



**POSTAL NEWS**

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## **Postal Service High-Speed Sorters Get Smarter, Faster** *Board of Governors Approve Funding for New Technology*

WASHINGTON, DC — In a move to enhance mail sorting technology to better serve customers, the Postal Service Board of Governors today approved funding to purchase technology to postmark letters faster and sort them smarter. The 550 Advanced Facer Cancellor System (AFCS) machines will replace existing sorters operating on 1980's technology.

Today's AFCS machine locates a stamp's phosphorescent ink and uses it to position the letter for postmarking on the upper right corner of the envelope. It then sends the letter to one of seven bins for additional sorting. The new AFCS will be 15 percent faster, apply barcodes, and process broader-sized letters before sorting them to one of 12 destination bins. The additional bins will reduce downstream processing needs for about 20 percent of the mail. The new equipment, which is more energy efficient, will be deployed between May 2010 and July 2011.

During its meeting today, the Board also approved funding to purchase 400 computer systems to replace existing National Directory Support System (NDSS) and the Integrated Data System (IDS). The Postal Service's 13,000 automated sorting machines process 212 billion letters, large envelopes (flats) and packages annually. Key to these operations is providing information to the machines to enable proper mail sorting and retrieving information from the machines about their operations.

The NDSS contains the nation's 148 million addresses and downloads ZIP Code directories to more than 13,000 letter, flat and parcel sorting machines weekly. On a daily basis, the NDSS generates and downloads more than 25,000 programs to sort mail in the order of delivery.

The IDS collects and distributes operational and management data to help the Postal Service achieve optimum machine performance. It also provides valuable mail sorting information that is shared with business customers.

These nationally deployed systems provide critical data used to manage automated mail processing operations. They also keep the Postal Service competitive by providing essential data used to support a variety of programs that generate revenue and reduce operating costs. Deployment of the new IDS-NDSS computer systems begins in January 2009 and will be completed in July 2009.

Also at today's meeting, the Board approved a new 10-year lease for the Bethpage, NY, Logistics and Distribution Center. The 409,054-square foot facility plays a major mail processing role for the New York City metropolitan area. The new lease will run from March 6, 2009, through March 5, 2019.

In other action, the Board today honored former Board chairman James C. Miller III for his three years of service as chairman. The Board also established the honorary title of chairman pro tempore for the immediate past chairman. Mr. Miller will be first to hold this honorary title. Miller was succeeded as chairman by Alan Kessler in January and Carolyn Gallagher was elected vice chairman at that time.

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