

electronic message to wmh@nrc.gov or dkw@nrc.gov.

Dated: June 13, 1997.

**William M. Hill, Jr.,**  
SECY Tracking Officer, Office of the  
Secretary.

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## OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee; Cancellation of Open Committee Meeting

According to the provisions of section 10 of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), notice is hereby given that the meeting of the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee scheduled for Thursday, June 19, 1997, has been canceled.

Information on other meetings can be obtained by contacting the Committee's Secretary, Office of Personnel Management, Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee, Room 5559, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20415, (202) 606-1500.

Dated: June 11, 1997.

**Phyllis G. Foley,**  
Chair, Federal Prevailing Rate, Advisory  
Committee.

[FR Doc. 97-15822 Filed 6-16-97; 8:45 am]

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## POSTAL RATE COMMISSION

[Order No. 1184; Docket Nos. MC97-4 and C97-1]

### Bulk Parcel Return Service and Shipper-Paid Forwarding Classifications and Fees; and Complaint of the Advertising Mail Marketing Association Regarding Charges for Standard (A) Merchandise Returns; Notice of Request for Changes in Domestic Mail Classification Schedule Provisions and Rates Affecting Forwarding and Return of Standard (A) Parcels and Order Instituting Proceedings

Issued June 11, 1997.

Before Commissioners: Edward J. Gleiman, Chairman; H. Edward Quick, Jr., Vice Chairman; George W. Haley; W.H. "Trey" LeBlanc III.

Notice is hereby given that on June 6, 1997, the United States Postal Service filed a Request with the Postal Rate Commission pursuant to section 3623 of the Postal Reorganization Act, 39 U.S.C. 101 et seq., for a recommended decision

on proposed changes in the Domestic Mail Classification Schedule (DMCS). The proposed revisions also include proposed new rates and fees. The Request includes attachments and is supported by the testimony of two witnesses and two library references. It is on file in the Commission Docket Room and is available for inspection during the Commission's regular business hours.

*Contents of the filing.* The Postal Service requests that the Commission consider two changes affecting the forwarding and return of Standard (A) parcels that were initially considered in Docket No. MC97-2. It requests that Bulk Parcel Return Service (BPRS) and Shipper Paid Forwarding (SPF) be established. Under current practice, forwarding and return of bulk Standard (A) parcels is obtained by endorsing mailpieces "Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed" or "Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed, Address Correction Requested." At the time that a parcel is returned, postage is paid for return service and indirectly paid for forwarding service, through a weighted fee that is 2.472 times the applicable single piece rate. The 2.472 weighting factor is the sum of one and 1.472. One, multiplied by the single piece rate, is intended to directly cover the cost of return service. 1.472 is the average number of pieces that are forwarded for every piece that is returned. Multiplying 1.472 times the single piece rate is intended to cover the cost of return service. This weighted fee can result in a charge for forwarding and return that is prohibitively high, according to the Postal Service. To provide continuity mailers other options, the Postal Service proposes to establish SPF and BPRS.

SPF would allow mailers to pay forwarding fees (the applicable single piece rate) directly, through the use of the tracking capabilities of the existing electronic Address Change Service (ACS). Only machinable parcels with the required endorsements would be eligible. An advance deposit would be required.

BPRS, through bulk handling of returned parcels, would lower the average cost of return service. BPRS mailers would arrange to pick up their returned parcels at a specified frequency, at a designated postal facility, or would have their returned parcels delivered to them in bulk by the Postal Service. Only machinable parcels weighing less than one pound, with the required endorsements, would be eligible for BPRS. A minimum of 50,000 returned parcels per year would be required. BPRS mailers would be

required to document their returned parcel volume, and to maintain an advance deposit account. A flat \$1.75 per-piece fee and an annual permit fee of \$85 is proposed. SPF and BPRS service could be combined.

The Postal Service's request is supported by the testimony of Postal Service witness Pham (USPS-T-1), which analyzes the costs of BPRS, and the testimony of Postal Service witness Adra (USPS-T-2), which addresses the consistency of the proposed changes in classifications and fees for SPF and BPRS with the applicable standards of the Postal Reorganization Act. The Postal Service asserts that neither SPF nor BPRS would alter existing forwarding or return services or rates for Standard (A) parcels. It also asserts that establishing BPRS would have little financial impact on postal costs and revenues. It contends that it would reduce overall postal costs by approximately \$4 million, and Standard (A) mail's contribution to institutional costs by less than \$1 million. See USPS-T-2, Exhibit USPS-2A.

The Postal Service's request is accompanied by two library references. The first (USPS-LR-1/MC97-4) is the FY 1996 Cost & Revenue Analysis Report. The second (USPS-LR-2/MC97-4) is a mailer survey designed to estimate the volume impact of BPRS.

*Proposed DMCS provisions.* The Postal Service's Request proposes changes in the current Domestic Mail Classification Schedule (DMCS). It proposes establishing separate Special Service Schedules SS-21, for Bulk Parcel Return Service, and SS-22, for Shipper-Paid Forwarding. The DMCS is codified at 39 CFR part 3001, subpart C, Appendix A. In Attachment A to its Request, the Postal Service displays the changes it proposes in the version of the DMCS currently in effect. These proposed revisions accompany this Notice as Attachment A.

*Proposed rate and fee schedules.* In Attachment B to its Request, the Postal Service displays changes it proposes to the various rate and fee schedules currently in effect. It proposes to establish Schedule SS-21, which would specify a flat fee for BPRS of \$1.75 per piece; and to specify a BPRS permit fee of \$85, under existing Schedule 1000. The Postal Service's requested changes in rates and fees accompany this Notice as Attachment B.

*Procedural proposals.* The Postal Service's Request is accompanied by a Motion of the United States Postal Service to Establish Procedural Mechanisms Concerning Settlement. In it, the Postal Service observes that the SPF and BPRS proposals in this docket