



Membership Guide

2014

Welcome!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Postmaster General’s Mailers’ Technical Advisory Committee, better known as **MTAC**. You have joined a prestigious assembly of recognized industry leaders with an impressive history of accomplishments stretching back over four decades. Since January 1965, MTAC has provided technical advice and feedback vital to the formation and implementation of many postal innovations such as the ZIP Code, ZIP+4, Move Update, postal certification programs, and the Intelligent Mail barcode (IMb).

In your new MTAC role, you will participate in quarterly MTAC meetings, and be encouraged to contribute to the work of various User Groups, Work Groups, and Task Teams. As a representative of the MTAC member association that appointed you, the views, comments, and advice you share in MTAC meetings and discussions should first and foremost reflect the collective interests and concerns of your association and its members. If, however, a situation involving MTAC and/or the Postal Service requires the viewpoint of your employer, rather than your association, you must be clear that in this situation, you are speaking on behalf of your employer, not the MTAC association you represent.



MTAC received the *NPF Partnership for Progress Award* at the 2008 National Postal Forum.

1 MTAC Charter and Leadership

The MTAC Charter establishes the purpose and organizational framework for MTAC. It provides important information on membership, attendance, and the formation of User Groups, Work Groups, and Task Teams. It also defines the roles and responsibilities of MTAC member associations/organizations, MTAC representatives, MTAC Leadership, and the MTAC Executive Committee. You are strongly encouraged to read the MTAC Charter carefully, as it sets out important expectations regarding participation in MTAC, including the requirement that MTAC representatives attend all quarterly meetings. The MTAC Charter and other important MTAC information is available on the USPS National Customer Support Center website – better known as “RIBBS” – found at <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=mtac>. [See Section 5 for more information about MTAC resources.]

The MTAC Executive Committee is comprised of seven members – four from the Postal Service, and three from the Industry. The Postal Service’s Vice President, Consumer and Industry Affairs, is the MTAC Postal Co-Chair. He or she appoints two Postal Vice-Chairs and the MTAC Program Manager, who along with his or her staff provides program support. The MTAC Industry Co-Chair and Industry Vice-Chair are elected by MTAC member associations’ executives and representatives. The Industry Co-Chair and Vice-Chair each serve a two-year term beginning in January of even-numbered years. In odd-numbered years, elections are held for the position of Industry Vice-Chair. At the end of his or her two-year term, the Vice-Chair automatically succeeds the Co-Chair, and serves another two-year term in that position. The third industry member is the immediate past Industry Co-Chair, whose term is also for two years (beginning at the end of his or her term as Co-Chair).

MTAC Executive Committee members are also members of the MTAC Leadership Committee. Other Leadership Committee members are Postal Service Vice Presidents (currently four) selected by senior Postal management, and Industry Focus Area Leaders. Elections for Industry Focus Area Leaders are held in odd-numbered years during the MTAC Business Meeting at the last quarterly MTAC meeting (November). Focus Area Leadership positions have two-year terms, with nominations due no later than mid-September of odd-numbered years.

2 MTAC Meetings

MTAC meets quarterly at the Postal Service’s national headquarters at 475 L’Enfant Plaza SW in Washington, DC. The content and overall structure of each meeting is discussed several weeks in advance by the MTAC Executive Committee, and the meeting agenda is set after a quarterly “Pulse of the Industry” call in which Industry Mail Class Leaders report on current industry issues specific to their mail class to Industry Focus Area Leaders, USPS Vice Presidents, and senior Postal leadership. Once the agenda has been finalized, it is sent to the MTAC distribution list and publicly posted on the MTAC page of RIBBS (see Section 5). Please contact your Focus Area Leader with any specific concerns, ideas, and input you have regarding topics for upcoming meetings.

The Postal Service typically hosts a USPS MTAC Open Session meeting and Stakeholders’ Reception in conjunction with quarterly MTAC meetings. The MTAC Open Session meeting includes presentations by senior Postal leaders and others on topics generally of interest to MTAC association executives and representatives.

3 MTAC Badges and Access to USPS Headquarters

To access the USPS Headquarters building, visitors must be cleared through Postal security stations located on the Lobby (street) or 1P (Promenade/Metro) entrances. Access to the headquarters building for events and meetings involving MTAC is expedited for MTAC members who have been issued Industry Badges by the US Postal Inspection Service. Industry badges, which feature a special MTAC sticker for MTAC members, are activated for MTAC-related meetings. This permits badge holders to enter through the turnstiles at USPS Headquarters entrances without having to stand in line to obtain a temporary visitor badge from Postal security guards. MTAC association executives and representatives who do not yet have an Industry Badge, or whose badge has expired, must check in at the security stations with a photo ID; guards will check their names against those on the list provided by MTAC Program management. Non-MTAC, pre-approved guests whose names are provided on a separate list are also issued visitor badges. Either a Postal employee or a MTAC member with an active badge must escort all visitors all time while in the building.

All MTAC members who do not have badges, or whose badges have expired, are encouraged to visit the Headquarters Badge Office (room 1P-331) to obtain or renew Industry badges. During MTAC week, the MTAC Program Manager can assist members in obtaining a badge. The agenda for each quarterly MTAC meeting specifies when the Badge Office will be open for MTAC members – usually for a few hours on both Tuesday and Wednesday.

4 Participation of Non- Members in MTAC Meetings

Each MTAC member association may annually sponsor a total of three non-MTAC members (“Participants”) to attend quarterly MTAC meetings/Focus Group Sessions. In addition, any **active** MTAC Executive Committee member or Focus Area Leader may sponsor a Participant to attend MTAC meetings/Focus Group Sessions. The primary purposes for sponsoring a Participant’s attendance are: a) to invite the viewpoint of an un- or under-represented segment of the mailing industry and/or user value chain, or b) to recruit new associations to join MTAC.

Here are some examples of ways in which MTAC associations may choose to apportion their three sponsored participants in a calendar year (though whether to sponsor *any* Participants is each association’s decision):

- Sponsor three different Participants at one quarterly meeting;
- Sponsor one Participant each at three quarterly meetings, or
- Sponsor two Participants at one meeting, and one Participant at another.

The sponsor association must complete a “Participant Recommendation” form for each Participant (available on the MTAC page of RIBBS at <https://ribbs.usps.gov>). On the form, the sponsor association specifies the date of the quarterly meeting/Focus Group Sessions this Participant will attend, and describes how this individual’s participation will help ensure that additional segments of the mailing industry and/or user value chain are represented in the Focus Groups’ technical discussions. The deadline for submitting a Participant Recommendation form to the MTAC Program Manager is always several weeks prior to the quarterly MTAC meeting at which the Participant’s attendance is requested. The forms are reviewed by the MTAC Executive Committee, and association executives and Participants are notified of the Executive Committee’s decision.

*[Please note: Non-MTAC Members, including approved Participants, do **not** attend MTAC Business Meetings, which are held during each quarterly MTAC meeting; only association executives and representatives of MTAC member associations attend MTAC Business Meetings.]*

5 MTAC Internet Resources: RIBBS, MITS and RITS

There is a wealth of MTAC and mailer information located on the USPS National Customer Support Center website, known as “RIBBS” (<https://ribbs.usps.gov>). RIBBS contains service information, notices, guides, and reports, as well as a special MTAC section. If you are not already familiar with RIBBS, you are encouraged to acquaint yourself with it and take advantage of all the information it provides. The MTAC page of RIBBS should be especially helpful to new members because it features MTAC meeting schedules and information; the most current roster of MTAC member associations, executives and representatives; the MTAC Charter; Guidelines for User Groups, Work Groups, and Task Teams; the MTAC Meeting Calendar, where Group/Team leaders post the locations and times of their upcoming meetings; and agendas, notes and presentations from previous MTAC and MTAC Open Session meetings.

RIBBS is also where you can access **MITS: the MTAC Issue Tracking System**. MITS is designed to track the progress of **active** User Groups, Work Groups and Task Teams. It is a library of files which for each Group/Team contains an Issue Statement identifying the Group/Team leaders, the purpose of the group, desired results, and minutes from past meetings. MITS is password protected, so to access it, please contact the MTAC Program Manager, who will request for you a login ID and password from RIBBS.

RITS is the Recommendation and Issue Tracking System, designed to show the progress of Work Group and Task Team recommendations by tracking the dates on which recommendations have been implemented or concluded. RITS works in conjunction with MITS, using the same search engine. It features a special dashboard report, known as a “RITS Requests Summary,” that is especially useful for those who wish to see at a glance all active recommendations generated by MTAC Work Groups and Task Teams.

6 MTAC Meeting Notes and Presentations

All presentations made in MTAC Focus Group sessions are promptly posted on the MTAC page of RIBBS after each quarterly meeting. In addition, high level notes taken during each of the sessions by Postal Service staff are consolidated after the meeting and distributed to MTAC’s Postal and Industry leadership for review. Once the notes and action items have been reviewed, they are posted on the MTAC page of RIBBS. MTAC representatives are strongly encouraged to take notes of their own.

The materials posted on the MTAC page of RIBBS are intended to assist MTAC representatives in communicating to their associations’ constituents the important discussion points and issues raised in MTAC Focus Group sessions. As noted in the MTAC Charter, after each quarterly MTAC meeting representatives are expected to share this information with the associations they represent.

7 Traveling to MTAC Meetings

MTAC meetings are held at USPS Headquarters, located at 475 L'Enfant Plaza SW in Washington, DC. MTAC-related activities typically begin on Tuesday afternoon and conclude by Thursday afternoon, so MTAC members usually wish to arrive in Washington on Monday evening or Tuesday morning, and depart on Thursday afternoon or evening.

There are a number of hotels within walking distance of USPS Headquarters, which is also easily accessible by Metro (the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority's subway system). Metro has stations throughout DC, Northern Virginia and suburban Maryland, and USPS Headquarters is a short walk from the L'Enfant Plaza Station, which is served by the Green, Yellow, Blue and Orange lines. USPS Headquarters can be entered by visitors from the South Lobby entrance on the street level, and the Promenade entrance, which is one floor below the Lobby, on the same level as the Metro escalators to the L'Enfant Plaza Station at the L'Enfant Promenade exit/entrance. As noted in Section 3, security stations are located at each of the USPS Headquarters' entrances. MTAC members with a current Industry Badge enter through the turnstiles without having to stop at the security station. Please contact the MTAC Program Manager or send a message to MTAC@usps.gov to request information on how to obtain a badge.

8 User Groups, Work Groups and Task Teams

The primary work of MTAC is conducted within the structure of User Groups, Work Groups and Task Teams. All MTAC members are strongly encouraged to actively participate in these groups as representatives of their member associations.

Guidelines for User Groups, Work Groups and Task Teams are posted on the MTAC page of RIBBS. These guidelines describe how groups/teams are formed, participant eligibility, and expectations for both participants and group/team leaders.

The designation of "User Group," "Work Group," or "Task Team" is based on the nature of the issue or topic, and whether establishing the group is: 1) to allow for in-depth discussion over an indefinite period; 2) to address specific technical issues within a defined period, or 3) to quickly resolve very specific issues with a small, focused team. There is often a natural progression of issue discussions relative to the User Group, Work Group and Task Team structure

A **User Group** is designed to be an open "think tank" discussion with broad industry and USPS participation centered on a topic or theme relative to an MTAC Focus Area. User Groups have no defined end date; however, an Issue Statement often helps guide the discussion. An MTAC Focus Area Leader(s) is/are responsible for a User Group, while designated User Group Leaders report on the group's progress to the MTAC Leadership Committee and during quarterly MTAC Focus Group sessions. Anyone interested in participating in an MTAC User Group is invited to contact that group's leaders for approval. Contact information for the leaders of active MTAC User Groups, Work Groups and Task Teams is provided in the last few pages of the MTAC Roster on RIBBS.

When an issue arises – often in a User Group or quarterly Focus Group discussion – and needs to be worked or resolved, an MTAC Postal or Industry Leader will propose the formation of a Work Group or Task Team.

A **Work Group** addresses a clearly defined issue, and works to accomplish a set of desired results by a specific date. Work Groups are primarily comprised of MTAC representatives and industry experts (along with key Postal managers and staff), with approval from the MTAC Focus Area Leaders. Status reports for an MTAC Work Group may be presented during the MTAC Focus Group sessions by the Work Group Leaders.

A **Task Team** is designed to quickly address and resolve a very specific issue with a small, focused team. Its scope is very narrow and its timeframe brief in order to drive a rapid (within days or weeks) response. Task Team members are selected and approved by the MTAC Executive Committee to ensure that affected industry segments are well-represented, and that the desired results reasonably can be achieved in the specified timeframe. Task Team reports are typically given during MTAC Leadership meetings, and shared during relevant MTAC Focus Group sessions.

The following chart summarizes the differences between User Groups, Work Groups and Task Teams:

Group Type / Intended Function	Primary Sponsor / Oversight	Group Participants	Approval of Participants	Timeframe
<i>User Group / Broad, topical "Think Tank" discussion</i>	MTAC Focus Area Leader (postal and/or industry)	Anyone	User Group Leaders	Open - No specific end date
<i>Work Group / Address defined issue, achieve specific results</i>	MTAC Focus Area Leader (postal and/or industry)	Primarily MTAC Members and industry experts	MTAC Focus Area Leader	Concludes when desired results are achieved (per the issue statement)
<i>Task Team / Quickly address very narrow issue, "fast track" results</i>	MTAC Executive Committee (may also be delegated to Focus Area Leader if subject is specific to an Area)	Selected by MTAC Leadership and EC	MTAC Executive Committee	Concludes when desired results are achieved (per the issue statement)

Additional Information and Support

This guide is meant to be a starting point for you to become better acquainted with MTAC and your new role as an MTAC representative. As you participate in MTAC meetings and activities, and explore RIBBS, MITS and other MTAC-related resources, please do not hesitate to contact your MTAC Focus Area Leaders, the MTAC Executive Committee members, and the MTAC Program Manager if you have questions, feedback, or need additional information. Contact information is provided in the current MTAC Roster (on RIBBS). We are all interested in helping you to successfully represent your association and the mailing industry within MTAC.

Congratulations, and welcome again to the Mailers' Technical Advisory Committee!