

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

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*.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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).

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.

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

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).

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 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.

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

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 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 reply mail accounting system (BRMAS)—See *qualified business reply mail*.

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.

carrier route—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 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 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.

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.

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.

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

coppalletize—To combine and present together on pallets mail from two or more different or separately produced mailstreams.

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.

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).

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 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.

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* and *entry post office*.

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

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

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.

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.

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

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

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.

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*.

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 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.

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.

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*.

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.

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. Any mailable matter may be sent as First-Class Mail. First-Class Mail is a USPS trademark.

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-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.

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*.

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

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*.

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*.

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 of mail 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.

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.

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*.

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.

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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).

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.

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.

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-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).

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-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.

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

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 to *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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

marking—Words or abbreviations printed on a mailpiece that show the class or service of a rate paid. See also *endorsement*.

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.

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

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.

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*.

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*.

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.

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).

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.

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.

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

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

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*.

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.

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.

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.

outsert—Mailing industry term for an external attachment.

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.

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

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*.

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 48 contiguous states.

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

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*.

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.

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*.

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

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.

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 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.

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*.

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

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.

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*.

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*.

Presorted Standard—The postage rate for Standard Mail (A) pieces that are part of a mailing and that meet minimum volume and preparation requirements.

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 to *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.

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 post office station or branch.

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.

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.

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.

registered mail—A service by which, through a system of receipts, the USPS monitors the movement of a 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*.

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.

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.

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, and locksmithing devices as well as odor-producing materials, certain liquids and powders, and battery-powered devices. Compare to *hazardous material*.

rural route (RR)—A delivery route served by a rural carrier.

scheme—Systematic plan for the distribution of mail to its destination. Also see *presort levels*.

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.

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.

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).

shortpaid mail—Mail on which additional postage is collectable on final delivery.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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*.

Standard Mail—A class of mail consisting ofailable 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.

subclass—A subdivision of a mail class, usually based on the consideration of a physical characteristic rather than content.

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.

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*.

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.

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.

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.

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.

verification—The procedural checks of a mailing presented by a mailer to determine proper preparation and postage payment.

walk sequence—The order in which a carrier delivers mail for a route. This order is required for most carrier route presort mail.

WKG (working)—A marking used on mail container labels that identifies the contents as mail requiring sorting and distribution.

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. 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.

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*.

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).