



# POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 5, 2007

Contact: Media Relations  
202-268-2155  
News Release No. 07-010  
www.usps.com

## **POSTAL SERVICE AGAIN HONORED AS MOST TRUSTED GOVERNMENT AGENCY**

*Recognition Comes During 'National Consumer Protection Week'*

WASHINGTON, D.C. - For the third year in a row, Americans have rated the U.S. Postal Service as the number one agency they trust to protect their privacy. Not only did the Postal Service retain the top spot, customer satisfaction and trust scores increased from the previous year, a national study shows.

Ponemon Institute LLC published its "2007 Privacy Trust Study of the United States Government" during National Consumer Protection Week. The study sought to understand the level of confidence Americans have in the many government agencies that routinely collect and use the public's personal information.

The Postal Service retained the top spot with a privacy trust score of 83 percent. It also is one of the few federal agencies able to increase its customer satisfaction and trust scores. The average trust score among the 60 agencies surveyed was 47 percent.

"For more than two centuries, the Postal Service has honored its fundamental commitment to protect the privacy and security of customers' personal information," said Delores Killete, Postal Service vice president and consumer advocate. "We have built a strong tradition of trust with our customers regarding how we handle mail and personal information."

The announcement comes during National Consumer Protection Week, a federal program hosted by the Federal Trade Commission to draw attention to issues and ideas to help create more informed and cautious consumers. The Postal Service and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service are partnering at hundreds of events across the country to educate consumers about fraudulent schemes and to provide them with the tools and information needed to combat fraud.

Dr. Larry Ponemon, chairman and founder of Ponemon Institute, said increased public awareness of fraud and sharing or compromising personal information is a key consumer issue. The Privacy Trust Study identified 10 factors, ranging from a sense of security when providing personal information to secure Websites and access to personal information, in ranking federal agencies. More than 7,000 adults were surveyed.

"As the Internet secures its place as a central force in many American households, the concern and interest in protecting information that is being shared is increasing rapidly," Ponemon said. "It doesn't matter if a consumer is logging on to buy a book, applying for a credit card, or updating a driver's license or home address."

The Privacy Trust Study findings also concluded that Americans remain concerned over a "loss of civil liberties and privacy rights," "surveillance into personal life," and "monitoring e-mail and Web activities."

One of the most pressing issues for consumers is identity theft. The Postal Service and the Postal Inspection Service provide a number of tips, especially when shopping online:

- Be cautious about giving out personal information. Be certain that the organization or company is legitimate.

- Don't disclose personal information, especially a Social Security number or home address.
- Teach children to check with parents or an adult before completing any form or survey online.
- Never share a password to anyone online. Never use a full name, telephone number, birth date or Social Security number as part of a password.
- Use a secure browser that complies with industry standards or technology such as encryption.

**To report fraud or for more information on preventing fraud: Postal Inspectors are responsible for enforcing the Mail Fraud statute. A fraud complaint can be filed at the local post office, by calling 1-800-FRAUD-IS (1-800-372-8347) or online at [usps.com/postalinspectors](https://usps.com/postalinspectors). The Federal Trade Commission works for the consumer to prevent fraud and deception. Call 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) or log on to [ftc.gov](https://ftc.gov).**

**Ponemon Institute, LLC** is dedicated to independent research and education that advances responsible information and privacy management practices within business and government. Our mission is to conduct high quality, empirical studies on critical issues affecting the management and security of sensitive information about people and organizations. As a member of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations (CASRO), we uphold strict data confidentiality, privacy and ethical research standards. We do not collect any personally identifiable information from individuals (or company identifiable information in our business research). Furthermore, we have strict quality standards to ensure that subjects are not asked extraneous, irrelevant or improper questions.

Since 1775, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. An independent federal agency, the Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits every address in the nation — 146 million homes and businesses — six days a week. It receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations and depends on the sale of postage, products and services to pay for operating expenses. With annual revenues of \$72 billion, USPS delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail — some 213 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves 10 million customers at its 37,000 retail locations.

###