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Five-Time Winner, U.S. Postal Service Again Named ‘Most Trusted’ *Consumers Rank USPS at Top of 74 Agencies in Ponemon Institute Survey*

WASHINGTON — The premier privacy trust study in America has named the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) the “Most Trusted Government Agency” for an impressive fifth year in a row.

More than 87 percent of the 7,000 Americans surveyed by the Ponemon Institute in its *2009 Privacy Trust Study of the United States Government* ranked the Postal Service first among 74 agencies. The top ranking means Americans trust USPS as the government agency best able to keep their information safe and secure. The average score among federal agencies included in the survey is 50 percent.

The first survey has been conducted in 2004. In addition to ranking as the top government agency every year, USPS also has increased its privacy trust score every year.

“We have a 230-year tradition of trust. Americans depend on the security of the mail and they trust the Postal Service to protect their privacy,” said Delores Killete, vice president and consumer advocate.

Killete attributed the number one ranking, in part, to the trusted relationship Americans have with letter carriers who deliver mail to every home and business across the country. Many know their letter carriers by name and see them as welcome and trusted members of the local community, she said.

“The Postal Service’s mission is to keep Americans connected,” Killete said. “That includes a commitment from each and every employee to uphold the trust behind our connections to friends, families and businesses through the mail.”

The survey asked 7,000 Americans, selected at random, to rank federal agencies based on their ability to handle and protect personal information. Questions ranged from factors that create trust in an agency and how confident consumers are that the agency will protect their information, to limiting the amount of information collected.

“Those agencies with the most public interaction, like the Postal Service — and those that also demonstrate a healthy respect for maintaining public trust — have scored well over the years,” said Larry Ponemon, chairman and founder of the Ponemon Institute.

The Most Trusted Government survey results first were announced at the Postal Service Board of Governors meeting Wednesday.

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Copies of the 2009 Privacy Trust Study of the United States Government are available by contacting the Ponemon Institute at www.ponemon.org.

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/welcome.htm.

An independent federal agency, **the U.S. Postal Service** is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services, not tax dollars, to pay for operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenue of \$75 billion and delivers half the world’s mail.

Ponemon Institute, LLC, is dedicated to advancing responsible information and privacy management practices in businesses and government. To achieve this objective, the Institute conducts independent research, educates leaders from the private and public sector and verifies the privacy and data protection practices of organizations.

