

Postal, Paper & Logistics Update

July 2025

In brief: New Postmaster General (PMG) David Steiner takes the helm of the USPS and defends the agency's independence. Paper market order lead times and prices are stable. The logistics market has slowed down after a pre-tariffs spike in imports in June.

Built on our roots as a printer, mail industry partner and logistics leader, Quad is a marketing experience (MX) company focused on delivering streamlined solutions at scale to our clients. As the largest USPS customer, we are uniquely positioned to provide clients with best practices and insights on the latest postal, paper and logistics topics. If you have any questions or concerns during these challenging times for our industry, contact your Quad representative. We'll tap our in-house experts to investigate and get you the answers you need.

Postal

New Postmaster General backs independence for the USPS

With little fanfare, the new PMG David Steiner officially took office on July 15. On July 17, he sent a [video message](#) and letter to all USPS employees. In the video, Steiner stated, "I do not believe that the Postal Service should be privatized, or that it should become an appropriated part of the federal government." (In the past, President Donald Trump has floated the idea of privatizing the agency. The administration's Department of Government Efficiency, aka DOGE, has reportedly been examining the USPS's current business model.)

Steiner also said he generally supported the 10-year Delivering for America (DFA) plan initiated by previous PMG Louis DeJoy, noting it "brought the Postal Service substantially closer to private sector logistics practices."

A former FedEx board member and Waste Management CEO, Steiner said that one focus of his leadership would be to improve on-time delivery. The agency is currently delivering about 85% of First Class mail on time, short of its 88% goal.

Under the DFA plan, the USPS has relaxed its delivery standards. Last year, as part of a Regional Transportation Optimization strategy, the service began running trucks less often between processing plants and post offices. This month, it announced it would no longer count Sundays and federal holidays when measuring delivery performance. The USPS does not deliver mail on those days, but it processes mail every day of the year.

USPS rolls out new pricing

The mail industry is coping with the USPS pricing and process changes that took effect on July 13. Many details of the changes were not published until shortly before that date, and Quad is closely watching for side effects resulting from higher volume hitting local processing facilities due to the elimination of National Distribution Centers (NDCs). As always, we are in close contact with the USPS so we can report issues as they occur.

Along with NDCs, NDC pre-sort pallets and discounts have also gone away. However, the USPS said it was aware that mailers work well in advance and are likely to have NDC pallets already prepared. The USPS will accept those pallets through Aug. 31 but will not offer any discounts for them. More details on NDC volume and pallets are available in [this USPS Industry Alert](#).

How to take advantage of the new Catalog Insights promotion

The upcoming [USPS Catalog Insights promotion](#) offers significant savings: a 10% postage discount. Mailers can also apply the add-on promotions of Informed Delivery and Sustainability for an additional 1% each, making the total available discount 12%.

The Catalog Insights promotion runs for nine months starting Oct. 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.

To be eligible, mailings must:

- be a minimum of 12 pages;
- have a bound edge (stapled, stitched, glued or fastened together along one edge);
- contain offers of products or services for sale along with pricing and fulfillment information.

Quad clients who wish to participate need to complete the following items:

1. **USPS Enrollment** – Enroll in the promotion (one time only) via the USPS Business Customer Gateway before Oct. 1. Registration opens Aug. 15. Instructions for how to enroll: [Client resources | USPS Promotions resources | Quad](#)

2. **USPS Approval** – Quad will submit the request for USPS approval on clients’ behalf. To make that possible, please provide USPS-required information regarding your business and mailings via this Quad form: [USPS Catalog Insights Promotion Plan](#). If you prefer to manage your own USPS approvals, please note that on the form.

Note: Businesses with multiple titles/brands will need to fill out a form for each title/brand.

Further details on this new Catalog Insights promotion can be found in the [USPS Catalog Insights Promotion Guidebook](#).

Miscellaneous updates

- The USPS will be publishing an Industry Alert recommending the use of Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST) appointments for origin mail, due to the anticipated higher volume at origin sites with the DNDC elimination.
- The USPS rule creating a new Marketing Mail Heavy Printed Matter (HPM) category has gone into effect. HPM will coexist with Bound Printed Matter (BPM). The USPS has not issued formal notice on when it plans to add HPM. In discussions, officials indicated they were looking at implementing the category with the January 2026 price change.
- Implementation details related to the new USPS rule moving the maximum weight of a Marketing Mail flat from 16 oz. to 20 oz. (or 24 oz. if in a CART bundle) are pending.
- The USPS resumed mail acceptance to several countries in July: to Iraq and Tajikistan on July 4; to Israel on July 11; to Brunei and Iran on July 18.

USPS delivery performance

Below are the average in-home curves for our Marketing Mail clients who tracked their mail with Quad’s IMsight application over the four weeks specified. We had extended in-home curves the week of July 7, as mail was delivered to USPS facilities later than usual due to the Independence Day holiday.

	Week of 6/23	Week of 6/30	Week of 7/7	Week of 7/14
Early	32%	30%	24%	21%
Day 1	60%	49%	42%	40%
Day 2	73%	67%	55%	62%
Day 3	88%	75%	68%	83%
Day 4	95%	91%	83%	93%
1 Day Late	95%	98%	85%	97%

Some facilities struggled with processing Flat mail in a timely manner. Below is a list of locations where less than 70% was in-home by Service Standard over the specified four weeks. Several facilities have been experiencing delays much longer than that. St. Louis has had issues since Fall 2023. Indianapolis has struggled since it opened a new Regional Processing and Distribution Center (RPDC) in January. Fox Valley, Ill., has been delayed for the last two months.

Entry Type	City	% In-Home By Service Standard
ASF	SIOUX FALLS, S.D.	25%
RPDC	INDIANAPOLIS	47%
RPDC	FOX VALLEY, ILL.	63%
SCF	ST. LOUIS	46%
SCF	INDIANAPOLIS	67%
SCF	LANSING, MICH.	68%

As of July 13, mailers are no longer allowed to take mail to a destination NDC facility. Any mail that does not get on a SCF (Sectional Center Facility)–level pallet must be dropped locally and is handled by the USPS as mixed mail.

Mail entering the USPS from one of our Wisconsin plants goes to the USPS's Oak Creek facility. This Wisconsin facility is supposed to be set up to process bundles and trays and move the mail on to the next facility, closer to its destination. Chicago is a back-up processing facility if Oak Creek is unable to handle the volume.

For months, we have been reporting that our DMU/Local mail was being moved to Chicago 1-3 days after it entered Oak Creek and then was further delayed in Chicago. We continue to monitor this situation closely and will work with the USPS if we continue to see delays.

USPS volume

Mail volume for the week ended July 12, compared to last year		
Total Mail Volume	Down 7.4%	▼
Packages	Down 6.0%	▼
Single Piece	Down 6.4%	▼
Presort First Class	Down 0.5%	▼
Marketing Mail	Up 2.3%	▲
Periodicals	Down 22.7%	▼

Mail volume for the week ended July 5, compared to last year		
Total Mail Volume	Down 5.0%	▼
Packages	Down 2.7%	▼
Single Piece	Down 6.8%	▼
Presort First Class	Down 8.7%	▼
Marketing Mail	Up 0.2%	▲
Periodicals	Up 26.6%	▲

Mail volume for the week ended June 28, compared to last year		
Total Mail Volume	Down 11.7%	▼
Packages	Down 10.3%	▼
Single Piece	Down 12.6%	▼
Presort First Class	Down 10.4%	▼
Marketing Mail	Down 5.7%	▼
Periodicals	Down 30.1%	▼

Mail volume for the week ended June 21, compared to last year		
Total Mail Volume	Down 13.2%	▼
Packages	Down 2.8%	▼
Single Piece	Down 11.4%	▼
Presort First Class	Up 0.8%	▲
Marketing Mail	Down 5.2%	▼
Periodicals	Up 15.4%	▲

Mail volume for the week ended June 14, compared to last year		
Total Mail Volume	Down 7.5%	▼
Packages	Down 7.3%	▼
Single Piece	Down 8.6%	▼
Presort First Class	Down 10.4%	▼
Marketing Mail	Down 5.4%	▼
Periodicals	Down 49.1%	▼

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Paper Market

Late summer is typically a quiet time for the paper market, and this year is no different.

- Paper order lead times for most printing grades are normal, and prices are currently stable as we head into the busy season.
- Look for paper mill production capacity to be reduced over the next year, to better align supply with demand.

Logistics

June saw a spike in U.S. imports, leading to an increase in domestic freight activity. This reflected businesses once again attempting to avoid the reciprocal tariffs that were set to go into effect July 9, plus the relaxation of the tariffs on China. The bulk of the July 9 tariffs were delayed until Aug. 1 to allow for more trade negotiations. The deadline for tariffs on China and Hong Kong was pushed to Aug. 12.

As we come off the freight rush of food and beverages for the Independence Day holiday, we look to settle back into a more normal summer freight rhythm.

As always, your Quad representative will work diligently to find you the lowest rates with the most efficient transportation available.

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