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Postal Service Updates Consolidation Initiative

No final decisions have been made

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Postal Service today filed an update with the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) indicating that 162 offices remain under review for possible consolidation under the station and branch consolidation initiative. That is six fewer from the last update in December. No final decisions have been made regarding specific office consolidations.

Today's filing with the PRC updates a review process begun last summer that initially examined about 3,300 stations and branches in urban and suburban areas, focusing on facilities in relatively close proximity to one another where consolidations might be feasible without compromising customer access.

"Consumer behavior is changing. It is important for the Postal Service to adjust to the shift," says Dean Granholm, vice president of Delivery and Post Office Operations. "We will continue to provide easy access, but changes to our retail network are essential to our ability to continue to provide the safe secure and fairly priced postal services that Americans have counted on for 234 years."

With more than 36,000 Post Offices, stations, branches, contract and community post offices, the Postal Service has the largest retail network in the United States. Always on the lookout for convenience, though, many Postal Service customers are choosing to access postal services and purchase stamps via alternative access – locations other than a Post Office.

More than 56,000 locations such as supermarkets, drug stores, and other retailers sell postage and selected postal services. Nearly 18,000 ATMs dispense sheets of stamps. It is the online alternative at usps.com, where you can get shipping information, purchase and print postage 24/7, that customers find most convenient. In 2009, nearly 30 percent of postal retail transactions were conducted in locations other than a Post Office.

The Postal Service receives no tax subsidy to operate the nation's mail service. Revenues from the sale of postage, products and services fund its operations. Last year, the Postal Service reported a loss of \$3.8 billion. A number of new initiatives have also been undertaken to build revenue, including Flat Rate Priority Mail pricing and the introduction of greeting cards for sale at about 900 select Post Offices.

As part of the consolidation process, the Postal Service has filed periodic updates with the Postal Regulatory Commission identifying the retail stations and branches that remain under consideration. Today's filing does not represent a final decision on consolidation. No facility-specific final decisions have been made as a result of this initiative.

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A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation, 150 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars. With 36,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, the Postal Service relies on the sale of postage, products and services to pay for operating expenses. Named the Most Trusted Government Agency five consecutive years and the third Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$68 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 28th in the 2009 Fortune 500.