B)*.)

frame bar — Either the first bar or last bar of a POSTNET barcode. These two bars at each end of the barcode have no numeric significance.

franked mail — Official mail sent without postage prepayment by members and members-elect of Congress, the Vice President, and other authorized individuals. Mail must relate to the mailer's official business, activities, and duties. The mailpiece bears a written signature, printed facsimile signature, or other required marking instead of a postage stamp. (Compare to *penalty mail*.)

F

fraud order — An order issued by the judicial officer or a delegated assistant directing a postmaster to mark “FRAUDULENT” and to return to sender all mail addressed to any person or concern found violating the postal fraud or lottery statutes. (Also see *mail fraud*.)

free matter — Material sent to or by the blind and other disabled persons and bearing the postage and fees paid indicia. It must be marked “Free Matter for the Blind or Handicapped.” (Also called *free matter for the blind and other handicapped persons*.)

frown — (informal) (See *smiles, frowns, and upside downs*.)

full flat tray — A tray that is sufficiently filled with flats to allow or require preparation to the corresponding presort destination. A full flat tray contains at least enough pieces so that a single stack lying flat on the bottom of the tray reaches to the bottom of the handholds. Additional pieces must be added when possible to physically fill the tray.

full letter tray — A tray filled at least three-fourths full with faced, upright pieces. Each tray must be physically filled to capacity before the filling of the next tray. A tray with less mail may be prepared only if less-than-full or overflow trays are permitted by the standards for the rate claimed. (Also see *less-than-full tray* and *overflow tray*.)

full sack — A sack filled with the minimum number of pieces needed to qualify for the class and rate claimed.

function — A specific set of skills and resources that can be used to perform one or more activities that make up a postal process. Usually, several functions are associated with a single process.

gateway — An important transportation center, especially for air transportation, where mail routes converge and mail is rerouted for onward dispatch. (Also called *consolidation point*.)

general delivery — An alternate delivery service that allows customers with proper identification to pick up mail at post offices. Provided primarily at offices without letter carrier delivery or for transients and customers who do not have a permanent address or who prefer not to use post office boxes. (Also see *poste restante*.) (Compare with *caller service*.)

general mail system (GMS) — The entire postal system, including the bulk mail network and all postal field operations. (Compare with *National Bulk Mail System*.)

general post office (GPO) — (obsolete) (See *main post office*.)

general purpose mail container (GPMC) — A wheeled container that is nestable (that is, it can be stored in an L-shaped configuration) and is used to transport, stage, and distribute sacks, trays, and bundles. More than 5 feet tall, with a capacity of 1,200 pounds of mail, the container can be pushed by hand or pulled by tractor. (Compare with *eastern region mail container*.)

general scheme — A pattern of distribution of mail for a state or section of a state that shows the route or supply by which each post office receives mail.

girth — The measurement around the thickest part of a mailpiece.

Global ePOST — An electronic-to-hard copy service that provides mailers with one-stop shopping for international mailings. Designed for large-volume mailers needing a fast, secure, and reliable way to send international mail, such as invoices, orders, account statements, and advertisements.

Global Package Link — An air export service that provides end-to-end solutions (e.g., varying service levels, customs clearance, tracking) for international volume package shipping.

Global Priority Mail (GPM) — An expedited international service for the shipment of documents, correspondence, and merchandise, featuring a 4-business-day delivery standard to selected countries in Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Canada.

G

gondola — (informal) A six-wheeled container or tub used to move pouches, sacks, and nonsackable mail. (Also see *basket*.)

Governors — (See *Board of Governors*.)

gravity roller conveyor — (See *conveyor*.)

gross combined weight (GCW) — The combined total vehicle weight of a tractor and trailer.

gurney — (See *basket*.)



hamper — A canvas-lined tub supported by a steel and wood frame, used to transport bulk, bundled, and sacked mail (from 440 to 800 pounds) between postal operations.

handbook — A USPS directive that documents the procedures needed to implement USPS policy stated in manuals.

hand-stamped cancellation — A cancellation on postage stamps that is applied manually (rather than mechanically with a canceling machine) on mailpieces that are nonmachinable or do not meet USPS dimensions. It includes the standard cancellation with killer bars, the circular cancellation without killer bars, the first-day-of-issue cancellation, the bull's eye cancellation, and the pictorial cancellation. (Also see *first-day-of-issue office*.)

hang the rack — (See *dress the rack*.)

hards — (informal) Mail laid aside pending instructions on proper dispatch. (Also called *selects*.)

hash — (informal) Mail that is not required to be ready for close connections and not in sufficient quantity to warrant a definite separation. (Also called *layover mail* and *house mail*.)

hazardous material — Any article or substance designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) as being capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety, and property during transportation.

header — (See *case label*.)

head-out — The starting point of a mail run or trip.

Headquarters — The national USPS unit that directs administration, policy, and operations. It is located at 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC 20260-0001. (Compare with *area* and *district*.)

heavy — (informal) (See *bulkier*.)

highway contract route (HCR) — A route of travel served by a postal contractor to carry mail over highways between designated points. Some HCRs include mail delivery to addresses along the line of travel. Formerly called *star route*.

H

highway contract route transportation pay cycle (HCR-TPC) — A 28-day (4-week) period that forms one-thirteenth of the fiscal year. It begins on a Saturday and ends at the close of business on the Friday 28 days (4 weeks) later.

hit — (informal) To postmark mail with a hand-stamped cancellation.

holdout — Mail held for handling and dispatch and for businesses that receive a large volume of mail.

horizontal bars — A series of uniform, wide bars, parallel to the length of the mailpiece, printed immediately below the no postage necessary endorsement on the right side of business reply mail.

hot case — (informal) A special distribution case in a delivery unit for last-minute sorting of mail. The letter carrier collects this mail before leaving for his or her route. (Also called *end case* and *final case*.)

hot house — (informal) An area used to separate and dispatch preferential mail. (Also called *hot spot*.)

hot mail — (informal) (See *preferential mail*.)

hot stamp — (informal) Stamp ink that contains a substance that becomes luminescent when passed through a facer-canceler. (Also see *luminescent indicia detector* and *tagging*.)

house mail — (informal) (See *hash*.)

Hub and Spoke Program (HASP) — For surface mail, primarily for 2-day committed mail. The HASP includes a central point (“hub”) where mail for a group of offices (“spokes”) can be unloaded from a series of incoming trips, massed according to their intended destination, and then sent on to that destination on another trip. Savings are realized because each trip does not have to drive to each individual office or “spoke” to drop off just a portion of its total load capacity.

identical piece — An individual mailpiece that has the same mail classification and physical aspect, size, and weight as all other pieces in a presorted mailing.

idle vehicle time — The period during a scheduled tour when a vehicle is inactive.

improperly returned — Mail erroneously returned to the sender.

incoming mail — Mail received by a postal facility, most commonly for distribution and delivery within the delivery area of the receiving facility. (Also see *destinating mail*.) (Compare with *outgoing mail*.)

incoming mail processing center (IMPC) — A mail processing facility that serves as a hub for incoming mail that destines at other processing or delivery facilities in its service area.

Incoming Secondary Sorting Program (ISSP) — A computer program used to analyze and plan cost-effective changes to secondary sorting operations performed on incoming mail in large postal facilities, using a multiposition letter sorting machine.

indemnity claim — A customer request for reimbursement filed for loss or damage to an item mailed by insured mail, collect on delivery, registered mail (with postal insurance), or Express Mail.

indicia — Imprinted designation on mail that denotes postage payment (e.g., permit imprint).

industrial trailer — A platform trailer (3 feet wide and 7 feet long) with two fixed and two swivel casters and end racks. It is used generally at postal terminals to move sacked mail between operations and can be coupled with other trailers to form a train drawn by an electric tractor.

information service center (ISC) — A facility that houses one or more accounting, computer operations, or software support centers.

information system — An engineered arrangement of computers, communications facilities, software code, and data designed to support the USPS business process.

information systems service center (ISSC) — A software design and support facility that provides support for postal activities. (Formerly called a *postal data center*.)

I

Information Technology (IT) — A package of equipment and/or systems related to data and/or communications that can be used as an enabler of USPS process reengineering.

Infrastructure Tool Kit (ITK) — A standardized suite of software products based on the business needs of the Postal Service and the planned direction of the Postal Computing Environment. This suite of products, called the USPS Infrastructure Tool Kit (ITK), is intended to institutionalize a core set of integrated commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) products across all USPS facilities for use in all development, support, and maintenance activities.

insert — A letter, card, or similar item placed inside another mailpiece (host piece).

Inspection Service — The federal law enforcement agency of the USPS that investigates criminal acts against the mails and misuse of the postal system; protects mail, postal funds, and postal property; and conducts internal audits. It is headed by the chief inspector.

insured mail — A service that provides indemnity coverage for a lost, rifled, or damaged article, subject to the standards for the service and payment of the applicable fee.

integrated retail terminal (IRT) — A microcomputer used at retail windows to weigh items, calculate postage and fees, and perform postal accounting functions.

interline movement — Mail moving between origin and destination by connecting schedules of more than one air, highway, or rail carrier. (Also see *intermodal*.)

intermodal — The use of two or more modes of transportation to move mail from origin to destination. (Also see *interline movement*.)

Internal Web — The Web site containing information accessible by postal personnel only (<http://blue.usps.gov>).

International Business Reply Service (IBRS) — In international mail, a service that allows envelopes and postcards to be distributed in certain foreign countries for return without postage prepayment to the original sender in the United States. (Compare with *business reply mail*.)

International Electronic Post (INTELPOST) — A facsimile message service available, at certain large post offices, between the United States and more than 40 foreign countries. A black-and-white image of the original (hard copy) document is printed and delivered to the addressee either the same day or the next day. INTELPOST is a USPS trademark.

international exchange office (IEO) — A post office or airport mail center/facility authorized to exchange international mail and military mail, both air and surface, with another country.

international mail — Mail originating in one country and destinating in another. It is classified as Postal Union Mail (that is, letters and cards (LC) and other articles (AO)), postal parcels, and Express Mail International Service.

International Mail Manual (IMM) — The USPS manual that contains classification regulations and other requirements for mailing between the United States and other countries.

International Merchant Purchase Authorization Card (IMPAC) — The official name for the VISA credit card used to purchase expense items, capital property, and vehicle parts.

International Package Consignment Service (IPCS) — (See *Global Package Link*.)

International Priority Airmail (IPA) — An international service for all mail items except postal parcels. This service is designed to be 1 day faster than regular airmail, provided that mailers meet minimum volume and sortation requirements. It is available to all countries except Canada. International Priority Airmail is a USPS trademark. (Also see *Priority Mail*.)

international reply coupon — A coupon that is exchangeable for postage (representing the minimum postage on an unregistered air letter) at post offices in member countries of the Universal Postal Union. The coupon is sold by post offices worldwide.

International Standard Book Number (ISBN) — A publication number issued by the Library of Congress that identifies a specific book or other nonperiodical.

I

International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) — A publication number issued by the Library of Congress that identifies a specific periodical (such as a Periodicals publication).

International Surface Air Lift (ISAL) — A bulk mailing service for fast, economical international delivery of any periodical publication, advertising mail, catalog, other printed matter, or a small packet. Mail is airlifted directly to the country of destination or routed through key distribution centers. (Also see *surface airlift mail*.)

irregular parcel — A mail processing category for a parcel that does not meet the dimensions of a machinable parcel.

irregular parcels and pieces (IPP) — Parcels that do not meet the dimensional criteria of machinable parcels and other parcels that cannot be processed by parcel sorters (for example, a noncaseable flat, small cube or fragile parcel, paper or sleeve-wrapped catalog, and sackable roll, tube, or film).

J

Jiffy bag — A padded mailing envelope that is sold in various sizes by post offices. Jiffy is a commercial trademark.

jog — To hit or shake a handful of mailpieces against a hard surface to align their edges. (Also see *edge*.)

jogger — A vibrating machine that aligns the edges of vertically stacked mailpieces.

jointly addressed mail — Mail designated for more than one addressee (for example, “Mr. and Mrs. John Doe”), neither of which may control delivery of mail addressed to the other.

Jx — (French) Abbreviation for journaux (newspapers).

K

keyboard — The 20-key, two-row, piano-type keyboard on the multiposition letter sorting machine. The operator presses one, two, three, or four keys to represent one-, two-, three-, or four-digit numbers sequentially.

keyboard sort — To sort mail by operating the keyboard of equipment such as the multiposition letter sorting machine.

keyline — Optional mailer information printed in or above the address or in the lower left corner of the envelope. The information in a keyline identifies the mailpiece and its presort level. Under some postage payment systems, the keyline is a required line that contains specific information about the mailpiece.

keys and identification devices — A separate rate category for keys and identification cards or tags that bear or have attached instructions to return the pieces and a guarantee of postage payment on delivery.

killer bars — The parallel lines that extend to the right of the circular postmark for canceling the postage stamp so that it cannot be reused. The lines are part of most standard machine and hand-stamped cancellations.

known office of publication — The business office of a Periodicals publication that is in the city where the original entry for Periodicals mailing privileges is authorized.

L

label — A strip of paper (printed singly or in multiples) that shows destination, mail class or type, office of distribution, and routing instructions. It is placed in the label holders of cases, pouches, or sacks. Also, a type of directive that provides limited information or instruction and can be fastened (glued or tied) to something such as a wall, door, bumper, or package. To imprint routing, destination, or other information on a label or facing slip. Also, to insert labels in the holders of pouches and sacks before dispatch.

label carrier — A card or paper stock of varying sizes that serves as the backing for an adhesive label that shows the delivery address. It may be affixed to the cover of the publication or inserted inside a polybag mailer.

Label Printing Center (LPC) — A large facility at the material distribution center in Topeka, KS, that prints sack and tray labels, case labels, facing slips, and scheme cards.

labor distribution code (LDC) — A two-digit code designating personnel costs for specific activities at all postal organizations and installations. (Also see *activity code* and *designation code*.)

Labor Utilization Report (LUR) — A report that reflects employee current pay period and year-to-date financial data about hours worked; types of leave taken; and hours, salaries, and benefits paid. The data is classified by USPS functional area, with each area subdivided by labor distribution code; it is available at various organizational levels (that is, finance number through national format).

LA lock (LA) — A common lock for mailbags and Parcel Post sacks. The lock is U-shaped and is made of brass or steel. The words *U.S. Mail* are engraved on the front of the lock. It was developed by a mail equipment official named Burton Andrus; the acronym stands for Lock Andrus.

lawn crossing — The practice of taking a shortcut across the customer's lawn during delivery; it is permitted unless it is hazardous or the customer objects.

layover mail — (See *hash*.)

lead facilitator (LF) — The lead facilitator for a postal reengineering project core team is usually a hired contractor who has a broad experience in reengineering and in the subject matter of the reengineering. The LF provides the day-to-day technical direction for the project core team in accomplishing the tasks in a reengineering methodology.

L

leaner — (informal) (See *adjustable platform stool*.)

leave — Authorized absence (such as annual or sick leave) from official duty.

less-than-full tray — A tray that contains mail for a single destination that was not preceded by a full tray for that destination. Less-than-full trays may be prepared only if permitted by the standards for the rate claimed.

letter — According to the Private Express Statutes, a message directed to a specific person or an address and recorded in or on a tangible object. Also a shortened way to refer to letter-size mail.

letter carrier — A USPS employee who delivers and collects mail on foot or by vehicle in a prescribed area. The term usually refers to a city carrier rather than to a rural carrier or highway contract carrier. (Compare with *carrier*.)

letter case — (See *case*.)

letter chute — (See *mailchute*.)

letter jacket — A durable envelope used for registered mail letters.

letter package — A box, packet, or thick envelope that is larger in size and/or heavier in weight than an ordinary business letter and is paid for at the letter class rate of postage. It can be exclusively correspondence in combination with other mailable items. The weight limit for letter packages is 4 pounds to all countries, except for registered letter packages to Canada, which can weigh up to 66 pounds.

letter-size mail — A mail processing category of mailpieces, including cards, that do not exceed any of the dimensions for letter-size mail (that is, 11-1/2 inches long, 6-1/8 inches high, 1/4 inch thick).

letter sorting machine (LSM) — A large mechanized machine that can sort letters into as many as 277 bins. Operators physically read the address and then manually enter an extraction code, via keyboard, based on their memory of the sort scheme loaded into the machine's computer software. (Also see *multiposition letter sorting machine*.)



letter tray — A flat cardboard or plastic container for sorted letter-size mail that can hold several hundred letters. Various kinds and sizes of trays are used in place of sacks or pouches for transporting mail within and between major postal facilities. Certain rate categories, especially automation rates, require the use of trays. (Compare with *flats tray*.)

letter tray transporter — A cart, with skeletal frames, used to transport plastic letter trays in plant and between postal facilities.

letters and cards (LC) — A category of international mail that consists of ordinary letters containing personal correspondence; letter packages containing correspondence and/or other mailable items; postcards and postal cards, and aerogrammes. The LC designation is derived from the French term *lettres and cartes*.

Library Mail — A Standard Mail subclass for items sent to or from or exchanged between academic institutions, public libraries, museums, and other authorized organizations. Books, sound recordings, academic theses, and certain other items may be mailed at the Library Mail rate if properly marked.

line haul charge — The fee based on the distance and quantity (weight or space occupied) of mail transported by highway or rail between two points. This charge is distinguished from the terminal charge for loading and unloading mail.

line-of-travel (LOT) sequence — A presort for Enhanced Carrier Route rates in which mailpieces are arranged by ZIP+4 codes in the order in which the route is served by the carrier. The mailpieces are sequenced in delivery order.

live mail — The mail in USPS custody that is being processed, transported, or delivered. (Compare with *dead mail*.)

loading conveyor — (See *conveyor*.)

Loan, Transfer, and Training System (LTATS) — A payroll software application that provides for the keyboard entry of loan, transfer, and training data via Form 1236-A, *Weekly Loan, Transfer, and Training Hours*. It is used to produce the Loan, Transfer and Training Hours Report.

L

lobby — The public area for conducting postal business in a post office, post office station, or post office branch. To enhance corporate identity, it is maintained according to established postal guidelines (for example, painting or redecorating).

lobby director — An employee who assists customers in retail units during peak periods by directing them to self-service if appropriate, determining service needs, or assisting with package preparation and forms.

lobby sweep — A procedure to reduce customer waiting time whereby a postal employee dispenses information, forms and notified mail articles to customers in line at a post office.

local buying — The authority to buy and pay for day-to-day operational needs locally (for example, at the post office level without approval from a purchasing and materials service center).

local collection box — A street letterbox where local mail can be deposited for local delivery with the local postmark.

local mail — Mail addressed for delivery within the postal area of the post office where the piece is mailed.

local postmark — A cancellation that a post office without mail processing operations applies to postage stamps, if requested by the mailer. It shows the city, state, and ZIP Code of the post office.

local service air carrier — A regional air carrier that provides local, short-haul service to supplement mail trunkline operations of larger air carriers.

lock — A device used to seal registered mail and other valuable mail shipments and for locking surface pouches of First-Class Mail.

lockbox — (obsolete) (See *post office box*.)

lock holder — A small canvas bag that hangs on the sorting rack and holds surplus locks.

log — (informal) A very heavy parcel. (Also called *truck*.)

long-life vehicle (LLV) — A city delivery van with an aluminum body that can carry 1,000 pounds of cargo. It is designed to last 24 years.

loop — (See *park and loop*.)



loose in the mails — Material separated from the addressed envelope, container, or wrapper in which it was mailed.

loose-loaded parcels — Parcels loaded into a trailer or van without being enclosed in sacks or containers. (Compare with *bedloaded bundles*.)

loose-pack sack — A No. 2 sack (for flats) or a No. 3 sack (for letters or flats) that contains untied, faced, and stacked mail for dispatch.

loose sack — A sack, pouch, or irregular mailpiece transported outside an air container at a specific transportation rate.

LTRS — A code used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as letter-size mail.

luminescent indicia detector (LID) — A device on the facer-canceler that detects luminescent material in the ink on postage stamps and meter stamps. This allows automated facing and canceling of mail. (Also see *hot stamp*.)

luminescent ink — Indicia or stamp ink that contains light-reflecting additives (such as phosphor) that allow a facer-canceler machine to face and cancel letter-size mail.

M

MACH — A code used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as machinable parcels (mail that can be processed on mechanized parcel sorting equipment).

machinable — The capacity of a mailpiece to be sorted by mail processing equipment. (Compare with *nonmachinable*.)

machinable parcel — A mailpiece that is of the correct size and weight to be safely sorted by mail processing machinery such as a parcel sorting machine.

machine readable — The capability of a delivery address being interpreted electronically by automated mail processing equipment.

made-up mail — Fully processed mail ready for dispatch and transportation.

mail — Any mailable matter that is accepted for mail processing and delivery by the USPS. Also, the sum total of the mail at any time that is in USPS custody. To deposit a mailable item in a collection box or present the item (or a mailing for large quantities of mailpieces) at a post office or business mail entry unit. (Also see *mailstream*.)

mailback service — A service available to servicers and dealers of philatelic covers at a fee set by the Philatelic Fulfillment Service Center. It is generally permitted on pictorial, standard, or certain first-day-of issue cancellations on envelopes, postal cards, or other memorabilia.

mailbag — A general term for a sack or pouch.

mailbox — Any private receptacle or container used by customers to receive mail either at their residence or at the curbside.

mailchute — A glass-fronted tube with a mailslot on each floor of a tall building. Letters are dropped for collection through the chute into a box on the ground floor.

mail class — The classification of domestic mail according to content (for example, personal correspondence versus printed advertising). It is codified in the Domestic Mail Classification Schedule.

mail condition report — A system of reports that identifies and monitors problems in mail processing within a postal facility. It supports the development of resources necessary to meet the demands of fluctuating mail volume and service commitments.

M

mail count — An enumeration (in pieces or pounds) of the amount of mail sorted or handled.

mail cover — A record of information on the outside (cover) of any mailpiece. It is kept to locate a fugitive, protect national security, or obtain evidence of a crime punishable by a prison term exceeding 1 year. This record is one of the few ways information on mail may be disclosed outside the USPS, and its use is lawful only if authorized by postal regulations. (Compare with *cover*.)

mailer — An entity that prepares and/or presents a mailing to the USPS. In some cases, a mailer is the agent for the actual owner of the mail.

Mailers Technical Advisory Committee (MTAC) — A group of mailing industry representatives and USPS officials that provides technical information, advice, and recommendations about postal services, programs, regulations, and requirements. The members represent associations of large and small commercial mailing organizations, related mailing services, and various industry groups.

mail fraud — A scheme to get money or other assets from a postal customer by offering a product, service, or investment opportunity that does not live up to its claims. Prosecutors must prove that the claims were intentionally misrepresented and that the mails were used to carry out the scheme. (Also see *fraud order*.)

Mailgram — A hard-copy message transmitted electronically by Western Union and delivered by the USPS. Mailgram is a trademark of Western Union. Effective August 17, 2006, the Postal Service and Western Union terminated Mailgram service. (Also see *serving post office*.)

mail handler — An employee who loads, unloads, and moves mail; cancels postage stamps; and performs other duties related to the moving and processing of mail.

mailing — A group of mailpieces within the same mail class and mail processing category that may be sorted together under the appropriate standards. Also, the action of depositing or presenting mail at a post office.

mailing agent — A private third party that engages in a principal-agent relationship to mail bulk mail.

M

mailing list — A group of names and addresses to which mailpieces in the corresponding mailing are addressed.

mailing list service — A USPS service available for a fee that mailers use to correct name and address lists, to correct occupant lists, or to sort mailing lists on cards by 5-digit ZIP Code. The USPS also provides address changes to election boards and voter registration commissions.

mailing statement — (obsolete) (See *postage statement*.)

mailpiece — A single addressed article of mail, usually a letter, flat, card, or parcel. (Compare to *piece*.)

Mailpiece Quality Control (MQC) — A self-paced training program available to anyone who wants to learn more about mailpiece sizes, proper addressing, barcoding requirements, and other USPS regulations. The information in this self-study course will prove helpful to mailers, printers, and businesses that design mailpieces and present them to the USPS for processing and delivery.

mailpouch — (See *pouch*.)

mail preparation unit — A unit in which specific tasks are performed to facilitate the flow of mail to distribution or dispatch operations.

mail priority — The preference that private carriers such as airlines give to mail as compared with other cargo.

mail processing — An integrated group of subfunctions required to sort and distribute mail for dispatch and eventual delivery. The principal subfunctions are culling, edging and stacking, facing and canceling, sorting, tying, pouching, bundling, sacking, and traying. (Also see *advanced facer-canceler*, *barcode clear zone*, *bundle*, *cancel*, *cull*, and *face*.)

mail processing category — One of five designations for mail (flat-size mail, letter-size mail, machinable parcel, outside parcel, and irregular parcel), based on physical dimensions (height, length, and thickness) and on weight.

mail processing equipment — Machinery and related apparatus used to perform distribution of mail and other functions such as canceling and culling. This includes automated and mechanized machinery as well as distribution cases. (Compare with *mail transport equipment*.)

M

Mail Processing Work Credit System (MPWCS) — A part of the Management Operating Data System that measures the efficiency of distribution and nondistribution separations.

mail receptacle — A privately owned mailbox or a USPS collection box or other container used to receive or deposit mail.

mail recovery center (MRC) — A postal facility designated only to receive and attempt to return undeliverable and unforwardable mail of obvious value. Unpaid mail without a return address is also sent to one of these facilities. (Also see *forward* and *undeliverable as addressed*.) Formerly called *dead letter office*, *dead letter branch*, or *dead parcel branch*.

mailsack — (See *sack*.)

mail stop order — An order issued by the USPS Judicial Officer that directs the post office of delivery to return to the sender any mail responding to a false representation or lottery scheme.

mailstream — The total live mail at any time in a USPS mail processing function. Also a mailing industry term that describes the assembly line production of mailpieces in a highly automated plant.

mail transport equipment (MTE) — Containers used for mail processing or transportation within or between facilities by the USPS, its customers, or contractors. These include general purpose mail containers, tray carts, bulk mail center containers, platform trucks/trailers, hampers, special purpose containers, in-plant and surface trays, pallets, sacks, and pouches. (Also see *nutting truck*.) (Compare with *mail processing equipment*.)

mail transport equipment service center (MTESC) — A field installation designated to receive, store, ship, examine, sort, pack, and condemn mailbags. It also issues, stores, and ships locks for mailbag equipment.

main post office (MPO) — The primary postal facility in a city where the post office uses subordinate post office stations or post office branches. It provides complete postal services to a specified geographic area. (Formerly called *general post office*.)

main stock — All postage stamps and postal stationery, nonpostal stamps, and philatelic products received by a post office but not yet consigned to the main office window unit or to window clerks.

M

make up — To prepare mail for mail processing. To separate and group mail for dispatch.

Managed Mail Program (MMP) — A distribution system that masses mail at a mechanized or automated area distribution center (ADC) for receipt and five-digit distribution within the ADC area. The system identifies, on first handling, First-Class Mail that cannot make next-day delivery owing to destination distance; the system also eliminates a secondary sorting for this mail so that it can be airlifted to the destination plant for processing during nonrush hours the next day. (Also see *airlift*.)

managed mail (MM) tray— A stackable cardboard or plastic container with an enclosing cardboard sleeve and plastic strap that is used to transport letter mail to or between post offices.

management instruction (MI) — A brief, time-sensitive directive that is codified to show the relationship to one of the six policy manuals. It is issued by Headquarters and has replaced regional instructions.

Management Operating Data System (MODS) — A system used with the Postal Source Data System that provides local postal management with information on the relationship between workloads and actual hours versus planned hours.

management review board (MRB) — A select group of stakeholders in the outcome of a USPS business process reengineering. It is the directing body of a reengineering body composed of peers of the executive sponsor. The MRB members are selected by the executive sponsor to represent their functions or processes that will be impacted by the reengineering. The MRB members meet on a periodic basis to hear the progress and reports of the project core team.

management sectional center (MSC) — (obsolete) (See *sectional center facility*.)

Manifest Mailing System (MMS) — A postage payment system that enables the USPS to accept and verify permit imprint mailings that contain nonidentical-weight and/or nonidentical-rate pieces of the same mail class (except Periodicals) and same mail processing category. These pieces are prepared by the mailer according to certain standards.

manifold book — A document (Form 3854, *Manifold Registry Dispatch Book*) that contains perforated forms to track registered mail items.

M

Manpower Scheduling and Staffing Program (MSSP) — A computer program that helps postmasters improve mail processing. The program obtains cost savings by matching mail volume and scheduling and staffing through the use of Post Office Scheduler and by methods improvement and other production control techniques.

manual — A directive that contains USPS policy. The former Postal Service Manual was reissued into these six subject manuals: Administrative Support Manual (ASM); Domestic Mail Manual (DMM); Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM); Financial Management Manual (FMM); International Mail Manual (IMM); and Postal Operations Manual (POM).

manual distribution — The sortation of mail into cases by hand as opposed to mechanized means (such as a letter sorting machine) or automated means (such as a multiline optical character reader).

marginal marking — Any notation or printing on the selvage of a sheet of postage stamps that can include the USPS copyright notice, plate number, control marking, informational inscription, or USPS slogan.

Mark II — (See *facer-canceler*.)

marking — Words or abbreviations printed on a mailpiece that show the class or service of a rate paid. (Also see *endorsement*.)

markup — A mailpiece that is undeliverable as originally addressed. It must be endorsed to show the next address for attempted delivery or other disposition, such as return to sender. (Also see *Computerized Forwarding System II* and *undeliverable as addressed*.)

mass — To combine mail from identical separations on a number of distribution cases (for example, combining the mail for ZIP Code 20001 from five different distribution cases).

massing point — A selected post office or point where mail is combined for dispatch.

massing scheme — (See *state dispatch list*.)

material distribution center (MDC) — A postal supply center that stocks retail supplies and equipment, forms and directives, spare parts, and expendable items.

M

maximum size standards — The greatest size (length, height, and thickness) and weight as determined by mail class and subclass. In international mail, these standards may vary by country.

M-bag — A special direct sack for mailers who wish to send printed matter to a single addressee in other countries.

mean time to repair (MTTR) — A statistical record of the average time required to repair an item, such as a piece of equipment or a component.

mechanical reject — In mail processing, a mailpiece that a sorting machine cannot handle for a physical reason, such as a machine malfunction. (Compare with *read reject*.)

merchandise return service — A service whereby an authorized company provides a customer with a special mailing label to return a shipment without prepaying postage. The company pays the return postage and a transaction fee.

merchandise sample — A Standard Mail (A) piece that is more than 5 inches wide, 5 inches high, or 1/4 inch thick, or is nonuniform in thickness.

meter reply mail (MRM) — A preprinted return envelope, card, or label provided by a meter license holder as a courtesy to customers on which the postage is prepaid as a meter impression. (Compare to *business reply mail* and *courtesy reply mail*.)

meter stamp — A postage imprint (either on meter tape or as a direct impression) applied in the upper right corner of the envelope, address label, or tag. The type, size, and style of the imprint must be fixed when the postage meter is approved for manufacture by the USPS. For letter-size mail, the imprint must be set in fluorescent ink.

meter tape — The USPS-approved tape on which metered postage is imprinted.

metered mail — Any mail class (except Periodicals) with postage printed by a USPS-approved postage meter.

M

metered postage — Postage printed by a mechanical or electronic imprinter directly onto the mailpiece or onto gummed tape or labels affixed to the mailpiece. It may be used on all mail classes except Periodicals.

Methods Improvement Program — Standard Operating Procedures (MIP-SOP) — A delivery program that helps managers identify and correct inefficient practices. The program stipulates procedures to achieve service goals and minimize daily operating costs.

Micro Mark — A retrofit to the Mark II facer-canceler that replaces the old vacuum tube electronics with solid state and microprocessor electronics.

migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp — A nonpostal stamp required by federal law for hunting ducks, geese, etc. This type of stamp is sold on behalf of the Department of the Interior by large post offices and by post offices where justified by customer demand. (Also called *bird stamp* and *duck stamp*.)

military mail — Domestic mail and international mail that bears a U.S. military delivery address or return address and that, in some stage of its transmission, is in the possession of the Department of Defense.

military ordinary mail (MOM) — A category for Department of Defense official mail sent at Periodicals or Standard Mail rates that requires faster service than sealift transportation to, from, and between military post offices. This mail is moved by surface transportation to a gateway facility and from there by air at a specific transportation rate and service standard. (Compare to *parcel airlift*.)

military post office (MPO) — A branch of a U.S. civil post office, operated by the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marine Corps to serve military personnel overseas or aboard ships. (Also see *army post office* and *fleet post office*.)

military post office cancellation — (See *cancellation*.)

minimum size standard — The smallest dimensions permitted for all mailable matter or for a specific mail processing category or specific rate. (Also see *aspect ratio* and *nonstandard size mail*.)

mint set — A folder that contains all the commemorative stamps or definitive stamps and postal stationery issued during a calendar year. The set contains a brief description of each stamp subject.

M

miscoded/misziped mail — Mail with an incorrect ZIP Code as part of the delivery address.

missent/misdirected mail — Mail that has not been dispatched according to official schemes, schedules, or special orders. (Compare with *error*.)

missort/missorted mail — Mail incorrectly distributed. To distribute mail to the wrong separation or bin. (Also see *throwback*.)

mixed class — A mailing containing more than one class of mail. With certain exceptions, the postage on the entire piece or package is charged at the rate of the higher class.

mobile post office — A trailer unit equipped to handle all major postal needs as an emergency or temporary replacement post office.

mobile vehicle repair facility (MVRF) — A 40-foot van equipped as a one-bay garage that goes to postal facilities to service vehicles.

money order — (See *postal money order*.)

motorist mailchute — (See *snorkel collection box*.)

motorized carrier — A letter carrier who uses a vehicle to deliver mail. The route is called a motorized or mounted route.

motor vehicle operator (MVO) — A craft employee hired primarily to drive postal vehicles.

mounted route — A city route on which the letter carrier drives a vehicle to deliver the mail rather than walk as done on a foot route.

multicommodity machine (MCM) — A vending machine that has the capability to dispense multiple varieties of postal commodities.

Multiline Accuracy Support System (MASS) — A tool (similar to the Coding Accuracy Support System) that accesses and checks the address-matching software used by customers' multiline optical character readers.

multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) — An optical character reader that reads and interprets more than one line of the delivery address on a mailpiece.

M

Multiple Entry Point Payment System (MEPPS) — A procedure that simplifies postage payment and documentation for mailings generated by computer-supported mailer systems.

multiposition flat sorting machine (MPFSM) — A machine that mechanically sorts flats by ZIP Code. Using four operators, it distributes between 10,000 and 13,500 pieces per hour into one of one hundred bins or stackers.

multiposition letter sorting machine (MPLSM) — A letter sorting machine that consists of a paneled mainframe with multiple operator consoles (typically 12) and 277 bins. It has the capability of processing 43,200 faced letter-size mailpieces per hour.

MXD — An abbreviation used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as mixed mail for different destinations processed at a single facility (such as for multiple ADCs).

N

national account manager (NAM) — A USPS employee who establishes and maintains communications with one of the largest mailing customers in the country who has multiple mailing sites located in several geographic areas. This individual works with a team of supporting staff to improve service, sell postal products, implement programs, and present customer viewpoints to postal management.

National Air and Surface System (NASS) — A computerized system operated at the St. Louis Accounting Service Center and 23 distribution networks offices to produce dispatch and labeling information for all mail classes. It is used by mail processing facilities. (Also see *accounting service center*.)

National Bulk Mail System (NBMS) — A network of 21 highly mechanized bulk mail centers (BMCs) and 10 auxiliary service facilities (ASFs) linked together and to other postal facilities by a transportation network. Each BMC or ASF processes originating and destinating bulk mail for a specific geographic area. (Compare with *general mail system*.)

National Change of Address (NCOA) — An address correction service that the USPS provides to mailers through USPS licensees. The licensees match mailing lists submitted to them on tape or disk against change-of-address information for the entire country from all Computerized Forwarding System units. If a match is made, NCOA can correct the address before it is printed on a mailpiece.

National Customer Support Center (NCSC) — A USPS organization that provides information, services, and products (for example, zone charts, directories, software programs, testing of ZIP+4 code or delivery point code address matching software) that are designed to improve the quality of addressing for mailings that qualify for certain rates.

National Deliverability Index (NDI) — An index that allows mailers to compare deliverability factors among several address lists prior to purchase or lease. It identifies and scores seven factors deemed critical for optimum mail processing and delivery.

National Network Service Center (NNSC) — The USPS data processing facility in Raleigh, NC, that serves as a laboratory for the development of business subsystems and as a national support center for computer networks.

National Postal Forum — A conference of postal management, major business mailers, and suppliers of postal products and systems who discuss common problems and solutions and also changes in mailing standards and mailing technologies. It is held biannually in Washington, DC.

National Stock Number (NSN) — (See *FEDSTRIP*.)

National Test Administration Center (NTAC) — A Headquarters unit that manages USPS testing of external applicants for hire and USPS personnel for promotion. It is located in Alexandria, VA.

National Workhour Report (NWR) — A report, which is generated on a pay period and accounting period basis, that uses workhours from individual employee pay records, including adjustments, and transferred, loaned, and training hours from Form 1236-A, *Weekly Loan, Transfer & Training Hours*. The report displays data by function and labor distribution code (LDC), which includes the following: the actual hours worked compared with the operating budget plan, the year-to-date performance, and the same-period-last-year (SPLY) performance. It is produced on various levels (for example, post offices through national summaries).

National Workhour Reporting System (NWRS) — The labor expense functional reporting system that consists of the National Workhour Report and the Labor Utilization Report.

neighborhood delivery and collection box unit (NDCBU) — A centralized unit of more than eight individually locked compartments sized to accommodate the delivery of magazines, merchandise samples, and several days' accumulation of mail. In addition, collection mail may be deposited in a designated compartment. (Also see *cluster box unit*.)

night differential — The 10 percent compensation added to an employee's base hourly rate for work time between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m.

nixie — A mailpiece that cannot be sorted or delivered because of an incorrect, illegible, or insufficient delivery address. A nixie clerk specializes in handling this mail. (Also see *undeliverable as addressed*.)

noncity delivery office (NCD) — A post office with no city delivery service.

nonlocal — Outgoing mail destined for a postal area outside the post office where the piece is mailed. (Also called *out of town*.)

N

nonmachinable — The incapacity of a mailpiece to be sorted on mail processing equipment because of size, shape, content, or address legibility. Such mail must be processed manually.

nonmachinable outside (NMO) — A parcel or mailpiece that, because of size, weight, or other characteristic, cannot be sorted by mechanized mail processing equipment and must be handled manually. The parcel is called an outside because it cannot be placed in a sack or other mailing container.

nonmailable articles and substances — Anything that, by statute, “may kill or injure another, or injure the mails or other property.” There are some exceptions to this rule that allow otherwise unmailable items to be mailed.

nonmailable written, printed, and graphic matter — Matter that would be otherwise mailable that includes certain solicitations, lottery and certain advertising matter, and matter using any fictitious name, title, or address in conducting any scheme or device in violation of law. The solicitations may be either in guise of bills, invoices, or statements of account, or they may deceptively imply federal connection, approval, or endorsement.

nonmail services — Postal services that do not include delivery of mailpieces (for example, providing mailing list service for a fee or selling a postal money order).

nonpersonnel unit — A small nonstaffed post office station or post office branch that is served by a rural carrier in quarters provided by a contractor, which also provides custodial and security support. This facility provides, on a self-service basis, essential customer services such as the collection and delivery of mail and the sale of postage stamps.

nonpostal stamp — A stamp that is sold by the USPS as an agent of other federal agencies (for example, the migratory-bird hunting and conservation stamp). Although U.S. Savings Stamps were once accepted as postal funds, this type of stamp is now solely redeemable by the U.S. Treasury.

Nonprofit rate — A preferred rate for a Periodicals publisher authorized as a nonprofit organization.

Nonprofit Standard Mail — A subclass of Standard Mail that is available only to qualified organizations specified by U.S. statute.

N

nonreadable mail — Mail whose address cannot be deciphered by an optical character reader.

nonsalable stock — Stamp stock that is damaged, detached, or obsolete, or stamp coil remnant that is insufficient for vending.

nonstandard size mail — Except for Priority Mail, any piece of First-Class Mail weighing 1 ounce or less and not claimed at a card rate that exceeds certain size limits. This type of mail incurs a surcharge. (Also see *aspect ratio*.)

no office (NO) — A notation on mail schedules and in listing points traversed by highway contract routes that indicates that the point has no post office.

nutting truck — A wheeled container that is used to move or store small quantities of mail within a postal facility. The container, which consists of a platform and two slatted ends to restrain loads, can be moved by hand or by tractor. It was named for its designer, Elijah Nutting. (Also see *mail transport equipment*.) (Also called *platform truck or trailer, float, or tram*.)

O

obliterator — A device used for cancellation that can include the validator, registry, or round-dater stamp; parcel post canceler; rubber oval stamp; and the all-purpose dating stamp.

occupant address — An alternative addressing format that uses one of four designations (that is, postal customer, occupant, householder, or resident) rather than an addressee name at a specific street address or post office box number, or rural route and box number; and post office, state, and ZIP Code. (Compare with *exceptional address* and *simplified address*.)

OCR read area — A rectangular area on the address side of the mailpiece that is 1/2 inch from the left and right edges of the mailpiece, 5/8 inch from the bottom edge, and 2-3/4 inches from the bottom edge. (Also see *optical character reader*.)

officer in charge (OIC) — A career postal employee appointed temporarily to fill a postmaster vacancy, usually for no longer than 180 days.

office time — The amount of time that a letter carrier spends in the delivery unit casing mail and performing other administrative duties before leaving to deliver mail or after returning from the route.

official mail — Mail authorized by federal law to be sent by government officials without postage prepayment. It includes franked mail sent by members of Congress and penalty mail sent by U.S. Government agencies.

Official Mail Accounting System (OMAS) — An automated system that provides for entry of data from postage statements for official mail used by federal agencies. The USPS bills the agencies according to OMAS data, and post offices get credit for the revenue. Agencies use data from OMAS to monitor their postage costs.

official personnel folder (OPF) — A folder maintained for each USPS employee that contains documents reflecting the official status, salary, benefits, and service or work performance of the employee.

On-Line File Maintenance (OFM) — A payroll software application for updating employee master records for specific data found in source documents. Examples include address changes, allotments, and health benefits.

O

On-Line Query (OLQ) — A software application that accesses employee master records through video display terminals. (See *Computerized Remote Postage Meter Resetting System*.)

On-Site Meter Setting — A program under which a USPS employee sets a postage meter at a mailer's office.

on-the-clock/off-the-clock — A designation that describes the duty status of a USPS employee (that is, on duty or off duty).

opening unit — An operational area within a mail processing facility where pouches, sacks, and containers of mail are received from arriving dispatches and are opened and prepared for distribution.

open transit — Mail from one country to another, usually in small quantities, sent to the United States for processing and dispatching. (Also called *à découvert*.)

optical character reader (OCR) — An automated mail sorting machine that interprets the address information on a letter-size mailpiece and sprays the corresponding ZIP Code information onto the piece as a barcode. The OCR consists of a mail feed unit, transport unit, stacker modules, computer with a control system, video monitor, and printer.

optional endorsement line (OEL) — A series of specific printed characters on the top line of the address block that identifies the sortation level of a package or bundle and may contain an ACS participant code. The OEL is used in place of package labels.

Optional Procedure Mailing System (OP) — A method of verifying and accepting First-Class Mail and Standard Mail consisting of identical- or nonidentical-weight pieces by comparing a mailer's financial, production, and other business records instead of using standard weight verification procedures. (Compare with *Manifest Mailing System*.)

ordinary — Shortened designation for ordinary mail.

ordinary mail — Any class of domestic mail that is accorded standard dispatching and handling. This excludes Express Mail and Priority Mail Service as well as mail with an extra service (for example, Certified Mail, collect on delivery, Delivery Confirmation, insured mail, Registered Mail, Signature Confirmation, and special handling).



original entry — The post office where a publisher submits the application for Periodicals mailing privileges for a qualified publication. The publication may be mailed there or at another post office for which the publisher holds an additional entry authorization. (Also see *exceptional dispatch*.)

original mailing office — The post office where the authorization for Nonprofit Standard Mail rates is filed.

originating mail — Outgoing mail and local mail that enter the mailstream (that is, the point of origin) for mail processing and delivery. (Compare with *destinating mail*.)

origin bulk mail center (OBMC) Presort rate — A rate available for Standard Mail (B) Parcel Post that is properly prepared and entered by the mailer at a BMC or other designated postal facility.

Origin Destination Information System (ODIS) — An information system by which data on mail volume, service standard analysis, and other mail characteristics are collected, developed, and reported in a variety of formats for USPS management.

origin facility — The point of entry used by mailer presenting a mailing.

other articles (AO) — A category of international mail that consists of the various classes of printed matter (i.e., regular printed matter, books and sheet music, and publishers' periodicals), matter for the blind, and small packets (e.g., lightweight merchandise shipments). The AO designation is derived from the French term *autres objets*.

outgoing mail — Mail sorted within a mail processing facility that is dispatched to another facility for additional processing or delivery. (Also called *originating mail*.) (Compare with *incoming mail*.)

outsert — Mailing industry term for an external attachment.

outside — A mailpiece that cannot be placed into a sack or container because of size, weight, shape, or contents.

outside parcel — A mail processing category for a mailpiece that exceeds the dimensions for machinable parcel or a high density item (other than a book or printed matter).

overage — The dollar amount above the accountable amount shown on Form 1412-A at the conclusion of a retail vending credit examination.

O

over-carry — Airlifted mail carried beyond the point of scheduled dispatch.

overflow tray — A less-than-full tray that contains pieces remaining after preparation of full trays for the same destination. Overflow trays may be prepared only if allowed by the standards for the rate claimed.

Overnighter, The — A shipping container (box, tube, or envelope) that the USPS provides at no extra cost to Express Mail customers. The Overnighter™ is a USPS trademark.

oversized rate — Parcel Post rate for pieces exceeding 108 inches but not more than 130 inches in combined length and girth.

over-the-road container (OTR) — A container used within the National Bulk Mail System for transporting surface preferential mail by truck or railroad. Also, a container that moves between a bulk mail center (BMC) and its associate postal facilities as opposed to a container used exclusively in the BMC.

P

package — A group of addressed pieces assembled and secured together to make up a basic unit of bulk mail for processing purposes. (Also see *bundle*.)

pallet — A reusable platform on which mail is stacked to be moved as a single unit. Pallets are made of rigid material designed for four-way forklift entry and capable of handling loads of up to 65 cubic feet and 2,200 pounds. A USPS pallet measures 48 by 40 inches. (Also see *copalletize* and *top cap*.)

palletization — A process of preparing mail on a pallet under specific standards for transportation. (Also see *copalletize*.)

palletize — To prepare mail on a pallet for transportation.

pane — One quarter of a full sheet of postage stamps (for example, 50 stamps of a sheet of 200). Full sheets are perforated and cut into panes before shipment to post offices. This process allows for easier distribution and sale.

paper rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

par avion — (French) International term for airmail.

parcel — Mail that does not meet the mail processing category of letter-size mail or flat-size mail. It is usually enclosed in a mailing container such as a carton. (Also see *irregular parcel* and *machinable parcel*.)

parcel airlift (PAL) — A service that provides air transportation for parcels on a space-available basis to or from military post offices outside the contiguous 48 states.

parcel locker — A unit that is installed alongside neighborhood delivery and collection box units or in conjunction with post office boxes in a retail facility that is used for parcel delivery.

Parcel Post — A subclass of Standard Mail with rates based generally on weight and zone.

parcel sorting machine (PSM) — A large machine with an input station controlled by a computer that sorts and discharges parcels from transport trays to primary and secondary positions.

P

park and loop — A delivery method in which the letter carrier parks the vehicle and walks out and back over one or more streets, delivering mail away from and looping back to the vehicle. (Also called *loop*.)

pay period — A period that comprises 2 service weeks, beginning on Saturday and ending 2 weeks later on Friday. (Also see *service day* and *service week*.)

penalty mail — Official mail sent without postage prepayment by officers of the executive and judicial branches of the U.S. government, by departments and agencies of the U.S. Government, and by specifically authorized individuals. Agencies then reimburse the USPS for the penalty mail service they receive. The term comes from the endorsement “Penalty for Private Use” printed on the mail. (Compare to *franked mail*.) (Also see *Official Mail Accounting System*.)

periodical publication — Printed matter (a magazine, newspaper, or other publication) that is issued on a regular, stated basis.

Periodicals — A class of mail consisting of magazines, newspapers, or other publications formed of printed sheets that are issued at least four times a year at regular, specified intervals (frequency) from a known office of publication. Periodicals usually must have a legitimate list of subscribers and requesters.

perishable matter — An item (such as produce, live animal, or live plant) that can deteriorate in the mail and thereby lose value, create a health hazard, or cause a nuisance or disturbance under ordinary mailing conditions. Such matter usually requires special packaging. (Compare with *hazardous matter* and *restricted matter*.)

permit — Any authorization required for specific types of preparation or postage payment. Specifically, an authorization to mail without postage affixed by using indicia or an imprint. Payment is made against an advance deposit account that is established with the USPS for postage and services.

permit imprint — Printed indicia, instead of an adhesive postage stamp or meter stamp, that shows postage prepayment by an authorized mailer. (Also see *permit*.)

P

philatelic center — A retail outlet or designated location in a postal lobby that sells select stamp stock of various plate number positions and a complete line of philatelic products for stamp collectors. (Also called *Postique*, which is a USPS trademark.)

Philatelic Fulfillment Service Center — A postal unit that supplies philatelic product orders (stamps and other products) by subscription or mail/telephone order. It also handles orders for personalized imprinted stamped envelopes and applies the first-day-of-issue stamp and other special cancellations. It is located in Kansas City, MO.

philately — The collection and study of the postage stamp and postal stationery for pleasure and profit.

pickup service — A service available for a fee from designated post offices for Parcel Post (if scheduled); Priority Mail at single-piece rates; and certain types of Express Mail.

pickup table — (See *facing table*.)

pictorial cancellation — (See *hand-stamped cancellation*.)

pie cart/pie rack — (informal) (See *tray cart*.)

piece — An individually addressed mailpiece. This definition also applies when piece is used in eligibility standards. Quantities indicated for optional or required sortations always refer to pieces unless specifically excepted.

piece count — A calculation of mail volume that provides the actual number of mailpieces processed. It is generated by machine meter, machine printouts, or actual counts. If these methods are not feasible, the weights, number of containers, or linear feet of mail are multiplied by a national conversion factor to determine the number of mailpieces.

piece rate — In bulk mail, the postage charged for each mailpiece in addition to the pound rate charge, if applicable, for the entire mailing.

pigeonhole — One opening or section for sorting mail into a distribution case.

piggyback — To move a single tractor-trailer onto a special rail flatcar. (Also called *trailer-on-flatcar service*.)

P

plant loading/plant load operation — An operation in which the USPS provides mail transportation for bulk mail from the mailer to a downstream facility, bypassing the local post office. (Also see *facility bypass*.)

plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) — A procedure that enables origin verification and postage payment for shipments transported by the mailer from the mailer's plant to destination post offices for USPS acceptance as mail. PVDS is typically used for mailings for which a destination entry discount is claimed.

plate block — The block rows of postage stamps, two rows wide, in a pane next to the selvage that contains the number(s) of the plate(s) used to print the stamps. Generally a block of four stamps, it may be larger if the pane of stamps includes more than four designs.

platform acceptance unit (PAU) — (See *business mail entry unit*.)

platform truck or trailer — (See *nutting truck*.)

pocket — (See *bin*.)

Point of Sale System (POS) — The electronic system used at retail facilities to record sales and payment transactions.

pool case shipment — Standard Mail (B) that is postage paid, addressed (with ZIP Code), destined for a sectional center facility, and packed in containers that can be moved with lift trucks or similar mail handling equipment.

point of purchase promotions (POP) — Elements of promotional campaigns for products and services sold at retail that are prominently and timely displayed in lobby and counter areas.

portable post office boxes — Post office boxes secured in a frame for central point delivery in business buildings.

POS ONE — New point-of-service system that will replace the 63,200 aging and obsolete integrated retail terminals (IRTs) with state-of-the-art Pentium processors. It is not a stand alone system; it will be the source of retail marketing, financial, and operations information used throughout the Postal Service. It will also be a primary tool for delivering USPS product and service information to customers.

P

POS ONE controller/terminal — This system is installed at all POS ONE sites not qualifying for AOI. The controller/terminal will be externally identical to the regular POS ONE terminal and will perform all POS ONE functions, but in addition will house the centralized POS ONE files and perform the other POS-related functions of the AOI server. All POS ONE terminals will be connected to the POS ONE controller/terminal, but non-POS ONE terminals will be connected to the controller/terminal.

POS ONE unit — Based on Intel PC architecture and will be configured with hardware components including the following: modular scale, customer and clerk displays, integral debit/credit authorization, signature capture, slip printer for imprinting money orders, MICR reader for checks, and a barcode scanner.

postage — Payment for delivery service that is affixed or imprinted to a mailpiece, usually in the form of a postage stamp, permit imprint, or meter impression.

Postage and Mailing Center (PMC) — Self-service equipment that allows a customer to weigh, rate, and buy postage in the form of a single stamp. The stamp is nondenominational until the time of purchase. Some machines also offer electronic change of address.

postage due mail — Mail on which additional postage is collectable on final delivery. (Also called *shortpaid mail*.)

postage meter — A mechanical or electromechanical device that can print one or more denominations of an authorized postage indicia. It is available for lease only from designated manufacturers. (Also see *metered mail*.)

postage stamp — A gummed or self-adhesive paper stamp affixed to mail as payment for postal services. Types of stamps include definitive stamp (regular-issue stamp), special-issue stamp, and commemorative stamp. (Compare with *metered postage*.)

postage statement — Documentation provided by a mailer to the USPS that reports the volume of mail being presented and the postage payable or affixed, and certifies that the mail meets the applicable eligibility standards for the rate claimed.

postage validation imprinter (PVI) — A computerized printing device that attaches to an integrated retail terminal to produce a postage label similar to a meter stamp strip. This label may contain a barcoded destination ZIP Code that is compatible with automated mail processing equipment.

Postal Answer Line (PAL) — An automated telephone service that provides recorded messages about rates and mail classes, international mail, special services, business mail, retail hours and locations, mail fraud and security, and other general postal topics.

postal area ZIP Code — All ZIP Code assignments other than unique ZIP Codes. This category includes ZIP Codes assigned to postal facilities, post office box sections, caller service, vertical improved mail units in buildings, and delivery units. ZIP Code is a USPS trademark.

Postal Bulletin — A biweekly USPS publication that announces instructions and changes in policy and standards. It has been issued by Headquarters since 1880 and sent to all postal units; it is also available to public subscribers. The notices are in force for 1 year unless they revise permanent standards or specify a different time frame.

postal business center (PBC) — A USPS unit that helps the small- and medium-volume mailer learn about postal products and services.

postal card — A blank mailing card sold by the USPS (as distinguished from a commercial postcard) with a printed or impressed postage stamp.

Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) — A staffing category that develops and maintains a group of employees for key management positions. There are two levels in PCES: Level I includes district, area, and Headquarters executives, and Level II consists of USPS officers, including vice presidents.

postal center — A free-standing enclosed unit that contains post office box modules (100 to 300 boxes). The center has a collection receptacle and a stamp vending machine, and it may have parcel lockers.

postal code — A delivery code used by a foreign country (as compared with ZIP Code used in the United States).

P

postal commodity machine (PCM)— Equipment that dispenses postage stamps, retail products, and stamped envelopes. This type of retail equipment is used in post office lobbies, shopping malls, and other self-service vending locations. (Also see *self-service postal center*.)

Postal Computing Environment (PCE) — Includes applications and data, information technology services, and information technology infrastructure. It includes technical information, design rules, configuration details, and procedures appropriate to guide the transition from centralized to distributed computing. It contains rules and procedures that are intended to improve postal computing in a distributed processing environment. In its entirety, it provides a framework for designing business applications and building IT infrastructure.

Postal Customer Council Program (PCC) — A national program that provides mailers with a forum for exchanging ideas for improved mail service and discussing new and existing USPS products, programs, regulations, and procedures. (Formerly known as *mail users councils*.)

postal data center (PDC) — (obsolete) (See *information systems service center*.)

postal/distribution/retail clerk — A USPS employee who separates incoming mail and outgoing mail according to established schemes, or serves the public at a postal retail location.

postal employee development center (PEDC) — Field units located in specific postal facilities that provide areawide training and development support services for all USPS personnel on a continuing basis. They are equipped with self-instructional material and audiovisual equipment for scheme training and other professional development.

Postal Forum — (See *National Postal Forum*.)

postal funds — All monies received or controlled by USPS personnel (including contractors who handle these funds) in any manner while performing their duties.

postal money order — A nonmail service provided for a fee for transmitting money. Domestic money orders are sold and redeemed at all post offices, and international money orders are issued to addresses in those countries whose postal administrations have agreements with the USPS.

Postal Numeric Encoding Technique (POSTNET) — The barcode system used on letter-size and flat-size mailpieces for encoding the delivery point information and ZIP+4 code information. (Also see *delivery point barcode*.)

Postal Operations Manual (POM) — This directive details the internal operations of post offices, including retail and customer service; collection and delivery service; mail processing and transportation; fleet management; and special services and supplemental mail services. It is one of six USPS policy manuals.

Postal Rate Commission (PRC) — An independent federal agency that makes recommendations on USPS requests for changes in postal rates and mail classifications. The five commissioners are nominated by the President and approved by the U.S. Senate.

Postal Reorganization Act — The statute that requires postal rates and fees to “provide sufficient revenues so that the total estimated income and appropriations . . . will equal as nearly as practicable total estimated costs.” (Public Law 91-375, signed August 12, 1970.)

postal routed network (PRN) — The internal postal network that enables electronic transmission of data within the Postal Service.

Postal Service Manual — (obsolete) The manual containing all USPS regulations that was reorganized and republished as six subject-based policy manuals.

Postal Service schedule (PS) — The wage structure that applies to USPS craft employees.

Postal Service Training and Development Institute (PST&DI) — (See *Management Academy*.) (Formerly known as *postal training center*.)

Postal Source Data System (PSDS) — An electronic data processing network that gathers operational and administrative data (such as mail volume and labor hours) from large post offices. It gathers the data with little or no manual intervention, processes it at a central site data center, and then disseminates information.

postal stationery — Postal cards, aerogrammes, and stamped envelopes. (Formerly called *stamped paper*.)

P

Postal Union Mail — Mail that is governed by the regulations of the Convention of the Universal Postal Union. It includes lettres et cartes (LC) and autres objets (AO). (Also see *colis postaux* and *Express Mail International Service*.)

postal vehicle service (PVS) — A service operated by employees of the local post office to transport mail between post office branches, post office stations, and terminals.

postal zone — A geographic measurement that is based on the distance between units of the earth's area 30 minutes square. This data is generally used when computing postage on zone-rate mail (such as Parcel Post) between USPS facilities including military post offices. (Also see *zone*.)

postcard — A privately printed mailing card. (Compare to *stamped card*.)

poste restante (PR) — (French) International mail sent to general delivery.

Postique™ — A USPS trademark. (See *philatelic center*.)

postmark — A postal cancellation imprint on letters flats and parcels. The imprint shows date and the name, state, and ZIP Code of the post office or sectional center facility that accepted custody of the mailpiece. (Also see *backstamp*.)

postmarking stamp — A handstamp used to cancel postage on mail and for imprinting (in black ink) the date and city, state, and ZIP Code. (Also see *facer-canceler*.) (Compare with *all-purpose dating stamp*.)

postmaster — The manager in charge of a post office. (Compare with *officer in charge*.)

postmaster general (PMG) — The chief executive officer of the USPS who is named by and serves at the pleasure of the Board of Governors. As a member of the Board, this officer appoints the deputy postmaster general jointly with the Board.

POSTNET — (See *POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique*.)

post office (PO) — The basic organizational unit of the USPS. Generally, each post office has primary responsibility for collection, delivery, and retail operations in a specific geographic area. Each year, these units are categorized by revenue and mail volume.

P

post office box — A locked box, located in the post office lobby or other authorized place, that customers may rent for delivery of their mail. (Formerly called *lock box*.)

post office box service — A premium service (or alternate delivery) that consists of delivery to post office boxes rented to customers for a fee (as opposed to general delivery or firm holdout service, which is provided at no charge). (Compare with *caller service*.)

post office branch — A unit of a main post office that is outside the corporate limits of the city or town of the main post office. (Compare with *post office station*.) (Also called *classified branch*.)

Post Office Scheduler (POSKED) — A computer program that simulates staffing schedules according to mail availability and operating variables. The program derives base staffing level and reporting schedules to evaluate the result of process changes.

post office station — A unit of a main post office that is within the corporate limits of the city or town of the main post office. (Compare with *post office branch*.)

pouch — A container identified by its leather neck strap with a closing latch and eye near the opening (unlike a sack, which is tied). It is generally used for First-Class Mail and registered mail; a special blue and orange pouch is used for Express Mail. Also, the term is used to indicate one unit making up a direct pouch labeled to another unit. In mail processing and dispatch functions, to place mailpieces in pouches. (Also see *mail transport equipment*.) (Also called *mailpouch*.)

pouch-on — To prepare a pouch of First-Class Mail for another post office.

pouch rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

practice card — A piece of stiff paper or cardboard that contains a dummy scheme item, with the delivery address on one side and the route number of the letter carrier on the bottom.

precancel — To cancel postage stamps or stamped envelopes before mailing. The USPS sells precanceled postage to mailers of Presorted (including automation rate) First-Class Mail and Standard Mail (A). If authorized, bulk mailers may precancel their own postage.

P

precanceled stamp — A postage stamp canceled by marking across the face before it is sold to mailers for use with bulk mailings. Also, a stamp designated by the USPS as a precanceled stamp without cancellation marks. Mailpieces with these stamps do not go through a canceling machine at the time of mail processing. Precanceled postage is an optional postage payment method for mailings at Presorted and automation First-Class Mail rates and at all Presorted Standard Mail (A) rates. (Also see *precancel*.)

preferential mail — Mail that receives preferential handling. This includes Express Mail, international airmail, First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, Periodicals, special delivery, and special handling. (Also called *hot mail*.)

preferred rate — A postage rate maintained, through congressional appropriations, at a level lower than the regular rate for the same mail class or service. These rates are available only to qualified organizations and individuals (for example, free matter for the blind and other handicapped persons). (Also called *nonprofit rate* and *special rate*.)

presort — The process by which a mailer prepares mail so that it is sorted to the finest extent required by the standards for the rate claimed. Generally, presort is performed sequentially, from the lowest (finest) level to the highest level, to those destinations specified by standard and is completed at each level before the next level is prepared. Not all presort levels are applicable to all mailings.

Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation (PAVE) — A voluntary program in which the USPS tests vendors' presort software and hardware products to determine their accuracy in sorting address information according to USPS standards and producing standardized supporting documentation.

presort levels — Terms used for presort levels are defined as follows:

- *firm*: all pieces for delivery at the business address shown on the top piece of a package or bundle.
- *carrier route*: all pieces for delivery on the same city route, rural route, highway contract route, post office box section, or general delivery unit.
- *5-digit*: the delivery address on all pieces includes the same 5-digit ZIP Code.
- *5-digit scheme*: the 5-digit ZIP Codes identified in the USPS City State File and processed by the USPS as a single scheme and that, subject to standard, may be presorted together as a single group. The 5-digit scheme sort is always optional.
- *3-digit*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with the same three digits.
- *3-digit scheme*: the ZIP Code on the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed by the USPS as a single scheme and that, subject to standard, may be presorted together as a single group.
- *entry SCF 3-digit(s)*: the ZIP Code in the delivery address on all pieces begins with one of the 3-digit prefixes processed at the postal facility in whose service area the mailer is located.
- *SCF*: the separation includes pieces for two or more 3-digit areas served by the same SCF.
- *ADC/AADC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same ADC or AADC.
- *ASF/BMC*: all pieces are addressed for delivery in the service area of the same ASF or BMC.
- *DSCF*: pieces sorted to and entered at the destination SCF. (Also see *plant-verified drop shipment*.)
- *DDU*: pieces sorted to and entered at the destination delivery unit.
- *BMC Presort*: pieces sorted to BMCs if machinable or BMC/ASF if nonmachinable. Entered at a facility (other than BMC) that accepts bulk mail.
- *OBMC Presort*: pieces sorted to BMCs if machinable or BMC/ASF if nonmachinable. Entered at a BMC.
- *mixed (BMC, AADC, etc.)*: the pieces are for more than one presort destination.
- *residual [pieces/packages/sacks]*: mail that is left over after completion of a presort sequence. Residual mail lacks the volume set by standard to require or permit package or bundle preparation to a particular destination. (Also called *nonqualifying* or *working mail*.)

P

Presorted First-Class Mailing — A nonautomation rate category for a mailing that consists of at least 500 addressed mailpieces and is sorted and prepared according to USPS standards. This mail does not bear a barcode.

presorted mail — A form of mail preparation, required to bypass certain postal operations, in which the mailer groups pieces in a mailing by ZIP Code or by carrier route or carrier walk sequence (or other USPS-recommended separation).

Presorted Standard — The postage rate for Standard Mail (A) pieces that are part of a mailing and that meet minimum volume and preparation requirements.

primary — The first sorting operation for outgoing mail or incoming mail. (Compare with *secondary* and *tertiary*.)

primary case — A case used for the initial or primary sorting of letter-size mail.

printed matter — Paper on which words, letters, characters, figures, or images (or any combination of them) not having the character of a bill or statement of account, or of actual or personal correspondence, have been reproduced by any process other than handwriting or typewriting. In international mail, this is a classification that includes books and sheet music, publishers' periodicals, and regular printed matter (all printed matter other than the aforementioned types). (Compare with *Bound Printed Matter*.)

Priority Mail — First-Class Mail that weighs more than 13 ounces and, at the mailer's option, any other mail matter weighing 13 ounces or less. Priority Mail provides expedited delivery. Any mailable matter may be sent as Priority Mail. Priority Mail is a USPS trademark.

Private Express Statutes — U.S. laws that give the USPS exclusive right, with specific exceptions, to carry letters for compensation. Regulations under these statutes are published in title 39 of the Code of Federal Regulations parts 310 and 320, as amended by final rules published in the Federal Register. (Also see *alternative delivery*.)

P

probationary period — The initial trial period of employment for career USPS employees. For bargaining unit employees, the probationary period is the first 90 calendar days; for nonbargaining unit employees, the period is the first 6 months. During this period, access to the grievance or adverse action appeal systems is not granted.

process expert — Supplies information to the postal reengineering project core team that is useful in the analysis of the subject reengineering. Process experts can be process stakeholders, survey teams, line and staff workers and supervisors, and process managers.

processing and distribution center/facility (P&DC/F) — A central mail facility that processes and dispatches part or all of both incoming mail and outgoing mail for a designated service area. It also provides instructions on the preparation of collection mail, dispatch schedules, and sorting plan requirements to mailers. The facility is usually a sectional center facility or a general mail facility, but it can also be a dedicated mail processing facility without a station or branch.

processing category — (See *mail processing category*.)

procurement service office (PSO) — (obsolete) (See *purchasing and materials service center*.)

Productivity Information Reporting System (PIRS) — A computer program used by the bulk mail centers that tracks workload, workhours, and productivity.

Program for Alcoholic Recovery (PAR) — (obsolete) (See *Employee Assistance Program*.)

prohibited matter — Any material that is illegal to mail because it can kill or injure an individual or damage other mail. This includes certain poisons and controlled substances and certain flammable or hazardous matter.

prohibitory order — A USPS order requested by the addressee of a pandering advertisement that directs the sender to make no further mailing to that addressee.

P

project manager (PM) — For each postal reengineering project core team there is a project manager (PM). The PM is selected by the executive sponsor to administer the activities of the reengineering. The PM will be the day-to-day postal resource placed full time on the team, bridging the gap from the team to the executive sponsor.

public service appropriations — Formerly, the annual appropriations by Congress for public service costs incurred in providing nationwide postal service. This subsidy was ended in fiscal year 1983. (See *revenue forgone appropriations*.)

publication watch — A method of determining the reason for delayed delivery or nondelivery of periodicals, newspapers, and other subscription materials. The addressee completes Form 3721, *Publication Watch*, to verify originating and destinating information.

Public Web — The Web site containing postal information accessible by anyone, postal or public (<http://www.usps.gov>).

publishers' periodicals — Publications that qualify as domestic Periodicals rate publications and are mailed to a foreign address. It is one of three classifications for international printed matter.

pull — To remove sorted mail from distribution cases and other containers for transport to the next point of handling. (Also called *sweep*.)

pull racks — To take mailbags from the sorting rack for dispatch. Also, to close and lock all sacks and pouches containing mail on sorting racks, usually at the end of each trip or working tour. (Also called *skin the rack*.)

purchasing and materials service center (PMSC) — A center reporting to headquarters that manages purchasing and supply activities for an area through subordinate offices. (Formerly called *procurement service office*.)

Q

qualified business reply mail (QBRM) (formerly BRMAS) — An automated means of processing and calculating postage plus fees on business reply mail. QBRM pieces must meet certain design specifications and may be eligible for the lowest per piece fee available for BRM and for reduced automation First-Class Mail postage rates.

qualifying piece — A mailpiece that meets all standards for a certain rate or discount.

quality assurance (QA) — A purchasing function that determines contractual compliance of items and services. This is done through inspections, tests, surveys, and audits of contractors' production and quality control systems. (Also see *contracting officer representative*.)

quality control (QC) — The control of various mail processing factors to produce consistent, uniform distribution, conforming to specified standards.

Quality Step Increase (QSI) — A step increase within a salary grade granted to a USPS employee before expiration of required waiting periods. It is awarded in recognition of outstanding performance.

R

rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

rates and classification service center (RCSC) — A field office of Business Mail Acceptance that provides guidance to field personnel and customers on mail classification, postage rates, mail preparation, and postage payment programs.

rate setting — The process by which postage rates and fees are changed under the joint responsibility of the USPS and the Postal Rate Commission (PRC). USPS managers recommend proposed rates for all mail classes to the Board of Governors; with the approval of the Board, the proposed rates are sent to the PRC, which holds public hearings and recommends rates. If the Board finds these rates unsatisfactory, it may modify them by unanimous vote. (Also see *Domestic Mail Classification Schedule*.)

readable — Capability of material (for example, the ZIP Code and address on letter-size mail) to be read by an optical character reader.

read reject — In the optical character reader system, a mailpiece for which the ZIP Code cannot be determined. In a barcode sorter, a mailpiece for which the barcode cannot be determined. (Compare with *mechanical rejects*.)

rebuts — (French) Undeliverable or refused international mail being returned to sender.

recall mail — Mail that is withdrawn from the mailstream and returned to the sender or designated representative at the sender's request.

recorded delivery — An international special service available to some countries that is similar to domestic certified mail.

red — (informal) A piece of registered mail. The term originated when registered mail was dispatched in red-striped pouches.

redesign — The transformation of a business process to achieve significant levels of improvement in one or more performance measures relating to fitness for purpose, quality, cycle time, and cost by using the techniques of streamlining and removing non-value added activities and costs. Redesign projects typically take about 6 months to complete.

red run — An assignment to handle registered mail.

R

reengineering — The radical transformation of a postal business process to achieve orders of magnitude improvement in one or more performance measures relating to fitness-for-purpose, quality, cycle time, and cost; usually requiring the application of technology enablers. Reengineering projects typically take a minimum of 2 years to complete.

reference scheme — (See *scheme*.)

refused mail — Mail that is not accepted by the addressee and is returned to the sender.

registered mail — A service by which, through a system of receipts, the USPS monitors the movement of the mailpiece from the point of acceptance by the USPS to delivery. The sender receives a receipt at the time of mailing, and a delivery record is kept at the post office of address. This service also provides optional indemnity in case of loss or damage. Registered mail is the most secure service offered by the USPS. (Compare to *certified mail* and *insured mail*.)

register of eligibles — A list of applicants for vacancies in an installation. The list is usually arranged by descending test scores.

regular-issue stamp — (See *definitive stamp*.)

regular stamp window — A clerk station in a post office that accepts mail, offers a variety of services (postal money order, meter setting, etc.), and sells postage stamps and postal stationery.

relay — Mail that a city letter carrier prepares in sacks for delivery to relay drop boxes along the line of travel of a route. After completing delivery of carry-out mail, the letter carrier picks up additional mail from the relay drop box and resumes delivery, continuing this process until the entire route is served. A relay may weigh up to 35 pounds. (Also see *drop box*.)

relay drop box — (See *drop box*.)

relay route — In city delivery service, a route in which the city carrier places sacks of mail in drop boxes for pick up by city carriers as they deliver mail on their routes.

R

remote encoding center — A USPS unit that uses advanced technology to assign barcodes to hand-addressed mailpieces physically located at a general mail facility. After the mailpiece image is displayed on a computer terminal, an operator, who is at the center, keys in the ZIP Code and the street address in order to match this information with that in a database. This allows for the imprinting of the barcode and automated mail processing at the general mail facility.

removal — (See *forward*.)

requester publication — A Periodicals publication of which 50 percent or more of its distribution is to persons who have requested the publication. This type of publication is ineligible for any preferred rate.

residential route — A city delivery route on which at least 70 percent of the deliveries are to residences. (Compare with *business route*.)

residual mail — Matter remaining after completion of a presort sequence. It lacks the volume set by standard to require or permit package, tray, or sack preparation to a particular destination. Residual mail usually does not qualify for the presort rate. (Also called *nonqualifying mail* and *working mail*.)

residual shape surcharge — A surcharge applied to Standard Mail (A) pieces that are prepared as parcels or that are not letter size or flat size.

residue — Mail for small post offices that have no direct separation space in a case or rack.

residue case — A case for distributing mail destined for post offices that do not have separations on primary or secondary distribution cases.

rest bar — (informal) (See *adjustable platform stool*.)

restricted delivery — A supplemental mail service that generally limits who may receive an item. This service is available for a fee when used with certified mail, collect on delivery, insured mail, and registered mail.

R

restricted matter — Any item on which certain mailing restrictions have been imposed for legal reasons other than risk of harm to persons or property involved in moving the mail and that require specific endorsements and markings. Examples include intoxicating liquors, abortive or contraceptive devices, odd-shaped items in envelopes, motor vehicle master keys, locksmithing devices as well as odor-producing materials, certain liquids and powders, and battery-powered devices. (Compare with *hazardous material*.)

Retail Analysis Program (RAP) — A program to monitor customer traffic, transactions, and other retail operations. Information from program surveys aids management decisions in areas such as staffing, workload, facility location, and service requirements.

retail facility — A postal unit (a post office and its subordinate units as well as military post offices) that sells postage stamps and provides other postal retail services to customers. The subordinate units are within the service area of a main post office and include post office stations, post office branches, contract postal units, and nonpersonnel units.

retail site verification program (RSVP) — A data base that provides up-to-date information about facility and revenue performance at retail units operated by the Postal Service. The RSVP system is designed to support retail functions for USPS Headquarters, area offices, and district offices.

retrace — The part of a rural route traversed twice by the rural carrier. To travel past the part of the route already served.

return address — A mailpiece element that is usually placed in the upper left corner of the mailpiece to indicate the address of the sender. This address indicates where the sender wants the mail returned if it is undeliverable and where the sender will pay any fee due for that mail. (Also see *undeliverable as addressed*.)

return mail — Mail that must be sent in the opposite direction for proper dispatch. (Also called *turnback mail*.)

R

return receipt — The mailing card (Form 3811 for domestic and Form 2865 for international) signed by the addressee of an article and mailed back to the sender as evidence of delivery. This supplemental mail service is available for a fee when using Express Mail or recorded delivery, certified mail, collect on delivery, mail insured for more than \$50, registered mail, or return receipt for merchandise.

return receipt for merchandise — A special service that provides the sender with a mailing receipt and a return receipt. A delivery record is kept at the office of address. It does not include insurance coverage and does not provide for restricted delivery.

revenue assurance — An ongoing policy to prevent the loss of revenue by identifying uncanceled postage stamps, and misclassified mail and collecting postage and fees for unpaid or shortpaid mail. (Also see *cancel*.)

Revenue/Cost Analysis System — A group of methods used to collect and develop revenue, volume, and cost data by mail class and special service, as required by postal management.

revenue forgone appropriations — Congressionally authorized reimbursements to the USPS for revenue that was not received because of phased or lower rates mandated by Congress for certain mail categories such as free matter for the blind. (Also see *public service appropriations*.)

Revenue, Pieces, and Weight (RPW) — A postal information system that uses samples of the mailstream to measure statistically its contents in terms of volume, work content, and revenue.

revenue unit — The average amount of revenue per fiscal year from postal rates and also fees for 1,000 pieces of originating mail and special service transactions. The number of revenue units is used to categorize post offices by size. (Also see *cost ascertainment grouping*.)

rewrap area — The area in which soiled or damaged mail is repaired and endorsed to show that it was damaged during processing.

rif — Mail that is easy to riffle.

R

riffle — Mail prepared so that 10 or more contiguous mailpieces are addressed to the same ZIP Code destination. Also, to check that mail is in ZIP Code sequence by thumbing quickly through the top of a tray of mail or along the side of a bundle of mail.

roll — Mail in a tube or cylinder that is limited in size by USPS standards. (Also see *irregular parcels and pieces*.)

roller-canceler — A canceling device for Periodicals and Standard Mail. (Also see *facer-canceler*.)

roller table — A table with a surface made up of rollers to facilitate manual mail sorting and separation of the mail into a container.

rotary lock — A special lock for pouches of registered mail. The lock is cylindrical and made of brass. The words “Registered U.S. Mail” are engraved on the front of the lock, and the back is engraved with the accountable serial number. A counter in the lock rotates to the next higher number with each turn of the key.

rotary sorting rack — A mechanical circular rack in a bulk mail center. It rotates to a predetermined scheme and positions the correct mailbag or sack near the operator for minimum movement and maximum accuracy. (Also see *circular sorting rack* and *sorting rack*.) (Also called *rotary sack rack*.)

round-dater stamp — (See *all-purpose dating stamp*.)

route — A scheduled course to be followed by a USPS employee or carrier (a contractor) in performing transportation or delivery duties. To designate the time, schedule, mode of transportation (such as air, highway, or rail), and the line of travel to be used in dispatching mail from a postal unit or transportation terminal. (Also see *distribution networks office*.)

route-sequenced mail — (See *carrier route presort mail*.)

routing slip — (See *buck slip*.)

run — The scheduled line of travel and operation of a mail transportation vehicle.

R

Rural Adjustment Processing System (RAPS) — A payroll software application used to make adjustments for rural employees based on data on Form 2240-R, *Rural Pay or Leave Adjustment Request*. (Compare with *Adjustment Processing System*.)

rural carrier — In rural communities lacking convenient postal facilities, a USPS employee assigned to deliver and collect all mail classes, thus providing most services available at a small post office.

rural carrier associate (RCA) — A noncareer USPS employee who either serves as a leave replacement in the absence of a regular rural carrier or provides service on auxiliary routes. This employee is selected from a register of eligibles, and after 1 year of service, has bidding rights to USPS career vacancies as they occur.

rural delivery service — The nationwide network of rural routes operated primarily to deliver and collect mail from roadside mailboxes owned and maintained by residents of communities without convenient postal facilities. (Formerly called *rural free delivery*.)

rural mailbox — A mailbox primarily on a rural route used for the delivery of customer mail from a vehicle. It is also used on curbside delivery routes.

rural route (RR) — A delivery route served by a rural carrier.

Rural Time and Attendance System (RTAPS) — A payroll software application that provides on-line entry of certificate data for rural carriers from Forms 1314, *Regular Rural Carrier Time Certificate*, and 1314-A, *Auxiliary Rural Carrier Time Certificate*.

S

sack — A container generally used to transport flat-size mail, parcels, and loose pack mail. It is made of sewn fabric (usually nylon, polyester, canvas, or plastic with an opening at one end) and is closed with a draw cord and fastener. In mail processing or dispatch functions, to place mail in a sack. (Compare with *pouch*.)

sack and parcel sorting machine — An overhead trolley system for hanging or placing on bucket carriers sacks to be transported for processing or dispatching at specific areas within a facility. (Compare with *sack sorting machine*.)

sack rack — (See *sorting rack*.)

sack routing system — The sorting of parcels into numbered sacks corresponding to route or geographical areas.

sack sorting and dispatch system — A large overhead trolley system with suspended trays. The system has data entry stations at central, remote in-house, and platform locations. It has discharge elements for in-house rework of sorted mail, dispatch sequencing, and direct deposit into trucks or rail cars.

sack sorting machine (SSM) — A mechanized, operator-controlled machine similar to a parcel sorting machine but of heavier construction. It separates 1,875 sacks per hour by ZIP Code to about 30 runouts. (Compare with *sack and parcel sorting machine*.)

sacs vides (SV) — (French) Empty foreign mail equipment, literally “empty sacks.”

Sales/Service Information System (S/SIS) — A computerized sales tool that helps account representatives and their sales managers to carry out their day-to-day marketing activities.

same period last year (SPLY) — The accounting period (or other period) compared with the same period the previous year.

saratoga — A deep canvas and leather satchel used for mail collection.

satchel — A canvas bag, with a large flap and shoulder strap, used by a city carrier to hold mail for delivery on a route. It is not used on a completely motorized route or mounted route.

S

satchel cart — A small, portable handcart used by city carriers to transport satchels of mail on their routes.

sawtooth platform — A platform for sorting sacks, surrounded by nutting trucks arranged in a sawtooth pattern for easy loading.

Schedules and Schemes Information System (SSIS) — A database of the Manpower Scheduling and Staffing Program. It collects data on work schedules and scheme knowledge of an office's employees.

scheme — Systematic plan for the distribution of mail to its destination. (Also see *presort levels*.)

scheme distribution — A systematic plan to move all mail classes from the originating office to the destinating office. It includes state schemes and city schemes.

scheme knowledge — The knowledge demonstrated by a letter carrier or distribution clerk concerning which address belongs to a specific carrier route in a specific ZIP Code area. (Also see *scheme*.)

scheme sort — The distribution of mail to its destination according to a systematic plan determined by the mail processing functional area. Typically, this allows mailers to combine pieces addressed to two or more 5-digit or 3-digit ZIP Code areas.

Science-of-Agriculture rate — A Periodicals rate that is available to an authorized mailer of agriculture publications.

screenline — A partition that separates the public lobby from the post office workroom. Also, the recessed installation of equipment into a wall.

secondary — A second mail sorting operation that separates mail into finer levels. (Compare with *primary* and *tertiary*.)

secondary case — A case used for making separations that cannot be included in the primary case, such as second handling pieces.

second-class mail — (obsolete) (See *Periodicals*.)

sectional center facility (SCF) — A postal facility that serves as the processing and distribution center (P&DC) for post offices in a designated geographic area as defined by the first three digits of the ZIP Codes of those offices. Some SCFs serve more than one 3-digit ZIP Code range.

sector — The sixth and seventh digits of a ZIP+4 code. It is a geographic portion of a ZIP Code area or a rural route, several city blocks or a large building, part of a post office box section, or an official designation.

segment — The eighth and ninth digits of a ZIP+4 code. It is a specific block face, apartment house bank of boxes, a firm, a floor in a large building, or other specific location.

selects — (informal) (See *hards*.)

self-adhesive — Type of postage that does not require moisture for the adhesive to perform. Stamps are peeled from a backer or liner, and they may be applied directly to mail.

self-service postal center (SSPC) — An unstaffed postal unit that uses vending machines to provide postage stamps and other retail products and services. (Also see *postal commodity machine* and *stamp vending machine*.)

selvage — The nonpostage strip or strips on the edge of a pane of postage stamps that show the plate number(s), notice of copyright, and other markings or inscriptions. (Compare with *plate block*.)

separation — A compartment in mail processing equipment used to hold separated mail. Also, a division (or segmentation) of sorted mail, after distribution, according to a scheme (for example, ZIP Code, city, or house number ranges). (Also see *sort*.)

sequence — To place mail in the order of its delivery. Mailers generally receive certain discounts based on the type of sequencing. (Also see *delivery sequenced mail* and *carrier route presort mail*.)

sequence loading — The placement onto a vehicle of mail in the reverse order that it is to be unloaded at its destination.

service day — An employee's scheduled work day, which is set on a calendar day (from 12:01 a.m. to 12 midnight).

service standards — A stated goal for service achievement for each mail class.

service week — An employee's scheduled work week, which is set on a calendar week (from Saturday at 12:01 a.m. to the following Friday at 12 midnight).

S

serving post office (SPO) — A postal facility at which Western Union Mailgram messages are received in electronic form, printed, and sealed in envelopes for delivery.

se tenant — (French) Two or more postage stamps designed for continuity of format and printed in the same pane. The stamps can form a single design; otherwise, they can be arranged in pairs, groups of four, or larger configurations.

set up — To face mailpieces in the same direction on the worktable to ease sorting into sacks and pouches.

7:01 rule — The rule that applies to city carriers who have been officially excused from the completion of the 8-hour tour. Although the carrier actually works more than 7 hours but less than 8 hours of a regular scheduled day, for pay purposes, he or she is credited with 8 hours of work time.

shake out — To empty mail from sacks and pouches.

shared mail — A number of separate circulars that are combined into a single mailpiece and mailed for several different individuals or organizations.

sheet — A complete, unseparated group of postage stamps as printed on a press. The sheet is usually perforated and cut into four or more panes for eventual sale.

shift — (See *tour of duty*.)

shipper paid forwarding (SPF) — An address change service (ACS) fulfillment vehicle. It allows mailers of Standard Mail (A) machinable parcels and most Standard Mail (B) pieces to pay forwarding charges via approved ACS participant code(s).

shortage — The dollar amount below the accountable amount shown on Form 1412-A at the conclusion of a retail vending credit examination.

Short-Interval Scheduler (SIS) — A computer program used to forecast mail volume. It helps supervisors make same-day operating decisions.

shortpaid mail — Mail on which additional postage is collectable on final delivery.

S

shrinkwrap — A plastic covering that is placed around mail and packages of stamps and then heat-sealed to enclose it tightly. Also, to cover mail with such material.

shuttle service — The scheduled transportation of mail between given points.

sidewalk delivery — A method of city delivery in which the letter carrier delivers to mailboxes posted at the edge of the sidewalk near the residence. (Compare with *central point delivery* and *curbside delivery*.)

simplified address — An alternative addressing format used when delivery of identical mail is requested to every customer on a rural route or highway contract route, or to all post office box customers at a post office without city carrier service. Instead of listing the name and address of the addressee, the mailer may use “postal customer.” It may also be used by government agencies for official mail sent to all stops on city routes and post office boxes at post offices with city delivery service. In such cases, these formats may be used: “Postal Customer,” “Residential Customer,” and “Business Customer,” depending on the type of coverage requested. (Compare with *exceptional address* and *occupant address*.)

single line queue — A queuing system to reduce customer waiting time in a postal lobby, using signs with movable stanchions connected by ropes. Customers line up single-file for the next available clerk at a retail window.

single-piece rate — A postage rate available for individual pieces of Express Mail, First-Class Mail, Priority Mail, and Standard Mail (B). It is not available for Periodicals except under the rate category of basic. This type of rate contrasts with rates available for bulk mail and presorted mail.

single point delivery — A residential service that provides delivery to a single address (as compared with multiple addresses) at one delivery stop. (Compare with *central point delivery*.)

single-position letter sorting machine (SPLSM) — A letter sorting machine with 96 separations that has one operator and a processing capability of 3,600 faced pieces per hour.

skew — The misalignment or slant of a character, bar, line of characters, or barcode with respect to the bottom or top edge of the mailpiece.

skid — (See *pallet*.)

skin sack — (informal) A sack or pouch containing a small amount of mail.

S

skin the rack — (informal) (See *pull racks*.)

skip — (informal) A mailpiece that has passed through a canceling machine without a cancellation being applied to the postage stamp.

sleeper — (informal) A letter that is lodged in the back of a case instead of lying flat in the pigeonhole or bin.

sleeve — A paperboard jacket that fits over the four sides (top, bottom, and two parallel sides) of a letter tray in order to keep the mail inside the tray from falling out.

slug — (informal) First-Class Mail or Standard Mail (A) that is too thick to be distributed into a case. Such a mailpiece must be manually culled in the facing and canceling operation. (Also see *bulkie*.)

small packet — A class of international mail that can be used to send disks and tapes, computer materials, commercial samples, other lightweight merchandise items, or business documents that do *not* have the character of personal correspondence. For postage payment purposes, it is part of the other articles (ao) rate category. The weight limit for small packets is 4 pounds to all destination countries, except for Italy, which has a 2-pound limit, and Burma (Myanmar) and Papua New Guinea, which have a 1-pound limit.

small parcel and bundle sorter (SPBS) — A modular machine that sorts small parcels and packages or bundles of letters and flats to 100 specific bins for either delivery or processing.

small parcels and rolls (SPR) — (obsolete) (See *irregular parcels and pieces*.)

smiles, frowns, and upside downs — (informal) The accidental deviations from the uniform alignment of envelopes on a facer-canceler or letter sorting machine. When the back of the envelope faces the machine or operator, it is either a smile (flap makes a V) or a frown (flap is inverted); when the address side faces the machine but is inverted, the envelope is called an upside down.

snorkel collection box — A USPS collection box that is placed at the curbside, fitted with a chute to receive mail deposited by motorists. (Also called *courtesy box* and *motorist mailchute*.)

S

sort — To separate mail by a scheme or ZIP Code range; to separate and place mail into a carrier case; to distribute mail by piece, package, bundle, sack, or pouch. (Also see *primary*, *secondary*, and *tertiary*.)

sortation — The distribution or separation of mail to route it to its final delivery point. (Also see *mail processing*.)

sorting conveyor — (See *conveyor* and *sort*.)

sorting rack — A metal framework with hooks from which sacks or pouches hang while being filled with mail. A sorting rack can hold five to ten sacks. (Also see *circular sorting rack* and *rotary sorting rack*.) (Also called *bag*, *pouch*, *sack*, *paper*, and *parcel rack*.)

sort plan — (See *scheme*.)

sort scheme — A computer program that provides automated equipment with sorting instructions. (Also see *scheme*.)

space available mail (SAM) — Military mail transported by surface means in the United States and by air on a space-available basis to overseas destinations.

special delivery — A special service that provides preferential handling in dispatch, transportation, and expedited delivery at destination, which includes Sunday and holiday delivery at certain large city post offices. It is available for every mail class except Express Mail. (Also see *preferential mail*.) (Compare with *special handling*.)

special die-hub cancellation — (See *cancellation*.)

special handling — A special service available only for Standard Mail (A) and Standard Mail (B). It provides preferential handling in dispatch and transportation but not expedited delivery. (Also see *preferential mail*.) (Compare with *special delivery*.)

special-issue stamp — A postage stamp issued for special purposes (e.g., the annual Christmas stamp). It is typically issued at the current First-Class Mail letter rate and is often available in greater quantities and over longer periods than commemorative stamps. (Compare with *commemorative stamp* and *definitive stamp*.)

S

special postage payment system — A method that simplifies postage payment procedures for large-volume mailers that meet certain requirements. This includes Alternate Mailing Systems, Centralized Postage Payment System, Manifest Mailing System, Optional Procedure Mailing System, and plant-verified drop shipment.

special rate — One of three preferred rates for Periodicals that require approval and authorization (Classroom rate, Nonprofit rate, and Science-of-Agriculture rate).

special request cancellation — (See *cancellation*.)

special service — A mail service for a fee in addition to required postage, that includes registered mail, certified mail, insured mail, collect on delivery, recorded delivery special delivery, special handling, parcel airlift, business reply mail, and return receipt for merchandise. (Also see *postal money order*, *return receipt*, and *restricted delivery*.)

speedy bag — A clear plastic sack used to identify and hold special delivery mail. The bag is then placed inside regular sacks of dispatched mail. It keeps this mail separate from other mail in transit and expedites its delivery.

spike — (informal) (See *verify*.)

stacker — A separation on the sweepside of a letter sorting machine or similar mechanized or automated mail processing equipment that collects letters at one end of a facing table.

stamp, all-purpose dating — (See *all-purpose dating stamp*.)

stamp, postage — (See *postage stamp*.)

stamp, postmarking — (See *postmarking stamp*.)

stamp credit — The monetary value of the postage stamp stock that is consigned to an employee or contractor out of the stamp accountability of the postmaster. At post office stations and post office branches, this value is consigned out of the general station or branch stamp credit. (Also see *accountable paper*.)

stamp distribution office (SDO) — A postal unit other than the parent sectional center facility that is designated, for security reasons, to supply postage stamp stock to associate post offices.

stamped card— A postcard sold by the USPS (as distinguished from a privately printed postcard) with a printed or impressed postage stamp. (Compare to *postcard*.)

stamped envelope — An envelope with a preprinted and/or embossed postage imprint.

stamped paper — (See *accountable paper* and *postal stationery*.)

Stamps by Mail (SBM) — A service in which a customer uses a self-mailer order form and pays by check for postage stamps that are delivered with the customer's regular mail. This service is available in most post offices and rural routes. (Also see *Easy Stamp Service*.)

stamps to go — A method for customer purchase of postage stamps at consignment outlets (e.g., grocery stores or drug stores) or via ATMs dispensing stamps.

stamp tagging — (See *tagging*.)

stamp vending machine (SVM) — A vending machine that has multiple modules capable of dispensing varying quantities of stamps from a coil from each module.

standard container mail — Mail transported in air carrier-owned containers on flights scheduled to depart between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Standard Mail — A class of mail consisting of mailable matter that is not required to be mailed as First-Class Mail or is not mailed as Periodicals.

Standard Mail (A) — Standard Mail matter that weighs less than 16 ounces. It comprises the subclasses of Regular Standard Mail, Nonprofit Standard Mail, Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail, and Nonprofit Enhanced Carrier Route Standard Mail. These subclasses include circulars, printed matter, pamphlets, catalogs, newsletters, direct mail, and merchandise. Standard Mail (A) may be sent at presorted rates and at automation rates.

Standard Mail (B) — Standard Mail matter that weighs 16 ounces or more but not more than 70 pounds. It comprises four subclasses: Bound Printed Matter, Library Mail, Parcel Post, and Special Standard Mail.

standpoint scheme — A scheme used by an international exchange office for the labeling and routing of international mail.

S

star route — (obsolete) Informal designation for a highway contract route based on the former practice of marking contract routes with asterisks on dispatch schedules.

state case — A case for separating mail according to city destination in a single state.

state dispatch list — A roster that shows dispatch of state mail to post offices or terminals best equipped, staffed, or located to perform the distribution. (Also called *massing scheme*.)

statement of account — A postal form (Form 1555) used for financial reporting by accounting period or postal quarter.

station — (See *post office station*.)

step increase — An advancement from one step to the next within a specific grade of a position. It is dependent on performance and tenure. (Also called *periodic step increase*.)

storage conveyor — A conveyor on which nonpreferential mail can be held for a brief period.

storage vehicle — A vehicle retired from service and awaiting sale.

strap out — To bundle letters and flats with straps or rubber bands, keeping them in delivery sequence. (Also see *tie out*.)

strategic planning — The top USPS management decision process that focuses on the longer range direction of the Postal Service and establishes the means by which that direction is reached. It includes the definition of missions and objectives — how the Postal Service enterprise sees its purpose and where it wants to go. Strategic planning provides the basic direction and focus of the organization, the big picture. Some of the organization's basic strategic decisions might relate to questions such as: What business are we in? What business should we be in, now and in the future? What should be the geographical scope of operations? What are our research and development goals? How should products be researched? Where are we the weakest? Strongest?

stringer — A pouch or sack hung loose on the outside of regular sacks. The term also refers to a sack with a broken drawstring.

S

string- or twine-tying machine — A machine, operated by a foot pedal, that mechanically ties bundles of letters or flats.

strip label — (See *label*.)

stuck — (informal) Having more mail than can be completely distributed prior to scheduled dispatch or letter carrier leaving time, as in “go stuck.”

subclass — A subdivision of a mail class, usually based on the consideration of a physical characteristic rather than content.

Supervisory Training System (STS) — A national training program for newly appointed field supervisors.

supplemental mail service — A mail service that usually supplements a special service. These include restricted delivery and return receipt.

supplementary mail service — (See *supplemental mail service*.)

supply — The mode, method, or route by which a given post office or locality receives its mail.

surcharge — An additional fee for nonstandard size mail or certain nonmachinable parcels.

surface airlift mail — A combined mode of transporting international mail and military mail by surface and air. (Also see *International Surface Air Lift* and *space available mail*.)

surface mail — In international mail, mail that is transported by any mode other than air (that is, sea, rail, or highway).

surface preferential mail — First-Class Mail and Periodicals, as well as Standard Mail that bears a prepaid special delivery fee or special handling fee.

surge conveyor — A part of the mail conveying system that holds back surges and meters out an even flow, keeping all mail in sequence. (Also see *conveyor*.)

suspense account — An account containing accounts receivable, monies owed to the Postal Service by others.

sweep — (See *pull*.)

S

sweeper — A clerk who removes the mail from the bins or stackers on mechanical and automated mail processing equipment and then places it in the equipment for dispatch.

sweepside — The side of the machine where sorted mail ends up after being processed by the equipment.

swing — A short period of time required to cover an absence.

swing room — The lounge used when employees are off the clock or on break.

swing time — The period that employees spend in non-work-related activities (for example, lunch or coffee breaks).

systems engineering — The process of selecting and putting into a unified pattern the devices, mechanisms, and equipment necessary for optimum operation and control of a complex mail processing or customer service system.

T

tag — A piece of cardboard or plastic that is attached to a pouch, sack, or tray. It is usually in addition to the container label and is printed in various colors and provides information on contents, mail class and sortation type, routing instructions, and specific handling information.

tagging — A process of coating a postage stamp with an invisible phosphorus additive that glows when exposed to ultraviolet light. Mail processing equipment recognizes the tagged stamp and then can automatically face the envelope and cancel the stamp. (Also see *facer-canceler* and *hot stamp*.)

tailboard delivery — The delivery of mail to a vehicle at the platform and subsequent acceptance at that point.

tailgate exchange — The transfer of mail between two postal or contract vehicles at an intersecting highway point rather than at a postal facility. (Also see *highway contract route*.)

tap — (informal) To gather mail from a collection box.

team roles — Modeling is a team effort. Each USPS BPR team member must be assigned one or more roles to ensure that the team meets its objectives. Some of the roles require a full-time effort; they are called the core team roles. Other roles require part-time or as-needed effort; they are referred to as the extended team roles.

Technical Training Center (TTC) — A facility at Norman, OK, that provides instruction in the maintenance and repair of postal equipment, systems, vehicles, and facilities.

terminal — A postal processing facility (at an airport mail center/facility or at a railroad or truck terminal) for the consolidation, distribution, and dispatch of mail.

terminal charge — The amount charged for services, such as loading and unloading, performed by carriers at an airport mail center/facility and railroad or truck terminal.

terminal dues — The charge levied by the destination country to cover the costs incurred for delivering international mail received. These charges are levied according to Article 49 of the Convention of the Universal Postal Union. (Also see *transit charge*.)

T

terminal handling — Any activity to receive, sort, route, and dispatch sacks, pouches, and outsides at an airport mail center/facility and railroad or a truck terminal.

tertiary — A third mail sorting operation. (Compare with *primary* and *secondary*.)

third-class mail — (obsolete) (See *Standard Mail (A)*.)

throughput — The rate at which a machine processes mail, usually designated in pieces per hour.

throwback — Miscased or missorted mail that has been reworked for accurate distribution. (Also see *missort/missorted mail*.)

throwback case — A distribution case in a delivery unit for the sortation of missorted and forwardable letters and flats. (Also see *undeliverable as addressed*.)

throwoff pouch — An emptied pouch whose contents have been sorted into other pouches.

tie out — To stop sorting letters and flats and to tie or band each separation made. (Also see *strap out*.)

timesharing services — Data processing services provided to post offices through computer terminals by either an accounting service center or a private company.

TO-BE models — Models that are the result of applying improvement opportunities to the current (AS-IS) USPS business environment. (Also see *activity model (AS-IS)*.)

ton-mile — One ton transported 1 mile.

top cap — Material that forms a flat, level surface horizontal to the base of a pallet that is used to protect the integrity of the mail under the top cap while also supporting a loaded pallet above. A top cap must be secured to a pallet of mail with either stretchwrap or at least two crossed straps or bands.

topical — A postage stamp collected by subject or theme (such as flowers or athletic events).

T

tour — One of three scheduled USPS shifts: Tour I (usually from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.) is the night shift, Tour II is the daytime shift (usually from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.), and Tour III is the evening shift (usually from 3 to 11 p.m.).

tour of duty — A USPS employee's scheduled duty hours during a workday or workweek. (Also called *shift* or *trick*.)

towveyor — (See *Container Transport System*.)

tracer — A form (Form 1510, *Mail Loss/Rifling Report*) that customers fill out to locate delayed or undelivered mail.

tractor-trailer — A combination vehicle for hauling large volumes of mail. The operator must be licensed and authorized to drive this type of vehicle.

trailer-on-flatcar service (TOFC) — A mail trailer transported on a special railroad flatcar. (Also called *pig* or *piggyback*.)

tram — A six-wheel platform truck for transporting sacked mail, trayed mail, and outsides (packages and parcels). (Also called *float* or *nutting truck*.)

transfer — Mail that receives first handling outside the receiving postal facility. In this case, the mail is for delivery outside the facility and requires only onward dispatch without opening.

transfer post office (TPO) — A service unit, usually located at a main postal truck or railroad terminal or airport mail center/facility, where the transfer of mail between carriers is complicated, voluminous, and requires supervision.

transit — Mail received from other post offices and handled for redistribution.

transit charge — A fee levied by one country for transporting, through its system, mail destined for and belonging to another country. (Also see *terminal dues*.)

Transportation Management System (TMS) — A computer system that organizes, standardizes, and streamlines the administration of USPS transportation operations.

tray — A container used in postal facilities to hold letters and First-Class Mail flats. It is used as a basic unit of mail quantity for purposes of preparing mail to qualify for discounted postage rates. (Also see *full flat tray*, *full letter tray*, *less-than-full tray*, and *overflow tray*.)

T

tray cart — A heavy-duty, wheeled container with fixed-steel mesh shelving, designed to hold standard USPS letter trays and flat trays. (Also called *bread tray*, *pie cart*, or *pie rack*.)

trick — (informal) (See *tour of duty*.)

truck — (See *log*.)

truck schedule — The set departure and arrival times for a vehicle at each postal unit, depot, boat dock, terminal, or other point.

truck terminal — A postal facility where mail transported, or to be transported, on highway contract routes is received, sorted, and dispatched.

trust account — (See *advance deposit account*.)

turnback mail — (See *return mail*.)

twine-tying machine — (See *string- or twine-tying machine*.)

two-pass — Method used in automation (for example, delivery barcode sorter) to sort mail to the sector, segment, or letter carrier walk-sequence level.

U

uncoded — Mail on which the delivery address does not include a ZIP Code.
(Also called *unzipped*.)

undeliverable as addressed (UAA) — Mail that the USPS cannot deliver as addressed and must forward to the addressee, return to the sender, or send to a mail recovery center. (Also see *address correction service*, *Computerized Forwarding System II*, *markup*, *nixie*, *return address*, *throwback case*, and *tracer*.)

unique ZIP Code — A ZIP Code assigned to a company, government agency, or entity with sufficient mail volume, based on average daily volume of letter-size mail received, availability of ZIP Code numbers in the postal area, and USPS cost-benefit analyses.

unit reserve stock — All postage stamps, postal stationery, nonpostal stamps, and philatelic products received by the window unit of a main post office, post office station, or post office branch but not yet consigned to a clerk.

United States Code (USC) — The official restatement of the general and permanent laws of the United States; 39 USC contains laws relating to the USPS.

United States Postal Service (USPS) — The successor to the Post Office Department, created on July 1, 1971, by the Postal Reorganization Act, as an independent establishment of the executive branch.

Universal Postal Union (UPU) — An international postal organization that is a specialized agency of the United Nations. Its 189 member countries form a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of letter-post items. Its Convention establishes the common rules applicable to the international postal service and the provisions governing letter-post services.

untied dispatch — Loose letter-size mail or flat-size mail packed in a sack, pouch, or letter tray or flat tray for direct dispatch to destinations.

upgradable mail — First-Class Mail and Standard Mail (A) that the USPS can process on a multiline optical character reader (MLOCR) to apply a barcode. Upgradable mail is letter-size, automation-compatible pieces, with machine-printed nonscript addresses, an OCR read area and a barcode clear zone meeting reflectance requirements, and paper that can accept ink. Preparation of upgradable pieces is usually simpler than the preparation of nonupgradable mail.

U

U.S. Savings Stamp — (See *nonpostal stamp*.)

unzipped — (See *uncoded*.)

upside down — (See *smiles, frowns, and upside downs*.)

utility carrier — A full-time city carrier who is assigned to a delivery unit to back up absent carriers.

V

valentine — A test card that delivery supervisors leave in collection boxes to ensure that mail is pulled on schedule.

value added refund — The postage returned by the USPS to an authorized mailer who prepares First-Class Mail or Standard Mail (A) for customers and adds value to the mail by sorting it to a finer level or moving it to an automation category. The USPS gives a refund to the mailer for postage affixed to the mail in excess of the rate applicable to the value added category.

VALUEPOST™ /CANADA — A bulk service for regular printed matter, books and sheet music, publishers' periodicals, and small packets. To qualify for this mail class, the mailer must sort and prepare mail according to specifications. VALUEPOST is a USPS trademark.

variable cost — A cost element that varies directly with the amount of product or service produced by an activity or cost. Variable costs go to zero if the activity stops. (Also see *fixed cost*.)

vehicle hire contract — An agreement between the USPS and an employee for the use of the employee's privately owned vehicle for city delivery. (Also see *drive-out agreement*.)

vehicle maintenance facility (VMF) — A USPS repair shop and garage that maintains USPS vehicles and that provides support documents for vehicle cost and accounting reports.

Vehicle Management Accounting System (VMAS) — A cost-accounting system that provides information on operating costs per vehicle, per mile, and per hour.

vehicle time — The length of time per mile and per hour a postal or contract vehicle is used for city delivery.

Vending Activity Reporting System (VARs) — A data collection system that collects information from "communicating" machines and hand-held data collection devices. Information is sent to a host computer for servicing and management purposes.

verification — The procedural checks of a mailing presented by a mailer to determine proper preparation and postage payment.

V

Verification Note/Bulletin of Verification (VN/BV) — In international mail, the form (Form 2971/8108 or UPU Form CP 78 (formerly CP 13)) used by the receiving international exchange office to notify the dispatching international exchange office of irregularities or errors in a dispatch of mail.

verify — To check either the proper destination of mail by piece-by-piece examination or the rates claimed on a postage statement with the actual mailing it accompanies. (Also see *plant-verified drop shipment*.) (Also called *spike*.)

vertical improved mail (VIM) — A mail service within high-rise office buildings. The letter carrier provides delivery and collection of mail for the entire building by operating a small elevator from a mailroom or by using a call window or a centralized mail delivery system.

vice president (VP) — A USPS officer who is appointed by the postmaster general and directs the various USPS functional departments and area offices.

Voice of the Business (VOB) — An assessment involving traditional measures of financial success to determine which progress is possible and desirable taking into consideration the current health of the business, opportunities in the market, and strength of the competition.

Voice of the Customer (VOC) — An assessment of customer needs and desires in the markets USPS serves and their satisfaction with services relative to other service available in those markets.

Voice of the Employee (VOE) — An assessment of USPS employee issues that will strengthen the company, shape the business future, and improve employees' role in its success.

Volume Arrival Profile (VAP) — A series of computer programs that analyze data transferred from the information systems service centers. The data is averaged to provide the Post Office Scheduler system with the necessary records to make up an arrival profile for all Management Operating Data System (MODS) operations.

W

walk sequence — The order in which a carrier delivers mail for a route. This order is required for most carrier route presort mail.

water-activated adhesive — The gum that requires moisture to perform on stamps. This is the alternative to self-adhesive.

way pouch — A pouch containing mail for post offices along a certain route. It is opened at each office to remove local mail and add mail from that office to other destinations on the route.

weight count — (See *piece count*.)

wide area barcode reader (WABCR) — A modification to a barcode sorter that allows the machine to read a barcode virtually anywhere on a mailpiece.

window envelope — An envelope with one or two openings (cutouts) on the address side through which a delivery address or barcode printed on the letter or insert placed in the envelope can be read. The openings must be covered with transparent material (such as glassine) for certain types of mail (such as registered mail).

wing case — An extension added to a case that protrudes at an angle on either side of the main case.

WKG (working) — A marking used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as mail requiring sorting and distribution.

worked — Sorted mail ready for dispatch.

Work Hour Management (WHM) — A computer program used to plan and track performance over short periods (such as a tour, day, week, or accounting period) and to facilitate the making of immediate decisions.

workhour report — (See *National Workhour Report*.)

working pouch — A pouch of First-Class Mail for distribution at the unit of address.

workroom floor — The part of a postal facility where employees handle, sort, and dispatch mail.

workup — To complete distribution.

Z

zero bin — On the multiposition letter sorting machine, the bin that accumulates letters that bypassed a full bin, were not keyed by the operator or otherwise keyed during dead-cycle time, or did not drop into the bin for which they were coded (owing to machine malfunction).

ZIP (Zone Improvement Plan) Code — Established in 1963, the system of 5-digit codes that identifies the individual post office or metropolitan area delivery station associated with an address. The first three digits identify the delivery area of a sectional center facility or a major-city post office serving the delivery address area. The next two (the fourth and fifth) digits identify the delivery area of an associate post office, post office branch, or post office station. All post offices are assigned at least one unique 5-digit code. ZIP+4 is an enhanced code consisting of the 5-digit ZIP Code and four additional digits that identify a specific range of delivery addresses. ZIP Code is a USPS trademark. (Also see *two-pass*.)

ZIP+4 — The nine-digit numeric code, established in 1981, composed of two parts: (a) The initial code: the first five digits that identify the sectional center facility and delivery area associated with the address, followed by a hyphen; and (b) the four-digit expanded code: the first two additional digits designate the sector (a geographic area) and the last two digits designate the segment (a building, floor, etc.). ZIP+4 is a USPS trademark.

ZIP+4 barcode — A nine-digit POSTNET barcode consisting of 52 vertical bars. (Also see *Postal Numeric Encoding Technique*.)

ZIP+4 code — The numeric representation of ZIP+4 as opposed to the POSTNET representation as a barcode. (Also see *ZIP+4*.)

ZIP+4 National File Directory Tapes — Address records that contain the ZIP+4 codes for all delivery points, in an electronic form.

ZIP+4 State Directory — A series of publications organized by state that shows all ZIP+4 code assignments in each state.

ZIP mail translator (ZMT) — An attachment for a letter sorting machine. It translates the operator's keystrokes into instructions that enable the machine to send the letter into the correct bin.

Z

zone — A number that expresses the distance that a zone rate mailpiece must travel from point of entry to point of delivery. It is based on the air mileage along a great circle line between three-digit ZIP Code prefix areas of dispatch and receipt. This mileage range is converted to a zone number. The USPS uses eight numbered postal zones and one local zone for computing postage on mail.

zone chart — A table that shows the zone number between three-digit ZIP Code prefix areas.

zoned rate — A rate structure for certain Priority Mail, Periodicals (except nonadvertising portion), and Standard Mail (B) (Parcel Post and Bound Printed Matter) that is based on weight and distance traveled (or zones crossed).

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

A

AADC	automated area distribution center
ABE	Automated Barcode Evaluator
ABMPS	Automated Business Mail Processing System
AC	actual count
ACDCS	Air Contract Data Collection System
ACS	Address Change Service
ACT	air contract transportation tag
ADAPT	Automatic Density Analysis Profile Technique
ADC	area distribution center
AE	additional entry
AFC	advanced facer-canceler
AIC	account identifier code
AM	Address Management
AMC/F	airport mail center/facility
AMO	area maintenance office
AMS	Alternate Mailing System
AO	associate post office
AO	autres objets (other articles)

AOI

BRM

AOI	associate office infrastructure
AP	accounting period
APARS	Accounts Payable Accounting and Reporting System
APO	Army Post Office
APS	Adjustment Processing System
ARM	accelerated reply mail
ASC	accounting service center
ASF	administrative support facility
ASF	auxiliary service facility
AS-IS	activity model
ASM	Administrative Support Manual

B

BBM	bulk business mail
BC	barcode
BCR	barcode reader
BCS	barcode sorter
BMC	bulk mail center
BMC	bulk mail center container
BMEU	business mail entry unit
BPI	business process improvement
BPM	Bound Printed Matter
BRM	business reply mail

C

CAG	cost ascertainment grouping
CAKT	computer-assisted keyboard training
CAS	Case Analysis System
CASS	Coding Accuracy Support System
CAST	computer-assisted scheme training
CDB	Corporate Data Base
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CFS II	Computerized Forwarding System II
CIIS	Comprehensive-Interactive Information Strategy
CIS	Corporate Information System
CMA	commercial mailing agent
CMRA	commercial mail receiving agency
CMRS	Computerized Meter Resetting System
COD	collect on delivery
CODES	Computerized On-Site Data Entry System
COR	contracting officer representative
COSC	computer operations service center
CP	colis postaux
CPO	community post office
CPP	Centralized Postage Payment System
CR	carrier route
CRF	Central Repair Facility
CRIS	Carrier Route Information System

CRM

EIS

CRM courtesy reply mail

CSI Customer Satisfaction Index

D

DAL detached address label

DAS Density Analysis System

DBMC destination bulk mail center

DDE/DR Distributed Data Entry and Distributed Reporting

DDU destination delivery unit

DMCS Domestic Mail Classification Schedule

DMM Domestic Mail Manual

DMU detached mail unit

DNO distribution networks office

DPBC delivery point barcode

DPMG deputy postmaster general

DPO designated post office

DSCF destination sectional center facility

E

EAP Employee Assistance Program

EAS executive and administrative schedule

ECB Engineering Change Board

EEO Equal Employment Opportunity

EI/QWL Employee Involvement/Quality of Work Life

EIS Executive Information System

ELM

FSO

ELM	Employee and Labor Relations Manual
EMMS	Express Mail Military Service
EMRS	Electronic Marketing Reporting System
EMS	Express Mail International Service
EPO	entry post office
ERMC	eastern region mail container
ESP	electronic sort processor

F

FCM	First-Class Mail
FDC	first day cover
FEDSTRIP	Federal Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures
FHP	first handling pieces
FIM	facing identification mark
FLTS	FLATS
FMM	Financial Management Manual
FMO	field maintenance offices
FPI	functional process improvement
FPO	Fleet Post Office
FR	Federal Register
FSM	flat sorting machine
FSO	facilities service office

G

GMS	general mail system
GPL	Global Package Link
GPM	Global Priority Mail
GPMC	general purpose mail container

H

HASP	Hub and Spoke Program
HCR	highway contract route
HCR-TPC	highway contract route transportation pay cycle

I

IBRS	International Business Reply Service
IEO	international exchange office
IMM	International Mail Manual
IMPAC	International Merchant Purchase Authorization Card
IMPC	incoming mail processing center
INTELPOST	International Electronic Post
IPA	International Priority Airmail
IPCS	International Package Consignment Service
IPP	irregular parcels and pieces
IRT	integrated retail terminal
ISAL	International Surface Air Lift
ISBN	International Standard Book Number

ISC

LUR

ISC	information service center
ISSC	information systems service center
ISSN	International Standard Serial Number
ISSP	Incoming Secondary Sorting Program
IT	Information Technology
ITK	Infrastructure Tool Kit

J

K

L

LA	LA lock
LC	lettres et cartes (letters and cards)
LDC	labor distribution code
LF	lead facilitator
LID	luminescent indicia detector
LLV	long-life vehicle
LOT	Line-of-Travel
LPC	Label Printing Center
LSM	letter sorting machine
LTATS	Loan, Transfer, and Training System
LUR	Labor Utilization Report

M

MASS	Multiline Accuracy Support System
MCM	multicommodity machine
MDC	material distribution center
MEPPS	Multiple Entry Point Payment System
MI	management instruction
MIP-SOP	Methods Improvement Program — Standard Operating Procedures
MLOCR	multiline optical character reader
MM	managed mail tray
MMP	Managed Mail Program
MMS	Manifest Mailing System
MODS	Management Operating Data System
MOM	military ordinary mail
MPFSM	multiposition flat sorting machine
MPLSM	multiposition letter sorting machine
MPO	military post office
MPWCS	Mail Processing Work Credit System
MQC	Mailpiece Quality Control
MRB	management review board
MRC	mail recovery center
MSC	management sectional center
MSSP	Manpower Scheduling and Staffing Program
MTAC	Mailers Technical Advisory Committee

MTE

NWRS

MTE	mail transport equipment
MTESC	mail transport equipment service center
MTTR	mean time to repair
MVO	motor vehicle operator
MVRF	mobile vehicle repair facility

N

NAM	national account manager
NASS	National Air and Surface System
NBMS	National Bulk Mail System
NBS	National Budget System
NCD	non-city delivery office
NCOA	National Change of Address System
NCSC	National Customer Support Center
NDCBU	neighborhood delivery and collection box unit
NDI	National Deliverability Index
NMO	nonmachinable outside
NNSC	National Network Service Center
NO	no office
NSN	National Stock Number
NTAC	National Test Administration Center
NWR	National Workhour Report
NWRS	National Workhour Reporting System

O

OCR/CS	optical character reader/channel sorter
ODIS	Origin Destination Information System
OEL	optional endorsement line
OFM	On-Line File Maintenance
OIC	officer in charge
OLQ	On-Line Query
OMAS	Official Mail Accounting System
OMSS	Organizational Management Staffing System
OP	Optional Procedure Mailing System
OPF	official personnel folder
OTR	over-the-road container

P

PAL	Parcel Airlift
PAL	Postal Answer Line
PAR	Program for Alcoholic Recovery
PAU	platform acceptance unit
PAVE	Presort Accuracy Validation and Evaluation
PBC	postal business center
PCC	Postal Customer Council Program
PCE	Postal Computing Environment
PCES	Postal Career Executive Service
PCM	postal commodity machine

PDC/F

PVDS

PDC/F	processing and distribution center/facility
PEDC	postal employee development center
PIRS	Productivity Information Reporting System
PM	project manager
PMC	Postage and Mailing Center
PMG	postmaster general
PMSC	purchasing and materials service center
PO	post office
POM	Postal Operations Manual
POP	point of purchase promotions
POS	Point of Sale System
POSKED	Post Office Scheduler
POSTNET	POSTal Numeric Encoding Technique
PR	poste restante
PRC	Postal Rate Commission
PRN	postal routed network
PS	Postal Service schedule
PSDS	Postal Source Data System
PSFR	Postal System Financial Report
PSM	parcel sorting machine
PSO	procurement service office
PSSR	Postal System Sales Report
PST&DI	Postal Service Training and Development Institute
PVDS	plant-verified drop shipment

PVI

SPLSM

PVI postage validation imprinter

PVS postal vehicle service

Q

QA quality assurance

QC quality control

QSI Quality Step Increase

R

RAP Retail Analysis Program

RAPS Rural Adjustment Processing System

RCA rural carrier associate

RCSC rates and classification service center

RPW Revenue, Pieces, and Weight

RR rural route

RTAPS Rural Time and Attendance System

S

SAM space available mail

SBM Stamps by Mail

SCF sectional center facility

SDO stamp distribution office

SIS Short-Interval Scheduling

SPBS small parcel and bundle sorter

SPLSM single-position letter sorting machine

SPLY

USPS

SPLY	same period last year
SPO	serving post office
S/SIS	Sales/Service Information System
SSIS	Schedules and Schemes Information System
SSM	sack sorting machine
SSPC	self-service postal center
SPR	small parcels and rolls
STS	Supervisory Training System
SV	sacs vides (empty mail bags)
SVM	stamp vending machine

T

TMS	Transportation Management System
TO-BE	activity model
TOFC	trailer-on-flatcar service
TPO	transfer post office
TQM	total quality management
TTC	Technical Training Center

U

UAA	undeliverable as addressed
UPU	Universal Postal Union
USPS	United States Postal Service

VARs

ZMT

V

VARs	Vending Activity Reporting System
VIM	vertical improved mail
VMAS	Vehicle Management Accounting System
VMF	vehicle maintenance facility
VN/BV	Verification Note/Bulletin of Verification
VOB	Voice of the Business
VOC	Voice of the Customer
VOE	Voice of the Employee
VP	vice president
VAP	Volume Arrival Profile

W

WABCR	wide area barcode reader
WHM	Work Hour Management
WKG	WORKING

X

Y

Z

ZIP	Zone Improvement Plan
ZMT	ZIP mail translator