

ORDER NO. 1476

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
POSTAL RATE COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20268-0001

Before Commissioners: George Omas, Chairman;
Dawn A. Tisdale, Vice Chairman;
Mark Action; Ruth Y. Goldway; and
Tony Hammond

Stamped Stationery Classification

Docket No. MC2006-7

NOTICE AND ORDER INSTITUTING DOCKET NO. MC2006-7 TO
ESTABLISH STAMPED STATIONERY CLASSIFICATION

(Issued August 24, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to 39 U.S.C. § 3623(b), the Commission is instituting a mail classification case for the purpose of receiving a request from the Postal Service for a recommended decision establishing a classification and fee schedule for Stamped Stationery.

In Order No. 1474, issued contemporaneously herewith, the Commission held stamped stationery to be a postal service.¹ As explained in that Order, the Commission found maintaining the status quo for a brief interim period to be in the public interest. *Id.* at 12, *et seq.* This approach provides the Postal Service a reasonable interval to prepare its Request without disrupting the stamped stationery market or causing the Postal Service to incur any costs that might be occasioned by withdrawal of the product.

Although its qualities, including design and purpose, make it a postal service, stamped stationery is, nonetheless, a specialty item, which, among other things, no

¹ PRC Order No. 1474, Docket No. C2004-3, August 24, 2006.

mailer is required to purchase. Under the circumstances, a novel pricing approach may be warranted for stamped stationery.

By signaling a willingness to consider a novel pricing approach, the Commission hopes to encourage the Postal Service and interested persons to consider innovative rate designs suitable for this specialty product. See *id.* at 13-15. In Docket No. C2004-3, pleadings addressed fee levels for stamped stationery. Although those arguments were not germane to the jurisdictional issue, they appear, at least at first blush, to be somewhat problematic. Consequently, in suggesting that a creative pricing approach may be appropriate, the Commission hopes to focus interested persons on the challenge at hand and perhaps to temper rote reliance on any preconceived fee structures.

The Commission's observations may also have the salutary effect of encouraging discussion among interested parties concerning an agreeable fee structure. With the threshold issue resolved, this possibility would not appear to be an unobtainable goal. It may, however, prove to be elusive. This guidance simply reflects the Commission's preliminary views. It is not intended to limit any interested persons' option, and participants remain free to present evidence and argument as they wish.

To facilitate discussions among interested persons the Commission will allow notices of intervention to be filed in this proceeding. Intervention, at this stage, will permit intervenors, including the Office of the Consumer Advocate, to participate in any pre- or post-filing conference the Postal Service may wish to convene. To the extent such conference(s) may be convened, any such discussions would be deemed privileged in any proceeding before the Commission.

Sunset date. To ensure this docket proceeds in an orderly fashion, the Commission establishes a due date for the filing of a request of February 26, 2007. Absent a request or other filing related thereto filed on or before that date, this docket will terminate and be considered withdrawn as of February 26, 2007.

Representation of the general public. In conformance with section 3624(a) of Title 39, the Commission designates Shelley S. Dreifuss, Director of the Commission's

Office of the Consumer Advocate, to represent the interests of the general public in this proceeding. Pursuant to this designation, Ms. Dreifuss will direct the activities of Commission personnel assigned to assist her and, upon request, will supply their names for the record. Neither Ms. Dreifuss nor any of the assigned personnel will participate in or provide advice on any Commission decision in this proceeding.

It is ordered:

1. The Commission establishes Docket No. MC2006-7 for the purpose of receiving a request from the Postal Service for a recommended decision establishing a classification and fee schedule for Stamped Stationery.
2. The Commission will sit *en banc* in this proceeding.
3. Notices of intervention are due no later than 28 days following the submission of the Postal Service Request.
4. Shelley S. Dreifuss, Director of the Commission's Office of the Consumer Advocate, is designated to represent the interests of the general public.
5. The due date for filing a request to establish the Stamped Stationery classification in this proceeding is February 26, 2007.

6. Absent a request or other filing related thereto filed on or before February 26, 2007, this docket will terminate and be considered withdrawn as of February 26, 2007.

7. The Secretary shall arrange for publication of this document in the *Federal Register*.

By the Commission.

(SEAL)

Steven W. Williams
Secretary