



Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System

Publication 407

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Transmittal Letter

- A. Explanation.** This publication describes the requirements for using an Optional Procedure Mailing System.
- B. Availability.**
- **Nonpostal users** may obtain copies of this publication at Business Mail Entry Units (BMEUs) and Business Mailer Support (BMS). This publication is also available on the Internet at www.usps.com — click on *About USPS & News*, then *Forms & Publications*, then *Browse All Periodicals & Publications*, then *Publications* (either *PDF Format* or *Text Format*), and then *Pub. 407*.
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D. Cancellations. All previous issues of Publication 407 and Handbook DM-107 are obsolete.

E. Effective Date. This publication is effective January 2003.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Wargo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

John R. Wargo
Vice President
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1 The Basics

1-1 General

This publication contains step-by-step instructions intended to give you, the mailer, all the information you need to participate in the Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System. It contains information and conditions for authorization for mailing permit imprint mail under the OP Mailing System. In addition to these requirements, you must comply with the standards governing presort, mail makeup, postage payment, and postage refunds contained in the *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) or, if applicable, in the *International Mail Manual* (IMM).

Chapters 2 – 5 in this publication pertain to the mailer’s responsibilities, whereas Chapters 6 – 9 pertain to the Postal Service’s responsibilities. They contain step-by-step instructions intended to give the various Postal Service participants all the information needed to perform the following tasks:

- a. Process an OP Mailing System application.
- b. Authorize and renew an OP Mailing System agreement.
- c. Verify and accept permit imprint mail under the OP Mailing System.
- d. Perform reviews of the mailer’s records under the OP Mailing System.
- e. Suspend/cancel an OP Mailing System agreement.
- f. Process postage refunds, which are submitted under the OP Mailing System.

1-2 The Optional Procedure Mailing System

The Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System is a program that allows the Postal Service to verify and accept identical-weight and/or nonidentical-weight permit imprint mail by a means other than the standard verification procedure of weighing mail in bulk. The OP Mailing System can be used for First-Class Mail® items, Standard Mail, Package Services, and in some instances International Mail.

There are several requirements to use the OP Mailing System, including the following:

- a. You must retain documentation required by the Postal Service to verify mail (e.g., standardized presort documentation).
- b. You must retain certain financial, production, and other business records that support the total number of pieces mailed and postage rates claimed on postage statements.
- c. You also must maintain an effective quality control (QC) program and retain documentation supporting your QC procedures.

1-3 System Definitions

The following terms have been defined to help you understand the OP Mailing System:

- a. **Job.** A job is the total number of pieces of a particular product that a customer has ordered, including pieces not mailed (e.g., samples, dealer copies). A single job could include multiple versions and mailings.
- b. **Mailing Segment.** A mailing segment is the portion of the job represented by a single postage statement; for Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) mailings, it is the portion represented on a consolidated postage statement.
- c. **Audit Trail.** An audit trail is a series of interrelated original source documents (financial, production, or a combination of both) specified in the OP Mailing System agreement that supports all elements of a job and the entries on the postage statement(s). You must produce an audit trail for each job submitted under the OP Mailing System agreement. If, as a normal business practice, you maintain a financial record audit trail that is separate and distinct from your production record audit trail, the OP Mailing System agreement requires that you maintain both audit trails independently and specifies the records that you must maintain for each separate audit trail. The OP Mailing System agreement specifies the records and the manner in which you must maintain them.

1-4 Determining Authorization

To be eligible for an OP Mailing System agreement, you must meet all of the following conditions:

- a. You have submitted PS Form 3626, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application*, (see Appendix A). Chapter 2 of this publication presents the application and authorization process.
- b. Your plant is operating and mailing at the time you submit the application.

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- c. Your records provide a sound audit trail that ensures that the Postal Service can collect the proper postage.
- d. Your mailings qualify as permit imprint mailings in accordance with standards contained in the DMM.
- e. You are in compliance with all provisions in the DMM (or the IMM, if applicable), this publication, and the OP Mailing System agreement.

When you meet all these conditions, the Business Mailer Support (BMS) manager can authorize and renew an OP Mailing System agreement in 2-year intervals.

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2 Mailer Responsibilities: General Requirements

2-1 Records

2-1.1 Job Jacket

A job jacket is an actual folder, or a set of case records, for each OP job that contains source documents required for the audit trail as specified in the OP Mailing System agreement. You must maintain a job jacket or set of case records for each OP job. You must include a sample of each completed mailing piece, insert, and envelope. You must maintain source documentation required by the OP Mailing System agreement, along with copies of postage statements signed and dated by the postal acceptance employee. You must clearly label all records as identified in the OP Mailing System agreement to correspond to the appropriate job.

If your OP Mailing System agreement includes a provision for maintaining any records in electronic format, then you must provide access to stored electronic data to postal representatives upon request.

You must maintain all records, whether hardcopy or electronic format, in a central location and retain them for 1 year for review by Postal Service officials on request.

2-1.2 Primary Record

A primary mailing record (also referred to as a primary record) is the source document you use to complete postage statements. It must provide the total pieces mailed by rate level and/or zone, if applicable. For PVDS mailings, the primary record must provide the total pieces by rate level and/or zone (if applicable) for each destination entry facility, in addition to the grand total summary.

You must submit the primary record, as specified in the OP Mailing System agreement, with the postage statement at or before the time of mailing. The postal acceptance employee initials and dates the primary record to indicate it was verified and agrees with the postage statement and returns it to you for inclusion in the job jacket.

2-1.3 Inkjet Reorders

For companies that use inkjet technology to apply addresses to Standard Mail flat-size pieces, bindery line controllers must be able to account for the number of immediate and non-immediate reorders and generate reports of this data for each mailing job. The Postal Service will provide you with software to help determine if additional postage is required for reordered pieces. You must retain all reorder reports and worksheets that are generated from the Postal Service-supplied software in the appropriate job jacket. An attachment to your OP Mailing System agreement outlines the procedures and additional postage collection requirements for inkjet reorders. Your Business Mailer Support (BMS) analyst can provide further information to you about inkjet reorder procedures.

2-1.4 Other Documentation

You must provide the postal acceptance employee with any other documentation, in addition to the postage statement, required by postal standards (e.g., standardized presort documentation). If you have received additional authorizations to participate in other mail preparation programs that require specific listings that are outlined in those program requirements, you must continue to submit those listings under the OP Mailing System agreement.

2-1.5 Running Summary

You must maintain and provide running summaries of mailings made to the Postal Service as shown in PS Form 3631, *Optional Procedure (OP) Summary of Mailings*, (see Appendix B). These summaries must include the following information:

- a. Permit number.
- b. Job number.
- c. Date of mailing.
- d. Postage statement sequence number.
- e. Total pieces.
- f. Weight of a single piece.
- g. Total weight for each mailing.
- h. Total postage for each mailing.

For PVDS mailings, you must enter the grand totals from the consolidated postage statement on the summary. For each postage statement, you must complete the summary before submitting the postage statement to the postal acceptance employee.

2-2 Quality Control

To participate in the OP Mailing System, you must implement a documented quality control (QC) program that ensures the following:

- a. Integrity of the system.
- b. Accuracy and proper maintenance of OP records.
- c. Eligibility of the mailings prepared for the postage rates claimed.
- d. Ability to take corrective actions.

When applying for OP authorization, you must include a detailed description of your internal QC program and the forms used to document your QC procedures. The BMS manager will review your QC procedures to determine their effectiveness for the OP Mailing System. If they are acceptable, the OP Mailing System agreement will specify those procedures, and you will be responsible for conducting and documenting those QC procedures and retaining those records for subsequent review by the Postal Service. The BMS manager may require additional QC procedures if your current QC program is inadequate for participation in the OP Mailing System.

2-3 Where Mailings Are Prepared, Verified, and Accepted

2-3.1 Location of Mail Preparation

You are responsible for the preparation of mailings entered under the OP Mailing System agreement.

If you contract any portion of the production or mail preparation process (binding, stitching, presorting, etc.) to another party or mailing plant, and then have the pieces returned to your facility for presentation to the Postal Service, you are responsible for ensuring that all pieces were produced and presorted properly, and that documentation to support each activity, as described in Article 3 of your OP Mailing System agreement, is available in the appropriate job jacket.

If you contract any portion of a job (i.e., mailstream, version, etc.) to another party or mailing plant, and that party or mailing plant presents that portion of the job to the Postal Service, you must include documentation in the appropriate job jacket to support the number of pieces contracted to the other party or mailing plant. The contracted party or mailing plant cannot present that portion of the job under your OP Mailing System agreement.

2-3.2 Mail Preparation Requirements

The mailings you prepare under an OP Mailing System agreement must meet the minimum quantity and mail preparation requirements contained in the DMM (or the IMM, if applicable) for the classes of mail authorized to be mailed under the OP Mailing System agreement in order to qualify for any postage rates claimed on the postage statement.

2-3.3 **Verification and Acceptance at Your Plant — Plant Load**

In most cases, the Postal Service will verify and accept mailings you present under the OP Mailing System at your facility, and your OP Mailing System agreement will specify the conditions by which the Postal Service verifies and accepts them.

2-3.4 **Verification at Your Plant — PVDS**

In most cases, the Postal Service will verify mailings presented under the OP Mailing System at your facility, and your OP Mailing System agreement will specify the conditions by which the Postal Service verifies them.

2-3.5 **Verification and Acceptance at a Postal Facility — Non-PVDS**

In some instances it may be more beneficial for the Postal Service to verify and accept mailings you present under an OP Mailing System at a Postal Service facility rather than at your plant. For such cases, your OP Mailing System agreement will specify the Postal Service facility where you are to deposit mailings and the manner in which you must deposit them.

2-3.6 **Verification at a Postal Facility — PVDS**

In some instances it may be more beneficial for the Postal Service to verify mailings you present under an OP Mailing System at a Postal Service facility rather than at your plant. For such cases, your OP Mailing System agreement will specify the Postal Service facility where you are to deposit mailings and the manner in which you must deposit them.

2-4 **Permit Imprint Mailings**

2-4.1 **All Pieces in a Mailing Bear the Same Permit Imprint**

You can make OP mailings containing identical and/or nonidentical weight pieces, all bearing the same permit imprint, under the following conditions:

- a. The administering Post Office holds the authorization for the permit imprint.
- b. For a nonprofit rate mailing, the administering Post Office holds the non-profit authorization of the organization for which the mailing is made.
- c. You ensure all applicable annual mailing fees are paid at the administering Post Office.

2-4.2 **Different Pieces in a Mailing Bear Different Permit Imprints**

When specified in your OP Mailing System agreement, you can make OP mailings containing pieces that bear different permit imprints, under the following conditions:

- a. All pieces in the mailing bear a valid permit imprint or company imprint authorized by the administering Post Office.
- b. A listing of the permit imprint numbers and nonprofit rate mailers included in the mailing are submitted at or before the time of mailing to the on-site Postal Service representative when the mailers in the mailings vary from mailing to mailing. Otherwise, one list (updated as necessary) is required prior to the first mailing.
- c. Pieces claimed at the nonprofit rates have nonprofit authorization at the administering Post Office.
- d. Regular rate and nonprofit rate piece counts are reported on separate postage statements.
- e. You pay postage for the mailing through a single permit imprint advance deposit account maintained by your company.
- f. All records are available (as required by your OP Mailing System agreement).
- g. Standardized presort documentation is capable of identifying, by a version code, each permit in the mailing.
- h. You ensure all applicable annual mailing fees are paid at the administering Post Office.

2-5 **Space Requirements for Detached Mail Unit**

If mailings are verified and accepted at your mailing plant, you must provide the Postal Service with a detached mail unit (DMU). A DMU is an office or work area located in your plant where postal acceptance employees can efficiently perform postal verification and acceptance procedures. The district manager will provide you with the specifications required to be in accordance with Postal Service policy.

2-6 **Mailing Production Schedules**

Each Friday, or on a schedule approved by the administering Post Office, you are required to provide the acceptance unit a tentative schedule of mailings that will be in production during the next week. You must provide the administering Post Office with any changes to this production schedule as they become known. You must identify each mailing or mailing segment, and you must indicate how and where it will be staged for verification. For continuous production mailings, you must also identify a loading schedule.

2-7 Submitting Mailings

You must provide the postage statement and primary record for each mailing or mailing segment prior to verification and acceptance by the postal acceptance employee. If you stage mailings or mailing segments prior to loading, you must physically separate them from other mailings so that postal acceptance employees can easily locate and verify each mailing.

2-8 Submitting Postage Statements

Unless otherwise authorized by the BMS manager (e.g., for Drop Shipment Management System (DSMS), preloads, cycle mailings, etc.), you must submit a completed postage statement for each mailing, or a consolidated postage statement for PVDS shipments at or before the time of mailing.

Note — Combined Permit Imprint Mailings. If your OP Mailing System agreement includes a provision for combining identical or nonidentical weight pieces bearing different permit imprints as part of the same mailing, the Postal Service considers that mailing to be a single job, and the requirements for submitting postage statements apply. The Postal Service will deduct postage for combined permit imprint mailings prepared in this manner from a single advance deposit account that you maintain.

It is your responsibility to ensure that sufficient funds are in the account to cover postage for all mailings.

3 Mailer Responsibilities: Getting Started

3-1 Meeting with Postal Service Representatives

If you are interested in applying for authorization to mail under an OP Mailing System, you should arrange a meeting at your plant with the postmaster of the administering Post Office and the district Manager of Business Mail Entry (MBME) to discuss the classes/subclasses of mail you are interested in submitting under an OP Mailing System. You might need to provide the postmaster and MBME a tour of your facility to help them understand your production and mailing operations.

3-2 Applying for Optional Procedure

To apply for the OP Mailing System, complete PS Form 3626, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application*, (see Appendix A) and submit the following with the application:

- a. A sample job jacket containing all the records that you will use in an audit trail to support the postage statements submitted with mailings entered under the proposed OP Mailing System agreement.
- b. A detailed written description of how the proposed audit trail records support the number and presort rate level of pieces mailed as claimed on the postage statements.
- c. A detailed flowchart of your production operation that supports the detailed written description.
- d. A detailed description of your internal quality control program and the forms used to document your quality control procedures.
- e. A detailed description of how immediate and non-immediate reordered pieces are handled and documented (needed only if you use inkjet technology to apply addresses to Standard Mail flat-size pieces).

Submit the completed and signed application and supporting documents to the postmaster of the administering Post Office.

3-3 Authorization Process

3-3.1 Application Processing

Your local postmaster will forward the application and supporting documentation to the BMS manager through the district manager. The BMS manager will review the application and supporting documentation and conduct an on-site review of your mailing operation to determine whether to approve an OP Mailing System authorization.

3-3.2 Approval of Application and Written Agreement

If the BMS manager approves your application, the BMS manager will prepare a written agreement between your firm and the Postal Service. This agreement will specify the types of mailings you may enter under the OP Mailing System, the audit trail records your firm must maintain, procedures for documenting and paying for inkjet reorders (if applicable), and your responsibilities and those of the Postal Service.

You may not mail under the OP Mailing System until all participants have signed the OP Mailing System agreement.

3-3.3 Denial of Application

If the BMS manager denies your application, the denial is effective 15 days from your receipt of the notice unless within that time you file a written appeal with the BMS manager. Your written appeal must present additional information explaining why your OP application should be approved. If the BMS manager still finds that the application should be denied, he or she will forward your file to the Business Mail Acceptance (BMA) manager at Postal Service Headquarters, who will issue a final Postal Service decision to you.

4 Mailer Responsibilities: Agreement and Authorization Status

4-1 Changes

If you wish to change the method of presenting or documenting mailings from that specified in the OP Mailing System agreement, or if you find that you can no longer comply with the standards that apply to your OP authorization, you must immediately notify the BMS manager, through the postmaster of the administering Post Office. The BMS manager will notify you if the OP Mailing System agreement should be modified and continued, or whether it should be canceled.

If you are requesting additional options or modifications, you must submit complete documentation supporting each requested change or modification to the BMS manager. You cannot make changes to the OP Mailing System agreement until the BMS manager has notified you in writing that the changes/modifications have been approved.

4-2 Suspension

The BMS manager may suspend an OP Mailing System at any time, pending review, when there is an indication that postal revenue is not fully protected. The BMS manager will notify you in writing of the decision to suspend the OP Mailing System. The suspension becomes effective upon your receipt of the notification.

4-3 Cancellation

4-3.1 Mailer Cancellation

You may cancel an OP Mailing System authorization at any time by written notice to the administering Post Office.

4-3.2 **Postal Service Cancellation**

The Postal Service may cancel an OP Mailing System authorization if:

- a. You provide misleading or incorrect data to avoid paying postage, make no mailings under the OP agreement during any consecutive 12-month period, or routinely fail to comply with the OP Mailing System.
- b. The 2-year renewal audit reveals that the OP Mailing System agreement should no longer be authorized or you are not complying with the agreement.

4-3.3 **Cancellation Notice and Appeal**

The cancellation takes effect 15 days from your receipt of the notice unless within that time you file a written appeal with the BMS manager. Your written appeal must present additional information explaining why your OP authorization should not be canceled. If the BMS manager denies the appeal, he or she will forward your file to the BMA manager at Postal Service Headquarters, who will issue a final Postal Service decision to you.

4-4 **Renewal**

Within 60 days of the 2-year renewal date of the OP Mailing System agreement, you will receive notification that the BMS manager, or designee, will conduct a renewal review to determine whether your OP Mailing System agreement continues to be justified and whether it should be renewed. If the BMS manager determines to renew the OP Mailing System agreement, the BMS manager will prepare and sign a new agreement or a 2-year renewal addendum to the original OP Mailing System agreement. The BMS manager will send the new agreement or addendum to the district manager, who will ensure that each participant in the OP Mailing System agreement signs it and receives a copy.

5 Mailer Responsibilities: Postage Refund Requests

5-1 General

If you discover that you have overpaid postage and wish to file a request for a postage refund, you must submit a written refund request to the postmaster of the administering Post Office. Your request must include the following:

- a. A clear explanation of the reasons for requesting the refund.
- b. Copies of all documentation supporting your request.
- c. If the overpayment was your fault, a description of the corrective actions you have taken to ensure that the discrepancy does not recur.

The postmaster of the administering Post Office will forward all refund requests to the BMS manager.

5-2 Refund Resulting From Postal Service Error

If the BMS manager determines that your refund request is valid and that you paid excess postage because of an error by the Postal Service, the BMS manager will authorize a refund, in accordance with DMM standards, for the total amount of postage overpaid. The BMS manager will notify the postmaster of the administering Post Office of the postage refund due, and the postmaster will issue the refund to you.

5-3 Refund Resulting From Mailer Error

If the BMS manager determines your refund request is valid and that you paid excess postage because of an error in your mailing operation, the BMS manager will authorize a refund. However, when a system failure in your operation causes a postage refund request to be processed, your company must pay the administrative costs (work hours) for processing the refund request and any associated costs (travel expenses) incurred for processing the request. The BMS manager will determine the extent of those costs and will notify the postmaster of the administering Post Office of the total amount

due to cover administrative processing costs. The postmaster will notify you of the amount due.

Before the postmaster can process your refund, you must pay this amount to the postmaster or authorize, in writing, its deduction from the amount of the refund. The postmaster *will not* process the refund if you refuse to pay the administrative costs or fail to notify the postmaster that the costs are to be deducted from the refund amount.

Because of the error that occurred in your mailing operation, the BMS manager will also determine whether the OP agreement should be continued. If the BMS manager determines that the agreement will not be continued, the BMS manager notify you — in writing, by certified mail, return receipt requested — that the OP agreement will be suspended effective with receipt of the notification.

6 USPS Responsibilities: Administering Post Office

6-1 Definition

The Post Office serving the mailer's plant is considered the administering Post Office.

6-2 Responsibilities

The postmaster of the administering Post Office has the following responsibilities:

- a. Review OP applications.
- b. Ensure postal acceptance employees are properly trained.
- c. Ensure employees are properly performing verification and acceptance procedures.
- d. Review mailer's running summaries.
- e. Review postage refund requests.
- f. Ensure uniform enforcement of presort and mail makeup requirements for mailings claimed at presort rates.
- g. Refuse to make *any* exceptions to mail preparation standards in the DMM without specific approval from the BMS manager.
- h. Refuse to authorize *any* waivers to the corrective actions required for the disposition of improperly prepared mailings without specific approval from the BMS manager.

6-3 Processing Application Requests

The postmaster of the administering Post Office reviews the OP application to ensure that the mailer has completed it properly and has submitted the necessary supporting documentation. If the postmaster determines that the application is complete, he or she will complete Part I of PS Form 3632, *Optional Procedure (OP) Review Application Checklist*, (see Appendix C) and forward the application and checklist to the district manager.

6-4 Detached Mail Unit

In most cases, postal acceptance employees from the administering Post Office will verify and accept mailings submitted under an OP Mailing System at the mailer's plant. The mailer must establish a detached mail unit (DMU) as described in Chapter 2.

The postmaster of the administering Post Office must ensure that the postal acceptance employees at the DMU have a signed copy of the mailer's current OP Mailing System agreement and current Postal Service publications, including the DMM, the IMM (if necessary), and a copy of the latest edition of the *Postal Bulletin*.

6-5 Scales

Although postal acceptance employees will no longer weigh the mail in bulk to determine whether the pieces and weights reported by the mailer on postage statements submitted for OP mailings are accurate, postal acceptance employees must continue to determine the weight of a single piece. Therefore, the DMU must have a 25-pound electronic scale, which the postmaster of the administering Post Office can provide through the normal procurement process. Each day, a postal acceptance employee must test the scale for accuracy with standard test weights before use. Also, at least once each year, the postmaster of the administering Post Office must ensure that an accredited weights and measures firm calibrates the scale.

6-6 Verification and Acceptance Procedures

6-6.1 Postal Acceptance Employees

The postal acceptance employees (whether at the DMU or at the administering Post Office — see 2-3) must perform the following verification and acceptance procedures:

- a. Accept mailings in accordance with the procedures specified in this publication and Handbook DM-109, *Business Mail Acceptance*.
- b. Verify mailings for presort and mail makeup in accordance with procedures specified in Handbook DM-109.
- c. Test the 25-pound electronic scale for accuracy with standard test weights before use each day and maintain a log for recording the daily test. The log must include the weight obtained when testing the scale, the date the scale was tested, and the initials of the postal acceptance employee who performed the test.
- d. Verify the single-piece weight. For identical weight mailings, verify the weight by randomly selecting and weighing 10 pieces from the actual mailing and dividing this weight by 10. For nonidentical weight mailings, verify the weight of a single piece for each version. This is especially

important for First-Class Mail pieces that weigh more than 1 ounce and for Standard Mail and Package Services mailings of heavy-weight pieces that are (or may be) subject to postage computed at the piece and pound rate. The postal acceptance employee may use other methods of obtaining verified piece weights (such as verifying mailpiece components or inserts), but only when specifically authorized by the BMS manager.

- e. Review for accuracy the information provided on the postage statement against the primary mailing record (referred to as a primary record) specified in the OP Mailing System agreement. If the information is accurate, initial and date the primary record to indicate that it agrees with the postage statement. If the information is not accurate, return the primary record and postage statement to the mailer for correction.
- f. For mailings of nonidentical-weight pieces, annotate “nonidentical” (or “N/I”) in the block identified as “Weight of a Single Piece” in the Postal Service portion of the postage statement.
- g. Endorse the postage statement “Not weighed in bulk—Mailed under DMM P920.”
- h. Sign and date-stamp the postage statement.
- i. Maintain PS Form 3631, *Optional Procedure (OP) Summary of Mailings*, (see Appendix B) when the mailer’s plant accepts OP mailings but does not have a postal computer system to bill postage statements to the mailer’s accounts. Complete a line item on the running summary for each postage statement received for billing. Initial and date each line item entry.
- j. Once each week, compare the mailer’s running summary for all mailings against the Post Office’s running summary of mailings and either each billed postage statement or PS Form 3609, *Record of Permit Imprint Mailings*, to determine whether all postage statements were received and billed correctly. Initial and date the running summaries to show the date that the comparison was performed and that the postage statements were billed correctly. If there are any postage differences or uncharged postage statements, notify the mailer for immediate corrective action.

6-6.2 Postmaster

The postmaster of the administering Post Office must ensure the following:

- a. The mailer submits postage statements at or before the time of mailing.
- b. Postal acceptance employees correctly compare postage statements against primary records, initial and date primary records, and return the primary records to the mailer for inclusion in the job jacket.
- c. Postal acceptance employees accept mailings consisting of pieces bearing different permit imprint numbers *only* when specified in the mailer’s OP Mailing System agreement.
- d. Postal acceptance employees deduct postage on a daily basis from the appropriate advance deposit account.

6-7 Record Maintenance

The administering Post Office must maintain (at either the Post Office or the DMU) a customer file for each authorized OP mailer. The file must contain the following:

- a. A current copy of the OP Mailing System agreement, including any addenda.
- b. Plant load authorization (if applicable).
- c. Any other additional authorizations.

6-8 Notification of Changes in Mailer's Operation

The administering Post Office must immediately notify the MBME if, during the life of the OP Mailing System agreement, it becomes aware of either of the following situations:

- a. The mailer has changed the method of presenting or documenting mailings from that specified in the OP Mailing System agreement.
- b. The mailer has failed at any time to comply with the standards contained in the DMM or the OP Mailing System agreement.

6-9 Postage Refund Requests

See Chapter 9.

7 USPS Responsibilities: District

7-1 Responsibilities

The district manager has the following responsibilities:

- a. Review OP applications.
- b. Ensure that the MBME performs semi-annual reviews.
- c. Ensure that the MBME assists the BMS analyst in conducting renewal reviews.
- d. Review postage refund requests.

In addition, if the district is the Post Office serving the mailer's plant, it is considered to be the Post Office administering the OP Mailing System agreement and, therefore, must assume the responsibilities as the administering Post Office, which are contained in Chapter 6.

7-2 Processing Application Requests

The district manager reviews the application and supporting documentation for completeness. If the application is incomplete, the district manager returns it to the administering Post Office with instructions for proper completion and to obtain necessary information.

If the application is complete, the MBME must conduct an on-site review of the mailer's operation. In the review, the MBME uses PS Form 3633, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Review*, (see Appendix D) to confirm that the documentation provided by the mailer with the application accurately reflects the mailer's operation and that the postmaster of the administering Post Office clearly understands his/her responsibilities under the proposed OP Mailing System. In addition to reviewing the sample job jacket submitted by the mailer with the application, the MBME should select and review a second sample job jacket.

Based on the results of the on-site review and the accuracy of the information on the application and the acceptability of the audit trail, the district manager completes Part II of PS Form 3632, *Optional Procedure (OP) Review Application Checklist*, (see Appendix C) and then forwards the completed application, all supporting documentation, and the checklist with a recommendation for approval or denial to the BMS manager.

7-3 On-Site Reviews of Approved Systems

7-3.1 **Semi-Annual Review**

The MBME must conduct semi-annual on-site reviews of the mailer and administering Post Office's operations to verify that the OP Mailing System agreement is properly administered in accordance with the provisions of the DMM, this publication, and the OP Mailing System agreement. As part of the review, the MBME must complete PS Form 3633, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Review*, (see Appendix D). The review must include an in-depth examination of all records required in the OP Mailing System agreement for the number of jobs that have been selected, based on PS Form 3634, *Optional Procedure (OP) Job Review Frequency Guide* (see Appendix E).

The MBME will retain the review checklist and any additional documentation and/or correspondence associated with the review for 1 year. The MBME must submit a copy of the checklist to the local BMS analyst after the review is completed.

7-3.2 **Annual Reviews and Renewal**

The MBME will assist the BMS analyst in conducting an annual on-site review of the OP Mailing System to determine whether the OP Mailing System agreement continues to be justified and, if the agreement is subject to renewal, whether it should be renewed. Because the MBME is assisting in this review, it will qualify as a semi-annual review for the district.

7-4 Notification of Changes in Mailer's Operation

The district must immediately notify the BMS manager if, during the life of the OP Mailing System agreement, it becomes aware of either of the following situations:

- a. The mailer has changed the method of presenting or documenting mailings from that specified in the OP Mailing System agreement.
- b. The mailer has failed at any time to comply with the standards contained in the DMM or the OP Mailing System agreement.

7-5 Postage Refund Requests

See Chapter 9.

8 USPS Responsibilities: Business Mailer Support

8-1 Responsibilities

The Business Mailer Support (BMS) manager has the following responsibilities:

- a. Authorize new OP Mailing System agreements.
- b. Ensure annual reviews are completed.
- c. Authorize the renewal of OP Mailing System agreements.
- d. Approve or deny postage refund requests.
- e. Suspend or cancel OP Mailing System agreements.
- f. Maintain a current copy of each approved record of mailers authorized to mail under an OP Mailing System.

8-2 Processing Application Requests

The BMS manager will decide to approve or deny the application within 90 days of receipt of a complete PS Form 3626 (see Appendix A), which includes all supporting documentation.

The BMS manager reviews the application and supporting documentation for completeness and accuracy. If any of the information is incomplete or if information is missing, the manager notifies the district manager and requests the necessary additional information.

If the review indicates the information is adequate, the BMS analyst will conduct an on-site review of the mailer's operation. (See 8-5.1.)

8-3 Approved Applications

If the BMS manager decides to approve the application, the BMS manager will prepare the OP Mailing System agreement and forward it to the district manager, who will sign the agreement and obtain the signatures of the mailer and the postmaster of the administering Post Office. See Appendix F for a sample basic agreement. After the mailer and the postmaster sign the

agreement, the district manager will return it to the BMS manager for signature. The BMS manager will provide a copy of the signed OP Mailing System agreement to the MBME for distribution to all participants.

8-4 Applications That Are Denied

If the BMS manager decides to deny the application, the BMS manager will notify the mailer in writing. The denial is effective 15 days from the mailer's receipt of the notice unless within that time the mailer files a written appeal with the BMS manager. In the written appeal, the mailer must present additional information explaining why the OP application should be approved. If the BMS manager still finds that the application should be denied, he or she will forward the file to the BMA manager at Postal Service Headquarters, who will issue a final Postal Service decision to the mailer.

8-5 On-Site Reviews

8-5.1 New Application — Review

When a mailer submits PS Form 3626 (see Appendix A) and the BMS manager's review indicates that the information provided is adequate, the BMS analyst must conduct an on-site review of the mailer's operation before the application can be approved. The BMS analyst will use PS Form 3633 (see Appendix D) to verify the following:

- a. The mailer and the administering Post Office provide adequate revenue protection.
- b. The administering Post Office has established sound acceptance procedures.
- c. The administering Post Office has qualified personnel and resources available to administer the proposed OP Mailing System.

8-5.2 New Agreement

Between the first 30 and 90 days of operation under a new OP Mailing System agreement, the BMS analyst, in conjunction with the MBME, must conduct an on-site review using PS Form 3633 (see Appendix D). The review has the following purposes:

- a. Verify that the postal acceptance employees follow established procedures for acceptance and verification.
- b. Confirm that the OP Mailing System agreement is justified and should be continued.
- c. Determine whether the mailer properly administers quality control procedures.
- d. Determine whether the quality control procedures adequately measure the quality of mail preparation and accuracy of postage payment.

8-5.3 **Annual Reviews and Renewal**

Once each year, the BMS analyst, in conjunction with the MBME, will conduct an on-site review of the OP Mailing System to determine whether the OP Mailing System agreement continues to be justified and, if the agreement is subject to renewal, whether it should be renewed. The purpose of this review is the same as described in 8-5.2. The BMS analyst must complete PS Form 3633 (see Appendix D) during the review. The review must include an in-depth examination of all records required in the OP Mailing System agreement for the number of jobs that have been selected, based on PS Form 3634 (see Appendix E).

8-5.4 **Agreement Renewal**

If the BMS manager determines that the OP Mailing System agreement should be renewed, the BMS manager will prepare and sign either a new agreement or a 2-year renewal addendum to the original OP Mailing System agreement, and then have the mailer, the district manager, and the postmaster of the administering Post Office sign the new agreement or addendum.

8-5.5 **Agreement Cancellation**

If, upon completion of the 2-year renewal review, the BMS manager determines that the OP Mailing System agreement should not be renewed, the BMS manager will notify the mailer in writing. The cancellation takes effect 15 days from the mailer's receipt of the notice unless within that time the mailer files a written appeal with the BMS manager. In the written appeal, the mailer must present additional information explaining why the OP authorization should not be canceled. If the BMS manager denies the appeal, he or she will forward the file to the BMA manager at Postal Service Headquarters, who will issue a final Postal Service decision to the mailer.

8-6 **Administrative Review of Semi-Annual District Review**

The BMS analyst will conduct an administrative review of the copy of PS Form 3633 (see Appendix D) completed by the MBME during the MBME's semi-annual review, to confirm the following:

- a. The MBME completed the semi-annual review.
- b. The Post Office serving the mailer's plant is properly administering the OP Mailing System agreement.
- c. The mailer continues to comply with the requirements of the OP Mailing System agreement.

8-7 Modification of OP Mailing System and Agreement

If the BMS manager determines that an OP Mailing System agreement should be modified, the BMS manager must prepare an addendum to the agreement and have the mailer, the district manager, and the postmaster of the administering Post Office sign the addendum to the OP Mailing System agreement.

8-8 Suspension or Cancellation of OP Mailing System and Agreement

8-8.1 **Suspension**

If the BMS manager decides to suspend the OP Mailing System agreement, the BMS manager will notify the mailer — in writing, by certified mail, return receipt requested. The suspension becomes effective upon the mailer's receipt of the notification.

8-8.2 **Cancellation**

If the BMS manager decides to cancel the OP Mailing System agreement, the BMS manager will notify the mailer — in writing, by certified mail, return receipt requested. The cancellation takes effect 15 days from the mailer's receipt of the notice unless within that time the mailer files a written appeal with the BMS manager. In the written appeal, the mailer must present additional information explaining why the OP authorization should not be canceled. If the BMS manager denies the appeal, he or she will forward the file to the BMA manager at Postal Service Headquarters, who will issue a final Postal Service decision to the mailer.

8-9 Postage Refund Requests

See Chapter 9.

9 USPS Responsibilities: Processing Postage Refund Requests

9-1 General

Only the BMS manager may authorize OP postage refunds.

Mailers must submit all requests for postage refunds relating to OP mailings with complete details to the BMS manager through the MBME.

The BMS manager may authorize a refund in accordance with the standards in the DMM if the mailer is able to establish the validity of the amount being requested.

If a mailer requests a refund after the Postal Service has accepted a mailing at the presort level claimed on the postage statement, the mailer must provide sufficient documentation that the mailer actually prepared and submitted the mailpieces in such a manner as to qualify for any discounts claimed in the refund request.

9-2 Processing Postage Refunds

9-2.1 Administering Post Office

Upon receipt of a mailer's written postage refund request and supporting documentation, the postmaster of the administering Post Office must conduct an in-depth examination of the mailing or job in question. The postmaster must submit the results of the review, including all records and working papers, along with the postage refund request and supporting documentation, to the MBME, who will examine the file for completeness and then forward it to the BMS manager.

The postmaster of the administering Post Office must include a recommendation to approve or deny the mailer's request. If the discrepancy could have been detected during normal examinations, the postmaster must include an explanation as to why the discrepancy was not discovered and what corrective action has been taken to ensure that it does not recur.

When a request for a refund is a result of an error by the mailer, the postmaster of the administering Post Office must submit the following to the BMS manager:

- a. Documentation for the amount of time spent reviewing and processing the application and supporting documentation for the refund as well as any associated travel expenses incurred.
- b. The names of individuals processing the application and performing the in-depth examination, their titles and pay levels, and the amount of time spent by each during the review.
- c. The recommendation to approve or deny the refund request.

If the BMS manager approves the mailer's application for refund, the postmaster of the administering Post Office will process the refund under the direction of the BMS manager.

9-2.2 **District Office**

Upon receiving a mailer's postage refund request and supporting documentation from the administering Post Office, the MBME will review the file for completeness. If the application is complete, the MBME will send it to the BMS manager with a recommendation to approve or deny the request.

When a request for a refund is a result of an error by the mailer, the MBME must submit the following to the BMS manager:

- a. Documentation for the amount of time spent reviewing and processing the application and supporting documentation for the refund as well as any associated travel expenses incurred.
- b. The names of individuals processing the application and performing the in-depth examination, their titles and pay levels, and the amount of time spent by each during the review.
- c. The recommendation to approve or deny the refund request.

If the application is incomplete, the MBME will return it to the postmaster of the administering Post Office with instructions for proper completion and to obtain necessary information.

At the request of the BMS manager, the MBME will assist the postmaster of the administering Post Office in conducting an on-site review in conjunction with the processing of the refund request.

9-2.3 **Business Mailer Support**

Upon receiving a mailer's postage refund request and supporting documentation from the district, the BMS manager will review the entire file.

9-3 Refund Resulting From Postal Service Error

If the BMS manager determines that the refund request is valid and that the mailer paid excess postage because of an error by the Postal Service, the BMS manager will authorize a refund in the full amount of the overpayment.

9-4 Refund Resulting From Mailer Error

If the BMS manager determines that the refund request is valid and that the mailer paid excess postage because of an error by the mailer, the BMS manager will authorize a refund for the overpayment under the following procedures:

- a. The BMS manager will document the total administrative costs (work hours) and any associated costs (travel expenses) incurred in processing the refund request.
- b. When authorizing the postmaster of the administering Post Office to issue a refund of postage, the BMS manager will notify the postmaster of the administrative charges to collect from the mailer for processing the postage refund request. The BMS manager will authorize the postmaster to refund the postage only after the mailer has furnished payment for the administrative costs or agreed in writing to deduct the costs from the amount of the refund.
- c. The postmaster of the administering Post Office *will not* process the refund if the mailer refuses to pay the administrative costs or fails to notify the postmaster that the costs are to be deducted from the refund amount.
- d. Because of the error that occurred in the mailer's operation, the BMS manager will also determine whether the OP agreement should be continued. If the BMS manager determines that the agreement will not be continued, the BMS manager will notify the mailer — in writing, by certified mail, return receipt requested — that the OP agreement will be suspended effective with receipt of the notification.

9-5 Denying a Refund

If the BMS manager decides to deny the refund, the BMS manager will notify the mailer, the postmaster of the administering Post Office, and the district manager of the decision in writing.

The mailer may submit a written appeal within 15 days of receiving the denial letter. In the written appeal, the mailer must include additional information to support the postage refund request. The mailer must send the written appeal to the BMS manager, who will forward it, along with the original file and any additional information, to the BMA manager, Postal Service Headquarters, who will issue the final decision.

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Appendix A

PS Form 3626, Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application

This appendix presents a copy of PS Form 3626, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application*.

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Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application

Before completing this application, review *Domestic Mail Manual (DMM) P920, Optional Procedure Mailing System*, and Publication 407, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System*.

Type or print legibly

I - Contact Person Information		II - Address Information	
Name		Company Name	
Title		Address (Number, street, ste., city, state, ZIP + 4)	
Telephone Number <i>(Include area code)</i>			
Fax Number <i>(Include area code)</i>			
Email Address		Signature	Date Signed

III - Mailer/Applicant Profile

Complete the hours of operation, by day, as applicable:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Thursday	Friday	Saturday	

Software

Is your address matching software CASS certified? Yes No

Is your presort software PAVE certified? Yes No

Hardware (Check all that apply)

OCR BCS MLOCR Platform Scale Electronic Sampling Scale

Other (List):

Program Participation (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plant-Load | <input type="checkbox"/> Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Address Change Service (ACS) | <input type="checkbox"/> Computerized Delivery Sequence (CDS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FASTforward | <input type="checkbox"/> Drop-Shipment Management System (DSMS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mail Preparation Total Quality Management Program (MPTQM) | <input type="checkbox"/> PostalOne! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

Address Technology (Check all that apply)

Inkjet Computerized Paper/Self-Adhesive Labels

Other (List):

Mail Description (Check all that apply)

Classes of Mail: First-Class® Mail Standard Mail Package Services International Mail

Processing Categories: Letters Flats Machinable Parcels Irregular Parcels

General

Will mailings be verified and/or accepted at your facility? Yes No

Will mailings be verified and/or accepted at the administering Post Office? Yes No

Is your firm authorized to commingle multiple permit imprints in a single mailing? Yes No

If YES, enter the unique permit imprint account number for commingled permit mailings:

Audit Trail Documentation

List the records/documents your company routinely uses that will support your Optional Procedure audit trail. At a minimum, those records must include:

- Production Records (If your company produces the product being mailed)
- Standardized Presort Documentation
- CASS Report (If applicable)
- Customer Bill/Invoice
- Inkjet Reorder Report (Only for Standard Mail flat-size mailings in which the address is applied by inkjet)
- Spoiled or Damaged Report (For spoiled or damaged addressed mailpieces)
- Quality Control Documentation

NOTE: Additional documentation may be required, depending on the type of mail presented under Optional Procedure.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Submitting the Application

In support of this application you must submit the following:

1. A detailed flow chart of your production operation.
2. Detailed quality control procedures.
3. A sample job jacket including:
 - a. All of the records in the proposed audit trail for the sample job.
 - b. A sample of a mailpiece from the sample job.
 - c. A copy or copies of postage statement(s) for the sample job.
4. A description of each audit trail record/document.

Submit the application and all supporting documentation to the postmaster serving your plant.

Postmaster

Complete PS Form 3632, *Optional Procedural (OP) Application Review Checklist*, for this mailer application and sign and date below with your recommendation for approval or denial.

- Recommend Approval
- Recommend Denial (*State reasons*):

Signature (*Administering Postmaster or designated representative*) _____ Date Signed _____

District Manager

Review the Application Checklist submitted with this application and sign and date below with your recommendation for approval or denial.

- Recommend Approval
- Recommend Denial (*State reasons*):

Signature (*District Manager or designated representative*) _____ Date Signed _____

Appendix B

PS Form 3631, Optional Procedure (OP) Summary of Mailings

This appendix presents a copy of PS Form 3631, *Optional Procedure (OP) Summary of Mailings*.

Appendix C

PS Form 3632, Optional Procedure (OP) Review Application Checklist

This appendix presents a copy of PS Form 3632, *Optional Procedure (OP) Review Application Checklist*.

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**Optional Procedure (OP) Application
Review Checklist**

I - Administering Post Office (Complete the following)

Postmaster's Name	Address (Number, street, ste., city, state, ZIP + 4)
Telephone Number (Include area code)	Date

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Is the mailer (applicant) an approved plant-load mailer? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Does the mailer hold an active permit imprint account at your Post Office?
If YES, list the permit imprint number(s): _____
If YES, is it a CAPS account? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If the mailer has an active permit imprint account, are all applicable annual mailing fees paid? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Are Business Mail Entry Unit (BMEU) clerks available to verify and accept mail at the mailer's plant during the mailer's hours of mailing operations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. List any relevant clerk training that may be necessary: | | |
| | | |
| 5. Is there a history of problems with mailings presented by this mailer (presort errors, exception requests, piece count discrepancies, etc.)?
If YES, explain: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | |
| 6. Review the mailer's application to ensure the application is complete and all documentation to support the application (as stated on PS Form 3626, <i>Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application</i>) is included. | | |
| 7. Sign and date the application and include your recommendation for approval or denial. | | |

Forward the entire application package & this checklist to the District Manager

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II - District

1. The Manager, Business Mail Entry (MBME) must review the mailer's application and supporting documentation to ensure the application is complete and includes all documentation to support the application (as stated in PS Form 3626, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Application*).
2. If the application is incomplete, the MBME must return it to the administering Post Office with instructions for proper completion. Or the MBME may contact the mailer (applicant) to obtain any additional required information/documentation.
3. If the application is complete, the MBME must conduct an on-site review of the mailer's operation. (See Publication 407, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System*, Chapter 7.)
4. Based on the results of the on-site review and the accuracy of the information on the application and the acceptability of the audit trail, the MBME must sign and date the application and include a recommendation for approval or denial.

Forward the entire application package, including the review worksheet completed by the MBME, and this checklist, to the Manager, Business Mailer Support.

Appendix D

PS Form 3633, Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Review

This appendix presents a copy of PS Form 3633, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Review*.

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Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Review

I - Mailer and Post Office Notification

Contact the mailer and the administering Post Office to arrange for a mutually agreeable date or date(s). You may notify the postmaster in writing of the review date and include a checklist of all the documents you will require to complete the review. The District or Business Mailer Support representative performing the audit will determine the number of jobs to be audited based on PS Form 3634, *Optional Procedural (OP) Job Review Frequency Guide*, contained in Publication 407, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System*. The postmaster will select the jobs to be audited and request that the mailer provide complete job jackets for those mailings on the day of the review. The jobs selected should include at least one PVDS mailing, one automated rate mailing (if applicable), and one mailing from each audit trail (if applicable).

Date Mailer Notified	Date Post Office Notified
Mailer's Name	Mailer Contact Person
Address (Number, street, ste., city, state, ZIP+4)	Mailer Telephone Number (Include area code)
	Date of Review

II - Post Office Review

This part of the review may be completed before or after the job jacket records review.

A. Ensure the following records are on file and current:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | OP agreement, including any addenda. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Plant-load application and service agreement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Additional authorizations. |

Comments:

B. Review refund requests and exception requests:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a pattern of repeat instances or a pattern of frequency that requires special attention from the mailer? |

Comments:

C. Review the most recent district semi-annual review.

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Were discrepancies noted that required action by the mailer or the administering Post Office? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | If so, has the mailer/Post Office responded satisfactorily to discrepancies noted?
<i>(Determine if additional action is required.)</i> |

Comments:

III- Opening Conference

The purpose of the opening conference is to review the OP agreement with the mailer and to discuss any other current issues involving the mailer's agreement. If this is your first visit, it is important that you tour the plant with the mailer, to learn how the plant operates. You will need to explain the intent of the review and discuss the following, if applicable.

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are there changes in operational procedures? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are there changes in job jackets records? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are there changes in staffing (i.e., in key contacts for Postal Service personnel)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are there changes in scheduling? |

If "Yes" was checked for any of the above, list the specific changes on the "Comments" section on the next page:

III - Opening Conference (Continued)

Comments:

IV - Job Jacket Reviews

- A. Review the job jackets selected by the Post Office to determine if all documents required in the OP agreement are available and properly labeled (including sample pieces).
- B. List the job numbers reviewed:

C. Review the postage statements in each job jacket for the following:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are they completed accurately by the mailer and the Post Office, including correct formats (computer generated), rates, endorsements, postage computation, certification clauses, and round-dating?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do they contain only mailings for classes authorized under the OP agreement?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do all mailings appear on the mailer's PS Form 3631, <i>Optional Procedure (OP) Summary of Mailings</i> ?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all postage statements been posted to either PS Form 3609, <i>Record of Permit Imprint Mailings</i> , or to the equivalent PERMIT System report?

Comments:

- D. Perform an in-depth review of the job jackets selected. On a separate sheet of paper, or customized worksheet, list all audit trail records required by the OP agreement and any other records provided. List the records in a logical sequence and indicate for each, where appropriate, the figure(s) by rate category that support the mailing. Explain any discrepancies or missing records. Determine the following during the review of job jackets:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the job jacket support the piece counts and postage claimed on the postage statements?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are the documents in the job jacket sufficient to support the audit trail?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are all job jacket records available and properly labeled?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are the primary records round-dated and initialed by the DMU clerk?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Was spoilage properly documented and debited, if applicable?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were inkjet reorder reports properly maintained, and additional postage collected, if applicable?

Comments:

- E. Review the mailer's PS Form 3631 for the following:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the record, at a minimum, contain the date of mailing, job number, postage statement sequence number, permit number, single piece weight (or range of weights for non-identical weight pieces), total pieces, and total postage?

Comments:

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the administering Post Office ensure that a Postal Service employee compares the mailer's PS Form 3631 against each billed postage statement or PS Form 3609 or PERMIT system equivalent at least once a week to ensure correct billing? (This employee must document the comparison by initialing and dating the applicable page(s) or entries.)

Comments:

IV - Job Jacket Reviews (Continued)

F. Review the mailer's quality control (QC) records. The QC records should include records for mailpiece production, presort, and job jacket record retention.

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the mailer in compliance with the terms of the agreement? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do the records indicate errors found and corrective action taken? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the QC procedures adequate? |

Comments:

V - DMU Responsibilities/Operations

Review the DMU and plant operation, paying specific attention to the areas listed below.

A. Observe the overall operation to determine compliance with detached mail unit requirements in Handbook DM-109, *Business Mail*

Acceptance:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the location of the DMU and space provided safe and adequate for effective acceptance procedures? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can the DMU be secured when clerks are not present? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has the mailer provided an adequate staging area for identification of mailings and mail flow from production to loading? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have the mailer and postal scales been certified as required and tested daily? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does the DMU have all postal manuals and bulletins pertinent to its duties and responsibilities? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is adequate security provided for accountable items? |

Comments:

B. Observe the DMU clerks' acceptance and verification procedures to ensure the following:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are mailings accepted in compliance with standards in Handbook DM-109, <i>Business Mail Acceptance</i> , including the "one pass/two pass" procedures? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are presort verifications properly performed and documented? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are samplings consistent with the size of the mailings verified? |

Comments:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are mailings presented in accordance with the terms of the OP agreement? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are disqualified and bypass mailings adequately documented and problem areas corrected? |

Comments:

C. Review, at a minimum, three live mailings (if available) for the following:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the mailpiece design and content correct for the class of mail and the rate claimed? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the mail properly prepared (including sortation, labeling, and presentation), and is the appropriate equipment used? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Was the documentation presented at or before the mailing, and is it accurate? |

Comments:

D. Review procedures for loading and dispatching mail to determine the following:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do DMU clerks observe the loading when required (plant-load)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are trailers properly dispatched, including correct use of revenue protection documents? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | For PVDS mailings, are the PS Forms 8125 properly completed? |

Comments:

V - DMU Responsibilities/Operations (Continued)

E. Based on your review, determine whether the DMU staff is adequate and properly trained as follows:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes | No | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does the mailer provide a production schedule that allows the administering Post Office to effectively meet the mailer's needs? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does the mailer provide sufficient resources to move mail, load vehicles, and respond to DMU questions? |

Comments:

F. For MEPPS sites, review the following:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Yes | No | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are all clerks using unique passwords, and is the administration of passwords handled correctly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the computer secured from unauthorized access? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do the DMU clerks receive disks in a timely manner? |

Comments:

VI - Exit Conference

After completing the review, discuss your findings with the mailer. To ensure a mutual understanding of what corrective action the mailer must take, it is recommended that this meeting include a representative from the administering Post Office. Also, be sure that you advise the mailer of areas where no deficiencies were found.

If your review includes Post Office findings, you will need to conduct a separate exit interview with the administering postmaster. Discuss the areas needing corrective action and include your suggestions for methods of implementing that action.

Comments:

VII - Participants

List name and title of each Postal Service participant completing the review:

Appendix E

PS Form 3634, Optional Procedure (OP) Job Review Frequency Guide

This appendix presents a copy of PS Form 3634, *Optional Procedure (OP) Job Review Frequency Guide*.



Optional Procedure (OP) Job Review Frequency Guide

I - District Semi-Annual Reviews

The district Business Mail Entry Manager must conduct semi-annual on-site reviews of the mailer's and administering Post Office's operations to verify that the OP agreement is properly administrated in accordance with the provisions of the *Domestic Mail Manual (DMM)*; Publication 407, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System*; and the OP agreement. The reviews must include an in-depth examination of all the records required in the OP agreement for the number of jobs that have been selected based on the following frequency guide. The district will keep records of all reviews conducted, as well as working papers used to perform the verification, for 1 year. The district must submit a copy of PS Form 3633, *Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Review*, used to conduct the review to the Business Mailer Support Analyst (BMSA) upon completion.

II - Business Mailer Support Analyst Annual Reviews and Renewals

Once each year, the BMSA, in conjunction with the district, will conduct a review to determine whether the OP agreement continues to be justified and, if the agreement is subject to renewal, whether it should be renewed. The review must include an in-depth examination of all records required in the OP agreement for the number of jobs that have been selected based on the following frequency guide. The BMSA will keep all records of reviews for 1 year.

The number of OP jobs to sample for district and/or BMSA reviews will be based on points that are granted in the following areas:

- The number of findings reported from the last two reviews.
- The number of OP refund requests reported during the last 6 months.
- The daily volume presented to the Postal Service each day.

III - Points

1. The last two reviews, number of findings:

Findings	Points	
0	40	
1	30	
2	20	
3 or more	10	
		Findings Point Total: _____

2. Number of OP refund requests reported during the past 6 months:

Refunds	Points	
0	40	
1	30	
2	20	
3 or more	10	
		Refunds Point Total: _____

3. Average daily volume of optional procedure mailings:

Volume	Number of Points	
<350,000	20	
350,000 - 650,000	10	
>650,000	0	
		Volume Point Total: _____

Findings + Refunds + Volume = _____
(Combined point total)

Total Points	Number of Jobs to Review
> 90	2
80-90	3
70-79	4
69 & below	4*

* **District:** Conduct a review within the next 2 months. If no discrepancies are found, place the mailer back on a semi-annual review schedule. If discrepancies are still found, notify your local BMSA for further instructions.

Sample Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Agreement and Instructions

This appendix presents a sample Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Agreement and Instructions. (The instructions appear first.)

Instructions for the Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Agreement

The mailer must sign the Optional Procedure (OP) agreement before beginning to mail.

Enter the appropriate information as indicated below:

Heading

Record the mailer's name and street address at the top of the agreement.

Article 3

Records Definition List. Include an attachment (identify as Attachment A) that provides the title of each record that must be included in each OP job jacket, and for each record that is not self-explanatory, define the purpose of the record.

List all records that must be included in each OP job jacket.

- The **Primary Record** is the source document used for completing postage statements. It must provide the total pieces mailed by rate level and/or zone, if applicable. For plant-verified drop shipment (PVDS) mailings, the primary record must provide the total pieces by rate level and/or zone (if applicable) for each destination entry facility, in addition to the grand total summary.
- The **Finished Product Report** (generic title) is a document that provides the final number of products (catalogs, letters, etc.) produced. Examples of finished product reports are Bindery and/or Press Completion Reports. If the mailer does not produce the product, a Receiving Report from the printing company, which shows the number of products received, would be an appropriate record for the mailer to include in the job jacket.
- The **Disposition Report** (generic title) is a document that provides the final disposition of all products produced or received. It lists the number of pieces mailed, shipped in bulk, stored in inventory, etc. A copy of the bill (or invoice) to the customer is also acceptable if the bill/invoice clearly accounts for all pieces produced or received.
- **Additional Records as Needed.** List any additional documentation that may be required to support mailings accepted under OP.

Article 7

Include an attachment (identify as Attachment B) that accurately describes the mailer's quality control (QC) procedures.

Article 17

Identify the class(es) and subclass(es) of mail authorized to be entered under the agreement.

Article 18

- a. Describe the mailer's procedures for handling damaged and/or spoiled products.
- b. Item b is applicable only if the mailer is submitting Standard Mail flat size pieces addressed using an inkjet system. Add to the agreement an attachment outlining procedures the mailer must follow to handle and document inkjet reorders.

Article 19

List the month and year the agreement expires.

Article 20

Include this article if the mailer subcontracts jobs or portions of jobs.

Article 21

Include this article if the mailer is authorized to commingle different permit imprint pieces in a single mailing.

Cautionary Statement

Include the number of articles in the agreement in the cautionary statement following the last article.

**Optional Procedure Mailing System Agreement
between the
United States Postal Service
and
[Mailer Name]
[Mailer Address]**

Our firm hereby acknowledges our understanding and intention to comply with the terms of this Optional Procedure (OP) Mailing System Agreement as set forth below.

1. A job jacket, or case records, will be maintained at the above address for each optional procedure mailing made by our firm. This will consist of source documents, as specified in Article 3 of this Agreement, to permit reconciliation with the postage statement and which allow the Postal Service to verify the accuracy of the computations for individual mailings as well as the aggregate of all mailings. These records will be maintained centrally and retained for a period of 1 year.
2. The Postal Service reserves the right to perform verifications of these records as necessary.
3. The following records, which are described in Attachment A, Records Definition List, will be retained by our firm for the purpose of mail verification and quality control:
 - a. Primary Record: USPS Qualification Report summary, or other presort summary report that supports Plant-Verified Drop Shipment (PVDS) loads
 - b. Postage Statement(s)
 - c. USPS Qualification Report
 - d. Finished Product Report
 - e. Disposition Report
 - f. PS Form 3553, CASS Report (for automation rate and carrier route mail)
 - g. Inkjet Reorder Reports (if applicable)

[LIST ADDITIONAL RECORDS AS NEEDED]

All records will be labeled, as they are created, as to the mailing (and/or order) to which they relate. No changes will be made to the records without prior written approval from the Manager, Business Mailer Support (BMS).

4. Our firm will maintain an OP Mailer's Running summary on which the job number, permit imprint number, date of mailing, postage statement sequence number, total pieces, individual piece weight (or weight range for non-identical weight pieces), total weight, and total postage for each OP mailing are recorded.
5. It is clearly understood that it is the responsibility of our firm to submit accurate postage statements and to maintain accurate records. Our firm will maintain adequate funds on deposit to cover the postage for all mailings made. Our firm will promptly pay, upon demand of the Postal Service, any and all funds due the Postal Service for postal charges.

Products presented as part of a PVDS mailing that have previously been dispatched will not be accepted without an accompanying postage statement and will be subject to verification and charged at the appropriate rates of postage. If the entry Post Office notifies the Detached Mail Unit (DMU) that the number of pallets, or other containers,

received was less than the number indicated on the PS Form 8125 and this is verified by the DMU, the pallets, or other containers, will be accepted. If the pallets, or other containers, will be entered at a different entry level, our firm will submit a postage statement reflecting the difference between the original entry level and the current entry level. The appropriate PS Form 8125 will be increased to reflect the change and the DMU clerk will place a note on the form prior to filing it.

6. An original and duplicate postage statement will be submitted to the Postal Service, with a sample mail piece, and the primary record specified in Article 3 of this Agreement, at or before the time of each mailing. The postal representative will initial and date the primary record and return it to our firm for inclusion in the job jacket.
7. We will conduct and document quality control (QC) procedures as described in Attachment B.
8. OP mailings will be verified by a Postal Service representative in a DMU at our facility. We will ensure that the DMU meets all specifications required by the USPS district manager in accordance with Postal Service policy.
9. Our firm will provide the postal representative in the DMU with the total weight of the mail loaded into each postal vehicle prior to dispatch to ensure maximum highway transportation weights and limits are not exceeded.
10. Our firm understands our responsibility to ensure that all required documentation to support a discounted postage rate mailing is completed and submitted as specified in the DMM for the class of mail and rate claimed.
11. Our firm understands that any request for a postage refund or any adjustment to the advance deposit account for postage underpayment must be submitted in writing and must document and clearly explain the reason for the discrepancy and corrective action taken to ensure it does not recur. A request will contain copies of the audit trail records in the job jacket and an analysis of those records substantiating the entire job was properly reported. The analysis will be formatted to show the total piece count by level of sortation for each record and include adding machine tapes to facilitate a Postal Service review.

Any occurrences of postage underpayment detected by our firm will be reported to the administering post office within five (5) working days from the date of detection.

Any postage refund request or postage underpayment occurrence may trigger an investigation by the Business Mailer Support (BMS) office to determine why the discrepancy was not detected by the system and whether proper corrective action was taken to prevent a recurrence. The BMS manager will make a decision on the validity of a postage refund request or postage underpayment.

12. Our firm understands that when the BMS office determines postage was overpaid or underpaid due to a system failure in our operation, the administrative processing cost will be charged to our firm. In that event, our firm agrees to separately pay the administrative processing cost, or allow the Postal Service to adjust the overpayment or underpayment amount, as appropriate.
13. Authorization for OP mailing privileges may be suspended by the Postal Service at any time, pending investigation, when there is an indication that postal revenue is not fully protected.

14. The Postal Service may cancel this OP agreement:
 - a. Any time it is established that our firm has provided misleading or incorrect data to avoid payment of postage.
 - b. When no mailings are made under this OP agreement during any consecutive 12-month period.
 - c. If our firm continually fails to comply with the requirements of the DMM, Publication 407, or the OP Agreement.
 - d. If it is determined from the 2-year renewal review that this agreement is no longer justified or that our firm is not complying with the terms of this agreement.
15. Our firm may cancel this OP agreement upon written notice to the BMS manager.
16. In addition to the requirements of this agreement and the requirements for OP, all mailings will be prepared in accordance with Postal Service regulations contained in the DMM.
17. It is understood that this agreement is limited to mailings of [LIST TYPE OF MAILINGS].
18. In order to ensure mailpieces maintain their qualification at originally intended levels of sortation and rate qualification, our firm will perform the following:
 - a. [LIST MAILER PROCEDURES]
 - [b.] For mailings of Standard Mail flat size pieces, in which the pieces are addressed using an inkjet system with reorder capability, our firm will comply with the procedures and documentation requirements described in Attachment [XX].
19. This OP authorization is subject to renewal in [MONTH AND YEAR].
- [20.] Our firm will generally process and prepare all portions of mailings that are authorized under this OP agreement for verification and acceptance at our facility. When it becomes necessary, a job or portion of a job may be subcontracted for production. When this occurs and portions of our OP jobs are mailed at other postal facilities, we will obtain copies of the postage statements for those mailings, annotated with our own job number, and include those postage statements in our OP job jacket.

A job or portion of a job may be subcontracted for production and returned for verification and acceptance at our facility subject to the following conditions:

- a. The required quality control preparation procedures that are described in Attachment B of this agreement will be performed and documented by the subcontractor for each job. The subcontractor will forward the documentation to our facility for retention in the job jacket. Our firm will also perform the quality control procedures described in Attachment B on the mail when the subcontractor returns it.
- b. In addition to maintaining the records listed in Article 3 of this agreement, our firm will maintain the following types of records that will be obtained from the subcontractor:
 - (1) Purchase Order or Quote Letter for the subcontracted job.
 - (2) Record of materials received from our firm.
 - (3) Operator production records (if applicable).
 - (4) Bill of lading, receiving records, or equivalent record for materials returned to our firm.
 - (5) Billing to our firm for work performed.

Any subcontracted jobs returned for verification and acceptance at our facility that do not meet the above requirements must be presented for verification by conventional weighing methods.

- [21.] Standard Mail identical and nonidentical weight mailings consisting of pieces that bear different permit imprints are subject to the following conditions:
- a. All pieces in the commingled mailing must bear either a valid company permit imprint or a [MAILER NAME] permit imprint. An approved PS Form 3615, Mailing Permit Application, must be on file and the appropriate fee paid at the administering Post Office for each customer whose permit imprint mail is included in each commingled mailing.
 - b. A listing of the permit imprint numbers and nonprofit rate mailers included in a commingled mailing must be submitted at or before the time of mailing to the DMU clerk. This list will be updated as necessary.
 - c. Regular rate and nonprofit rate piece counts must be reported on separate postage statements.
 - d. Postage for each commingled mailing submitted will be through a valid [MAILER NAME] permit imprint account.
 - e. All records, as required in Article 3 of this agreement, will be available for all commingled mailings.

This Optional Procedure Agreement consists of [19, 20, or 21] articles and cannot be amended without the approval of the Manager, Business Mailer Support.

Signatures

Mailer

Printed Name	Title
Signature	Telephone Number
Company Name	Street Address
Date	City, State, ZIP+4 Code

Postal Service

Printed Name	Title POSTMASTER
Signature	Telephone Number
Street Address	City, State, ZIP+4 Code
Date	

Printed Name	Title DISTRICT MANAGER
Signature	Date

Printed Name	Title MANAGER, BUSINESS MAILER SUPPORT
Signature	Telephone Number
Street Address	City, State, ZIP+4 Code
Date	

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