MTAC Workgroup 129
Permit Task Group Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2009

Members on the call today included Wanda Senne, Greg Hall, Bob Bokor, Dave Meyers, Kurt Ruppel, Karen Tucker, Linda Clayton, Carrie Witt, Becky Dobbins, Bill Chatfield, Max Heath, George Laws, Mike O'Hora and Walter Alesevich.

George Laws provided an overview of PARs. It is outlined below, as well as the area of the envelope that PARS tries to read.

Greg asked a question about the IMB and if it would be used at all with PARS to make these determinations. George said that at this time, it would not be.

Of the designs tested, six were read, five were not and one could not be read by the AFR. Factors discussed that could have affected the read rate were colors, font size and style, how the rate markings appeared, whether there was a printed box or not, etc. However, there didn't seem to be a set pattern. Although these results didn't give definitive parameters, it was agreed that the results showed that the current standards requiring any design to be placed to the left of the indicia box and not touching could potentially be revised to allow more creativity, at least from an engineering standpoint.

Other requirements would need to be considered, however, to offer guidelines on the content of the design as opposed to the placement. It was suggested that the rules for PC Postage may provide some good input, as well as parts of DM 601 related to printed matter, etc. Another factor for consideration would be the "policing" of the content, including any possible trademark infringement, at acceptance.

The team then reviewed the different designs. George agreed to send Greg specs for the area of the envelope that PARs reads and Wanda agreed to then resubmit some of the "rejected" images with a different font size to see if that might achieve better results.

The one item that still remains that was not discussed was a design submitted by Max Heath with the permit imprint directly below, to the left or above the delivery address on ECR pieces. This still needs to be discussed.

From George Laws:

IMAGE AREA: The grey image snippet of the indicia zone which is provided to IMS with the binary image with a width of 1440 pixels and height of 512 pixels. This means that the snippet starts 512 pixels down from the upper right corner of the mailpiece and extends 1440 pixels to the left. With the resolution of 256 dpi this translates into a **grey snippet area of 5,625 inches x 2 inches**, i.e. 127.0 mm x 50.8 mm.

PARS PROCESS: There are two parts to PARS, the interception of Undeliverable As Address (UAA) mail as it is being processed and the redirection of mail that has been identified as UAA, either by PARS or by a carrier. As letter mail is processed on USPS letter processing equipment, OCR processing is performed on the destination address and the character data is sent to the Change of Address Record Server (CARS). The CARS firsts tries to determine a delivery point ZIP Code for the mail pieces and checks to see if that delivery point is in its record of addresses with a COA on file. If the delivery point is in CARS, the mail piece is a potential UAA, pUAA. CARS attempts to identify the recipient name on the pUAA mail. If the recipient name matches the name on the COA, the mail piece is confirmed UAA, cUAA, and it sorted to a UAA bin, intercepted, for PARS processing.

Mail that has been identified as UAA, either PARS intercept, carrier identified forwardable (CIF), or return to sender (RTS), is run on a CIOSS (Combined Input/Output SubSystem) for PARS processing to determine the proper handling of the mail piece. The mail pieces is first run in image lift mode. PARS first sends the image lift from the CIOSS to the Advanced Forwarding Reader (AFR) for reading of the original delivery address, recipient name, endorsement, ACS participant information, mail class, and return address. PARS checks if the AFR provided enough information to determine how the mail should be handled and to process it (e.g. if the mail piece is not RTS the return address is not required). If PARS does not either have enough information to determine how to handle a piece (based on mail class and endorsement) or have the information it needs to process the mail, the mail piece image is sent to the Remote Encoding Center (REC) for keying of the missing information by a keyer at the REC.

Mail is run on the CIOSS a second time in label mode. In label mode, the CIOSS applies the yellow label, prints the redirection address (either forwarding address or return address) and new bar code. If the mail piece is RTS, the reason the mail could not be delivered is also printed on the label. PARS will also generate ACS information if needed and send it to NCSC in Memphis. NCSC will either produce hard copy address change information or provide the mailer electronic ACS inform.