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Department of Defense Instruction

ASD(MRA&L)

SUBJECT: Military Postal Service and Related Services

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 4525.6, "Single Manager for Military Postal System," May 5, 1980
 - (b) Title 39, United States Code, Section 406, "Postal Service"
 - (c) Title 49, United States Code, "Transportation of Mail", Sections 1375 and 1376
 - (d) U.S. Postal Service Manuals¹, issued by the U.S. Postal Service
 - (e) through (j), see enclosure 1

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A. PURPOSE

This Instruction supplements the provisions of and delineates the responsibility assigned pursuant to references (a) through (d) for the operation of the Military Postal Service (MPS) and the transportation of mail, including mail services and charges, within the Department of Defense.

B. APPLICABILITY

The provisions of this Instruction apply to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) (including elements assigned to OSD for administrative support), the Military Departments, the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified, Specified and Combined Commands, the Defense Agencies (hereafter referred to as "DoD Components"), and other government agencies that use the MPS. The term "Military Services," as used herein, refers to the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard (under agreement with the Department of Transportation).

C. DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this Instruction and other postal related publications are defined in enclosure 2.

D. POLICY

1. The MPS shall transmit official and personal mail promptly, efficiently, and economically in support of the defense mission and consistent with the required delivery date, security, accountability, and class of mail.

This document has been approved for public release and sale; its distribution is unlimited.

¹Includes Domestic Mail Manual, Administrative Support Manual, Postal Operations Manual and International Mail Manual. Can be obtained upon request from HDQA (DAAG-MP), Washington, DC 20314.

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2. When first class and priority mail are transited within the military transportation system, it shall be moved consistent with priority designators expressed in DoD Instruction 4410.6 (reference (e)).

3. Duplication of postal services by the MPS and United States Postal Service (USPS) is not authorized. Further, there may be no overlap of postal service between elements of the MPS or DoD and non-DoD courier or pouch systems. Thus, opening of APOs for non-DoD agencies shall be limited to areas where the State Department pouch system is determined by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics) (ASD(MRA&L)) to be inadequate. Each DoD Component shall comply with the provisions of DoD Instruction 7041.3 (reference (f)) in meeting these requirements.

4. All classes of mail shall be transported according to the provisions of 39 and 49 U.S.C. and the USPS Manuals (references (b), (c), and (d)), the USPS Transportation Handbook Series, T-7 (reference (g)), and this Instruction. U.S. civilian air carriers shall be the primary means of transporting air eligible mail. Availability of authorized U.S. air carriers shall be determined by the Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA) in coordination with USPS.

5. Foreign commercial airlines or military airlift (as authorized by 39 and 49 U.S.C., references (b) and (c)) may be used on a temporary basis to transport military mail when U.S. commercial air is unavailable or cannot provide timely delivery. Authority to use foreign air carriers on a continuing basis must be granted by the MPSA in coordination with USPS.

6. Foreign postal administrations are authorized to transport military mail when approved by the MPSA, in coordination with USPS.

7. Mail moved by industrially funded Military Airlift Command and Military Sealift Command requires reimbursement at the common user tariff rate.

8. Official registered mail that is moved to, from, and between MPS activities shall be transmitted in the manner required by DoD 5200.1-R (reference (h)).

9. Military activities receiving their predominant administrative and logistic support from U.S. Embassies or other government agencies are not eligible for MPS support since this duplicates an existing communication system.

10. MPS elements are authorized the use of local overseas command funds to transport military mail between command elements in unique problem situations. Such transportation may not be used in competition with U.S. commercial carriers but shall be subject to the limitations above and the standards prescribed by the MPSA.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Secretary of the Army, as the single manager, Military Postal Service, shall appoint a general officer or equivalent to act as the Executive Director of the MPSA.

2. The Executive Director, Military Postal Service Agency, shall:

- a. Develop the DoD position to be used in negotiating with the USPS for changes to the USPS-DoD Postal Agreement, DoD Directive 4525.6 (reference (a)), and enclosure 3.
- b. Develop technical directives to be used by all DoD Components in support of the MPSA mission, and publish instructions for the handling and delivery of mail in unit or ship mailrooms and postal service centers.
- c. Coordinate the compilation of statistics, conduct studies, and perform any necessary analyses.
- d. Establish a support team composed of personnel from the MPSA to provide technical assistance and monitor command postal operations for all Military Services in overseas areas.
- e. Establish direct liaison with service operating command postal elements to facilitate effective day-to-day operation of the MPS. Establish liaison with Military Service commands to investigate and resolve postal problems.
- f. Establish a Joint Military Postal Activity (JMPA) Atlantic and Pacific as the single point of contact with USPS at the gateways. The Atlantic headquarters shall be located in the New York City area, and be responsible for military mail movement management to and from Military Post Offices (MPO) with APO/FPO New York and Miami designations. The Pacific Headquarters shall be located in San Francisco, California, and be responsible for military mail movement management to and from MPOs with APO/FPO San Francisco and Seattle designations. JMPAs shall provide information to USPS to allow proper distribution, dispatch, and transportation of military mail for overseas and maneuver forces, ships, and other maneuver units.
- g. Notify the ASD(MRA&L) of any proceeding before the Postal Rate Commission or of any notice of proposed rulemaking document published by any federal agency that has a significant impact on DoD postal matters, together with a recommended course of action. After the proceeding, inform ASD(MRA&L) of the outcome and recommend any further required action. Notify other interested DoD Components.
- h. Develop integrated management information systems for the MPS, consistent with the policies of DoD Directive 5000.19 (reference (i)). The information system shall use standard data elements and codes, in accordance with the policies of DoD Directive 5000.11 (reference (j)). Any new data elements shall be registered with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller).
- i. Monitor all military reserve postal training programs, regardless of Military Service.
- j. Ensure that overlap or duplication of MPS functions are identified and that a coordinated solution for those elements is obtained.
- k. Process all postal claims made against the MPS by USPS. The MPSA shall coordinate investigations of deprecations of mail, USPS funds, and equipment with the USPS and with the appropriate Military Service commanders and DoD investigative elements.

l. Maintain and periodically publish a consolidated list of MPO numbers as issued by USPS and controlled by MPSA.

m. Provide information from MPSA management information systems to the Military Services for development of their budget estimates concerning overseas mail transportation costs. In addition, the MPSA shall review Military Service postal budgets to ensure up-to-date rate data are included. Current Military Service postal budgeting processes shall remain in effect until necessary data can be provided.

n. Process all Presidential, Congressional, and other high-level correspondence relating to the MPS.

3. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics), or designee, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Supply, Maintenance, and Transportation), shall:

a. Provide broad policy guidance and direction in carrying out the provisions of this Instruction.

b. Serve as final authority concerning requests for first opening and last closure for a MPO for any country.

c. Serve as the DoD representative for implementation and administration of agreements with the USPS.

4. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

a. Request the establishment of MPOs in accordance with the criteria agreed upon between USPS and ASD(MRA&L), as promulgated by the MPSA.

b. Maintain inspection, advisor, and assistance responsibilities for MPS activities under their jurisdiction.

c. Provide air and surface transportation support to move military mail, when tendered by USPS or MPS.

d. Provide and maintain the required military personnel (whose grade and specialty shall be specified by the single manager and whose tour length shall be established at a minimum of 36 months) to support the MPSA.

e. Coordinate all contingency and war planning involving MPS matters with the MPSA.

f. Ensure that major commands are designated to provide the MPSA through the JMPA, Atlantic or Pacific, with information to allow proper mail routing when their respective field units change locations, are activated, deactivated, inactivated, or when units rotate.

g. Provide the MPSA with information concerning postal restrictions or policies affecting the MPS due to unique requirements. Provide excerpts of the appropriate country-to-country (status of forces) agreements that affect the MPS.

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h. Provide the MPSA with information systems, consistent with the provisions of DoD Directive 5000.19 (reference (i)) and DoD Directive 5000.11 (reference (j)). Specific taskings by MPSA will be coordinated with each Service.

i. Assist MPSA in resolving overlap or duplication of MPS functions.

j. Establish and operate MPOs for use by all authorized organizations and personnel on their respective installations overseas. DoD Components shall be provided postal service on a non-reimbursable basis. MPOs may be operated at location overseas other than a military installation to meet an operational requirement of a Military Department.

5. Heads of DoD Components shall respond to official mail policy direction and provide any information and assistance that may be needed by the Single Manager or the Executive Director, MPSA, to carry out the assignments of this Instruction.

6. Commanders of the Unified, Specified And Combined Commands, or their Theater Postal Single Manager (when designated by MPSA), shall coordinate any request for the first opening and last closing of any country MPO service in their areas through the Executive Director, MPSA, to ASD(MRA&L) for final decision. In the case of first opening, this coordination shall include the identification of the Military Service designated to support this mission.

F. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately. Current service postal regulations will remain in effect until publication of the Military Postal Manual and other DoD postal publications.

Robert G. Stone

Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense
(Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics)

Enclosures - 3

1. References
2. Definitions
3. Supplemental Postal Agreement: Administrative Details

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REFERENCES, continued

- (e) DoD Instruction 4410.6, "Uniform Materiel Movement and Issue Priority System", October 30, 1980
- (f) DoD Instruction 7041.3, "Economic Analysis and Program Evaluation for Resource Management," October 18, 1972
- (g) U.S. Postal Service Transportation Handbook Series, T-7, issued by the Postal Service¹
- (h) DoD 5200.1-R, "Information Security Program," October 1980, authorized by DoD Directive 5200.1, November 29, 1978
- (i) DoD Directive 5000.19, "Policies for the Management and Control of Information Requirements," March 12, 1976
- (j) DoD Directive 5000.11, "Data Elements and Data Codes Standardization Program," December 7, 1964

¹Can be obtained, upon request, from HQDA (DAAG-MP), Washington, DC 20314

DEFINITIONS

1. Joint Military Postal Activity (JMPA). A subordinate element of the MPSA located in New York and San Francisco with specific geographical responsibility to provide liaison and military mail routing instructions to USPS postal concentration centers at gateway cities.
2. Mail Address Only. An APO or FPO number serving as a routing indicator for mail separation and transportation purposes only.
3. Military Airlift Command (MAC). The Single Manager Operating Agency for Airlift Service. Established and organized as a major command of the United States Air Force.
4. Military Sealift Command (MSC). The Single Manager Operating Agency for Sealift Service. Established and organized as a major command of the United States Navy.
5. Postal Single Manager (PSM). A Military Service component, when specifically directed by the Executive Director, MPSA, who acts as functional director of APO/FPO mail within a theater.
6. Mail Coordinator. A postal transportation quality control function of the MPS performed at military and commercial airports.
7. Terminal Navy Post Office. An NPO which is required to act, in addition, as a center for the concentration, consolidation and onward dispatch of mails.
8. United States Postal Service (USPS). An independent establishment of the Executive Branch of the Government of the United States, established under the authority of Title 39, United States Code, to provide postal services to the people of the United States.
9. Unit or Ship Mail Room (UMR/SMR). A facility operated by a DoD Component for the receipt and delivery of mail for military units or other authorized organizations and agencies.

SUPPLEMENTAL POSTAL AGREEMENT: ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

I. TRANSPORTATION

A. The Department of Defense agrees to arrange for military mail transportation from overseas postal facilities to commercial or military terminals in the United States and between military postal activities within overseas areas.

B. The Postal Service agrees to:

1. Arrange for military mail transportation to overseas postal facilities from commercial terminals in the United States and make transportation arrangements when the postal services of another country are required. However, this does not preclude Military Departments from making direct arrangements for the transportation of military mail to or between designated overseas points on a short term basis when operational requirements dictate.

2. Provide inbound and outbound mail transportation between the postal concentration centers and military or commercial air or surface carriers.

3. Transport mail between civilian post offices on military installations and the receiving or dispatching Postal Service facility.

II. PERSONNEL

The Department of Defense agrees to:

1. Appoint mail clerks and issue them uniform identification cards.

2. Assign only qualified personnel to duties in military post offices, mailrooms, mail control activities, and other postal facilities. No persons convicted of a crime involving theft or moral turpitude or disciplined for any action reflecting unfavorably upon their integrity shall be assigned to postal duties. Those having a history of psychiatric disorder, alcoholism, or drug abuse may be so assigned if medical evidence of current good health, sufficient to meet published Postal Service standards, is available. This does not preclude the Department of Defense from establishing requirements that are more stringent than the published Postal Service standards.

III. EQUIPMENT

A. The Postal Service agrees to:

1. Provide equipment and furniture necessary for the operation of civilian post offices located on military installations.

2. Furnish equipment and supplies for use in military post offices. Equipment shall be new or serviceable and shall be issued in accordance with mutually determined issuance standards. Supplies and accountable equipment shall be furnished without charge. Nonaccountable equipment shall be furnished on a reimbursable basis beginning in FY 1982.

3. Repair equipment for which it has a unique capability.

B. The Department of Defense agrees to transport such equipment between the continental United States and the overseas destination.

IV. DELIVERY

A. The Department of Defense agrees to:

1. Decline to accept Collect on Delivery mail for delivery at military post offices.

2. Not provide special delivery service.

3. Deliver mail to personnel in a temporary duty status, in training, and where delivery requirements exceed Postal Service standards.

4. Deliver accountable mail, delivery of which is restricted by the sender, through mail clerks, only upon the written authorization of the addressee when it is impracticable for the addressee to accept delivery in person at the civilian post office.

B. The Postal Service agrees to:

1. Neither accept nor forward to military post offices any Collect on Delivery mail.

2. Provide delivery service on military installations in the United States commensurate with the delivery service that would be provided for civilian communities of comparable characteristics. Postal Service criteria shall be used in considering extensions of delivery service. Mail to principal administrative buildings or commands shall be delivered in bulk. The Postal Service agrees to also provide the mail in bulk to personnel and basic units in a transient or temporary duty status of 180 days or less. Where criteria will not allow free delivery service to be established or extended, the Postal Service agrees to provide the mail for individuals in bulk to basic units. However, in locations with adjacent civilian communities having delivery service, the Postal Service agrees to submit proposals to the Department of Defense to furnish service to groups of receptacles consistent with mutually agreed criteria and funding.

3. Deliver accountable mail addressed to military personnel, at military installations served by civilian post offices, to the addressees or mail clerks upon proper receipt.

V. CLAIMS

A. The Department of Defense agrees to:

1. Assume financial liability, under military claims procedures, for loss, damage, theft, wrong delivery, or rifling of accountable mail after

receipt from or prior to delivery to a civilian or military post office by a mail clerk employed by the Department of Defense.

2. Reimburse the Postal Service for claims submitted by the Postal Service for the value of postal effects embezzled or lost through negligence, errors or defalcations while in the possession of military post office personnel. Reimburse the Postal Service for claims paid by the Postal Service for losses of accountable mail through negligence, errors, or defalcations while in the possession of military post office personnel.

a. To be reimbursable, claims must be submitted within one year from the discovery of the loss by the Postal Service.

b. In all just and expedient cases, the military departments may request the Postal Service to take action under 39 U.S.C. 2601(a) (3) to adjust, pay or credit the account of a Military Post Office, Postal Finance Officer, Military Postal Clerk, Financial Postal Clerk, Custodian of Postal Effects, or persons acting in those capacities for any loss of Postal Service funds, papers, postage, or other stamped stock or accountable paper, under the same standards as such credit is granted to Postal Service employees.

B. The Postal Service agrees to relieve custodians of postal effects of responsibility for the amount of the invoice of any shipment of stamps or stamped paper lost in transit as a result of casualty.

VI. LOGISTICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

A. The Department of Defense agrees to:

1. Furnish adequate facilities for civilian post offices located at military installations solely in support of the installation's mission. Utilities and local telephone service shall be furnished on a reimbursable basis beginning in FY 1982.

2. Offer billeting and meals to civilian post office employees who work at military installations on the same basis as those offered to Department of Defense civilian employees.

3. Issue invitational travel orders for Postal Service representatives who, at the request of the Department of Defense, are assigned to perform inspections, investigations, or audits of overseas military postal operations.

B. The Postal Service agrees to:

1. Reserve the right to discontinue civilian post offices on military installations where existing conditions endanger the health, safety, or welfare of its employees.

2. Furnish office space for related military mail terminals, fleet post offices, or liaison units at postal concentration centers.

VII. AUDITS AND INSPECTIONS

A. The Department of Defense agrees to:

1. Assist Postal Service representatives in surveying, inspecting, and auditing military postal operations.

2. Conduct surveys, inspections, investigations, and audits of Department of Defense postal facilities and operations as needed to verify that accountable postal effects are on hand and properly protected, that all revenue due the Postal Service is being collected and properly accounted for, and that the service rendered is efficient and in accordance with Postal Service and Department of Defense regulations.

B. The Postal Service agrees to assign Postal Inspectors or other representatives of the Postal Service, as practicable, to conduct surveys, inspections, investigations, and audits of military postal operations to assure that efficient postal service is maintained.

VIII. MAIL SORTATION

A. Except in time of war or other emergency as determined by the Secretary of Defense, the Postal Service agrees to:

1. Sort mail for overseas forces in fixed base units to the five digit Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office ZIP Code separation. Mail for ships and other mobile units shall be sorted to the mobile unit by ZIP Code or name when warranted. Mail for maneuver forces, air groups, submarine groups, units in transit or temporary duty status for 180 days or less, and other similar units shall be separated in accordance with the needs of the Department of Defense. The Department of Defense agrees to develop mail routings for all of the above mail and provide the routing instructions to the postal concentration centers of the Postal Service.

2. Sort mail for the forces at installations in the United States where delivery receptacles are not provided to basic military units or numbered boxes in groups of approximately 200, so far as practicable and mutually agreeable to the Postmaster and military authorities concerned.

B. In time of war or other emergency as determined by the Secretary of Defense, the Postal Service agrees to:

1. Allow the Department of Defense to control ZIP Code assignment to all military units.

2. Specify jointly with the Department of Defense the sorting of mail for overseas forces and forces at installations in the United States.

C. Postal Service criteria shall be used to assign ZIP Codes to military installations in the United States.

D. The Department of Defense and the Postal Service agree to cooperate in the assignment and use of overseas ZIP Codes.

1. Normally each military installation shall have one five digit ZIP Code, although special circumstances may be considered in assigning additional ZIP Codes. Additional ZIP Codes shall only be assigned if all resulting separations receive at least 1,000 pieces of mail per day. The implementing procedures for nine digit ZIP Codes shall be jointly developed.

2. The Department of Defense agrees to make every reasonable effort to see that its components have the correct ZIP Code in their address and return address. The Postal Service agrees to make every reasonable effort to see the correct ZIP Code is in the address and return address of mail for military units and personnel originated by other government agencies and the civilian sector. Since the ZIP Code furnishes the Postal Service with its sole method of forwarding Army Post Office and Fleet Post Office mail, the Postal Service agrees to return to sender at the post office of origin all mail for Army Post Office or Fleet Post Office addresses that does not have an authorized Army Post Office/Fleet Post Office ZIP Code.

IX. MAIL FORWARDING

A. Where the Department of Defense delivers the mail it agrees to provide directory service for undeliverable-as-addressed military mail and endorse each piece to show a forwarding address or reason for nondelivery.

B. Where the Postal Service delivers the mail it agrees to maintain change of address forms and endorse forwardable mail that is undeliverable as addressed.

X. SAM/PAL LAW

A. This paragraph provides for the joint development of regulations as required by 39 U.S.C. 3401 (f) (1976) by the Postal Service and the Department of Defense concerning administration of the "SAM/PAL Law." Each party agrees to designate one or more organizational counterparts to serve on a committee to discuss conditions and regulations under which the SAM/PAL law will be jointly administered.

1. For the Postal Service, the designees are:
The Assistant Postmasters General, Mail Processing Department, and Rates and Classification Department, or their designees; and, the Chief Postal Inspector or his designee.
2. For the Department of Defense, the designee is:
The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Supply, Maintenance and Transportation) or his designee.

B. Neither party shall take any unilateral action with respect to implementing policies, conditions, or regulations promulgated exclusively under the SAM/PAL law without prior consultation with the other party. Committee meetings may be held upon written request of either party. Following such consultation, a joint committee report may be prepared for transmission to the respective managements.

C. Nothing herein is intended to provide for the joint administration of any activity whose administration is not provided for by 39 U.S.C. 3401 (f) (1976).

D. This section supersedes the supplementary agreement dated September 30, 1976 concerning "Joint Administration of Title 39, United States Code, Section 3401 (The SAM/PAL Law) by the United States Postal Service and the Department of Defense."

XI. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This Agreement may be amended at any time by mutual agreement. It shall be reviewed every five years by the Department of Defense and the Postal Service.

XII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Agreement is effective when signed by both parties.

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE:



RICHARD DANZIG

FOR THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE:



C. NEIL BENSON

Dated: February 22, 1980