



# OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

## UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

### PostalOne!- Business Customer Support System Availability

### Audit Report

Report Number  
IT-AR-16-010

August 10, 2016





# OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

## UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

### Highlights

***Management is not effectively supporting and managing PostalOne!-BCSS availability and needs to improve its process for notifying all users when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable.***

### Background

Nearly 584,000 business mailers and business mail acceptance employees use the U.S. Postal Service's PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System (PostalOne!-BCSS) to enter postage statements, deposits, and other financial transactions needed to process and manage business mail. PostalOne!-BCSS is a complex system that interfaces with 45 other Postal Service systems. During fiscal year (FY) 2015, the Postal Service processed about 14 million transactions and generated over \$40.9 billion in revenue through Postal One!-BCSS, which was a majority of the \$68.9 billion of total Postal Service revenue.

Management's goal is to have the system available to users 99.95 percent of the time. The chief information officer (CIO) scorecard provides the status of system availability.

Management monitors PostalOne!-BCSS availability by continuously checking the system status for internal and external user access. Outages can result from application, hardware, configuration, or network issues. According to the PostalOne!-BCSS contingency plan, the Postal Service should notify all users and instruct them to use a manual contingency plan when the system is unavailable; which requires data to be subsequently entered when the system becomes available. The Postal Service has contracts with outside vendors to provide monitoring and support for PostalOne!-BCSS.

Our objective was to determine the effectiveness of support for PostalOne!-BCSS operational availability.

### What The OIG Found

Management is not effectively supporting and managing PostalOne!-BCSS availability and needs to improve the process for notifying all users of PostalOne!-BCSS outages. Based on reported outages, the Postal Service also does not maintain consistent records to track outages and the unavailability of PostalOne!-BCSS.

PostalOne!-BCSS did not consistently meet its daily 99.95 percent availability goal during FY 2015. We identified 22 reported instances where the daily average availability percentage ranged from 76.03 to 99.92 percent.

Additionally, the CIO scorecard did not accurately reflect actual system availability status because it excluded blackout maintenance hours, which should have been included according to best practices.

Specifically, we reviewed 61 of the 252 FY 2015 CIO scorecards that reflected 100 percent availability, and determined the reported availability percentages would have been significantly lower if the blackout maintenance hours were included in the calculations. In addition, downtime for PostalOne!-BCSS exceeded recommended industry best practices by about 1,135 hours.

We also determined an effective communication process was not in place for notifying all users when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable. The PostalOne! Help Desk notified less than



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1 percent of users in FY 2015 when the system was not available. Finally, required information technology clauses related to monitoring and support were not included in PostalOne!-BCSS contracts.

These issues occurred because there is no formal process for mitigating and resolving systemic issues affecting PostalOne!-BCSS availability and because management does not execute all testing phases of software development. We recommended management execute all testing phases of software development in a prior audit report; therefore, we did not make a recommendation in this report.

Further, management does not follow industry best practices when calculating PostalOne!-BCSS availability percentages; formally define system status terminology (downtime, uptime, outages, and availability) enterprise-wide; or have a reliable method for tracking availability to assess the impact of downtime. Finally, management does not have detailed guidance for notifying all users of outages and the original contracting officer believed that the clauses missing from the PostalOne!-BCSS contracts were not applicable.

Business mailers are negatively impacted when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable. Although mail is inducted, users must follow the contingency plan, which is a manual process

of recording mail submissions. Users must then enter the same data into the system when it becomes available. When PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable business mailers do not know the status of their mail submissions or have access to mailer scorecard information.

PostalOne!-BCSS downtime affects the movement of mail, which could result in deferred or lost revenue. In addition, senior management may not have accurate system availability information to make appropriate decisions that benefit all PostalOne!-BCSS users. Further, untimely outage notifications could cause business mailers to incur additional labor and transportation costs and mailer scorecards may not be updated timely. Finally, if appropriate IT clauses are not in PostalOne!-BCSS contracts, data may be exposed or misused.

### **What The OIG Recommended:**

We recommended management establish a plan to resolve systemic and recurring PostalOne!-BCSS availability issues, implement a formal process to track outages and downtime, define system status terminology, develop and implement a detailed PostalOne!-BCSS notification policy, and include blackout maintenance hours in availability calculations on the daily CIO scorecard. We also recommended management update contracts to include the required information technology clauses.

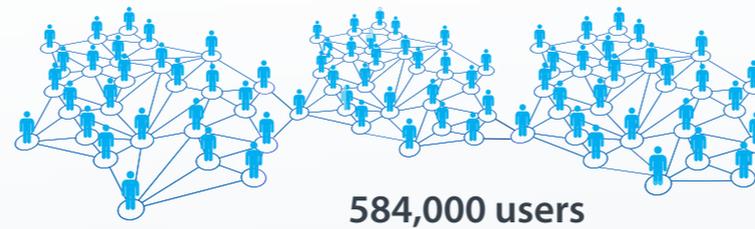


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### PostalOne!-BCSS

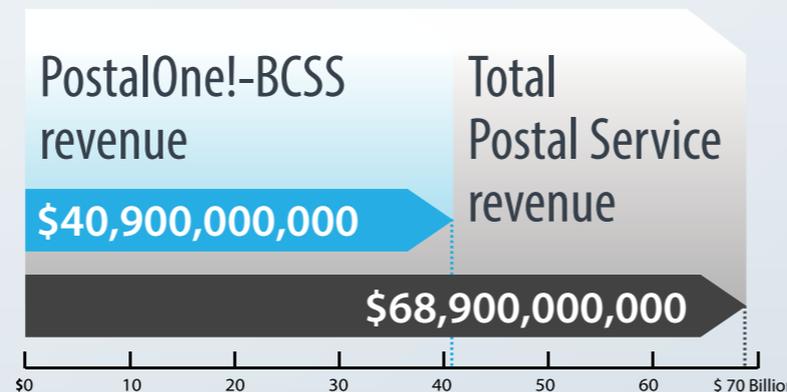
FY: 2015



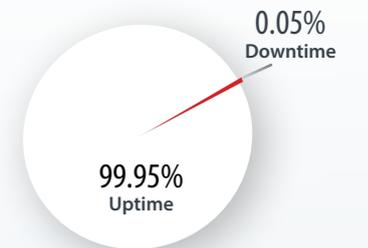
Interfaces with 45 other Postal Service systems



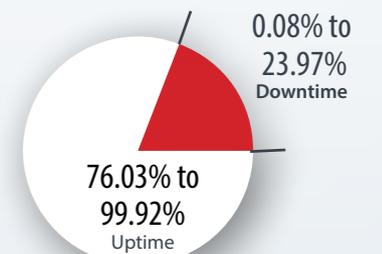
14 million transactions



Management's goal is **99.95%** system availability



In 22 instances availability ranged from **76.03% to 99.92%** (excluding maintenance hours)



Downtime exceeded recommended best practices by 1,135 hours

Less than 1% of users were alerted when the system was unavailable



# Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

August 10, 2016

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** SUSAN M. BROWNELL  
VICE PRESIDENT, SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

JEFFREY C. JOHNSON  
VICE PRESIDENT, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

PRITHA N. MEHRA  
VICE PRESIDENT, MAIL ENTRY AND PAYMENT  
TECHNOLOGY

E-Signed by Kimberly Benoit  
VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop  


**FROM:** Kimberly F. Benoit  
Deputy Assistant Inspector General for Technology

**SUBJECT:** Audit Report – PostalOne!-Business Customer Support  
System Availability (Report Number IT-AR-16-010)

This report presents the results of our audit of PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System Availability (Project Number 15TG040IT000).

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Jason Yovich, director, Information Technology, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Corporate Audit and Response Management

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# Findings

## Introduction

This report presents the results of our audit of the availability of the PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System (BCSS) (Project Number 15TG040IT000). Our objective was to determine the effectiveness of support for PostalOne!-BCSS operational availability. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about this audit.

Nearly 584,000 business mail acceptance employees and business mailers use the U.S. Postal Service's PostalOne!-BCSS to enter postage statements, deposits, and other financial transactions necessary to process and manage business mail. The Postal Service used PostalOne!-BCSS to process about 14 million transactions and generate over \$40.9 billion in revenue during fiscal year (FY) 2015.

When there is a PostalOne!-BCSS outage, users are unable to access the system to upload their postage statements. The PostalOne!-BCSS contingency plan defines a system outage as any time an acceptance employee<sup>1</sup> cannot access PostalOne!-BCSS to finalize postage statements or a business mailer is unable to submit an electronic mailing because the system is unavailable. An outage can occur on a local or national level.

During a PostalOne!-BCSS system outage, acceptance units and business mailers revert to a manual contingency process to record all mailings.<sup>2</sup> The Mail Entry and Payment Technology (MEPT) group is responsible for notifying all PostalOne!-BCSS users of planned<sup>3</sup> and unplanned<sup>4</sup> outages.<sup>5</sup>

Postal Service management established a goal to make critical applications, including PostalOne!-BCSS, available 99.95 percent of the time. Management reports the availability status of these applications on the chief information officer (CIO) scorecard. Availability status is determined using tools<sup>6</sup> that monitor both internal and external availability. PostalOne!-BCSS outages negatively affect business mailers' and business operations' ability to process mailings, which could result in deferred or lost revenue.

## Summary

We determined that management is not effectively supporting and managing PostalOne!-BCSS availability and needs to improve its process for notifying all users when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable. Specifically, the PostalOne!-BCSS system did not consistently meet the established 99.95 percent availability goal and the availability calculation was not accurately reflected on the daily CIO scorecard. In addition, we found that downtime<sup>7</sup> exceeded industry best practices and management did not maintain consistent records to track outages and the unavailability of PostalOne!-BCSS. Further, an effective communication process was not in place to notify all users when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable and contracts related to the system are missing required information technology (IT) clauses.

- 
- 1 Acceptance employees process hard copy or electronic mailings at Business Mail Entry Units (BMEU), Detached Mail Units (DMU), or Destination Delivery Units (DDU).
  - 2 The Postal Service also has a process within its contingency plan for mailer outages that involve a loss of power at the mailer's facility or issues with the internet service provider. During mailer outages, the mailer must contact the PostalOne! Help Desk to obtain an incident ticket and follow the contingency process to submit their mail. The Postal Service is only responsible for resolving system outages that involve PostalOne!-BCSS unavailability.
  - 3 Planned outages consist of planned blackout maintenance hours, which includes releases that may require downtime.
  - 4 Unplanned outages include emergency maintenance and other performance/system availability issues that result in downtime.
  - 5 Management provides these notifications primarily through the PostalOne! Help Desk email distribution listing.
  - 6 Monitoring tools are Webmetrics and TMart. Webmetrics monitors PostalOne!-BCSS availability outside the Postal Service network and TMart monitors internal availability. Availability percentages on the CIO scorecard include the average of the internal and external availability percentages.
  - 7 For report purposes, downtime is considered to be both planned and unplanned time that the PostalOne!-BCSS system is unavailable.

Downtime and untimely notification of PostalOne!-BCSS outages could negatively affect the movement of mail, business operations, and the Postal Service brand, resulting in deferred or lost revenue. Since the Postal Service does not have a reliable method of tracking PostalOne!-BCSS availability, provisions are not in place to limit the impact of downtime on users. Also, inaccurate CIO scorecard data could impact management decisions that affect all users and missing IT clauses in PostalOne!-BCSS contracts increase the risk of data exposure.

These issues occurred because management did not have a formal process for mitigating and resolving systemic issues affecting system availability and did not execute all required testing phases of software development processes. Management also did not follow industry best practices by including blackout maintenance hours when calculating PostalOne!-BCSS availability percentages, formally define system status terminology (e.g., downtime, uptime, outages, and availability) enterprise-wide, provide detailed guidance on notification procedures for communicating outages, or recognize the importance of establishing methods to inform all users of system status. Finally, management stated they did not include the required clauses in PostalOne!-BCSS contracts because they believed they were not applicable.

## PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System Availability

PostalOne!-BCSS availability goals were not met and availability was not calculated in accordance with best practices. We identified issues related to meeting the established availability goal, the accuracy of availability calculations reflected on the daily CIO scorecard, and excessive downtime.

### Availability Goal

We determined the PostalOne!-BCSS system did not consistently meet the established daily 99.95 percent availability goal during FY 2015. Specifically, we reviewed 252 daily CIO scorecards<sup>8</sup> and determined 22 reported instances where the daily average availability ranged from 76.03 to 99.92 percent. See Table 2, [Appendix C](#) for a detailed listing.

This occurred because management did not have a formal process for mitigating and resolving systemic issues affecting availability. Although management has initiated activities (such as the review of critical incidents, outages, and degraded performance<sup>9</sup>) to identify recurring PostalOne!-BCSS issues, they have not developed a formal process for mitigating and resolving these issues.

The Postal Service has built in redundancy and failover<sup>10</sup> processes; however, network, database, and server issues also impact PostalOne!-BCSS availability. PostalOne!-BCSS downtime negatively affects the movement of mail, business operations, business mailers' experience, and the Postal Service brand, which could result in deferred or lost revenue.

We also noted in a prior audit report<sup>11</sup> that Postal Service project teams were not executing all required testing phases of their software development process, increasing the risk that applications will not meet customers' needs or achieve business goals. In our prior report, we recommended management ensure that all new system requirements and modifications are gathered,

<sup>8</sup> The FY 2015 CIO scorecards were not created for every day of the fiscal year. Availability percentages over weekends and holidays were combined into single scorecards.

<sup>9</sup> The Postal Service reviewed PostalOne!-BCSS availability from July 1, 2015, through January 5, 2016, including the number of critical incidents/outages and degraded performance; and has developed a metric to determine corrective actions. The metric includes 17 instances where outages or degraded performance issues were identified for PostalOne!-BCSS.

<sup>10</sup> Failover is a backup operational method in which the functions of a system component (such as a processor, server, network, or database) are assumed by secondary system components when the primary component becomes unavailable through either failure or scheduled downtime.

<sup>11</sup> *Software Development Processes* (Report Number IT-AR-15-006, dated July 13, 2015).

***The PostalOne!-BCSS system did not consistently meet the established daily 99.95 percent availability goal during FY 2015.***

**Availability percentages for 61 FY 2015 CIO scorecards that reported 100 percent availability to the Executive Leadership Team would have been 0 to 95.83 percent if blackout maintenance hours were included in the calculations for these reports.**

**Downtime for PostalOne!-BCSS exceeded industry best practices for critical applications by 1,135 hours. PostalOne!-BCSS had 585 hours of planned downtime due to blackout maintenance hours compared with 200 hours recommended as a best practice; and 754 hours of unplanned downtime compared to 4 hours recommended as a best practice.**

analyzed, documented, and tested before migration to production. Management stated they would evaluate and update current software development processes in the IT organization and implement processes and procedures that reflect these practices by September 2016.

### Availability Calculations

Management was not correctly calculating PostalOne!-BCSS availability. System availability is recorded on the daily CIO scorecard, which provides the availability percentage of critical systems. However, management did not include planned downtime<sup>12</sup> associated with blackout maintenance hours<sup>13</sup> in their availability calculations. We reviewed 61 of 252 FY 2015 CIO scorecards that reflected 100 percent availability, and determined the reported availability percentages would have been significantly lower if blackout maintenance hours were included in the calculations.<sup>14</sup> We calculated availability ranges of 0 to 95.83 percent when including blackout maintenance hours in these 61 scorecard reports<sup>15</sup> (see Table 3, [Appendix C](#) for details). This occurred because management did not consider industry best practices<sup>16</sup> when calculating and reporting PostalOne!-BCSS availability percentages, which they report to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). In addition, management did not formally define status terminology (downtime, uptime, outages, and availability) enterprise-wide. As a result, the ELT did not have accurate PostalOne!-BCSS availability information to make decisions that affect business mailers.

### Downtime

Downtime for PostalOne!-BCSS was excessive compared to industry best practices for critical applications. For FY 2015, we determined that PostalOne!-BCSS had 585 hours of planned downtime due to blackout maintenance hours compared with the 200 hours recommended as a best practice.<sup>17</sup> PostalOne!-BCSS also had 754 hours of unplanned downtime<sup>18</sup> compared to the 4 hours<sup>19</sup> that is recommended as a best practice. Based on reported outages, we determined the Postal Service does not maintain consistent records to track outages and the unavailability of PostalOne!-BCSS. For example, information on FY 2015 unplanned outages was provided from three different sources – the IT Performance Achievement group (61 outages), the MEPT group (23 outages), and the PostalOne! Help Desk (13 outages). We determined that only two outages were consistently documented from all three sources. If the Postal Service maintained consistent records, all three sources would reflect the same number of PostalOne!-BCSS unplanned outages (see [Figure 1](#)).

12 Planned downtime includes planned maintenance and releases that may require the PostalOne!-BCSS system to be unavailable.

13 Blackout requests are used to schedule maintenance and releases within the maintenance windows. Downtime hours associated with these requests do not count against availability as reported on the CIO scorecard.

14 Since the Postal Service does not track PostalOne!-BCSS unavailability during the maintenance hours, we used the planned maintenance hours the Postal Service provided to calculate the adjusted percentages.

15 We calculated the adjusted availability percentage by dividing the maintenance hours by 24 hours in a day, and subtracting it from 1, then multiplying by 100. For example, our calculation for the four maintenance hours on October 9, 2014 was:  $4/24 = .1667$ ;  $1 - .1667 = .8333$ ;  $.8333 \times 100 = 83.33$  percent availability.

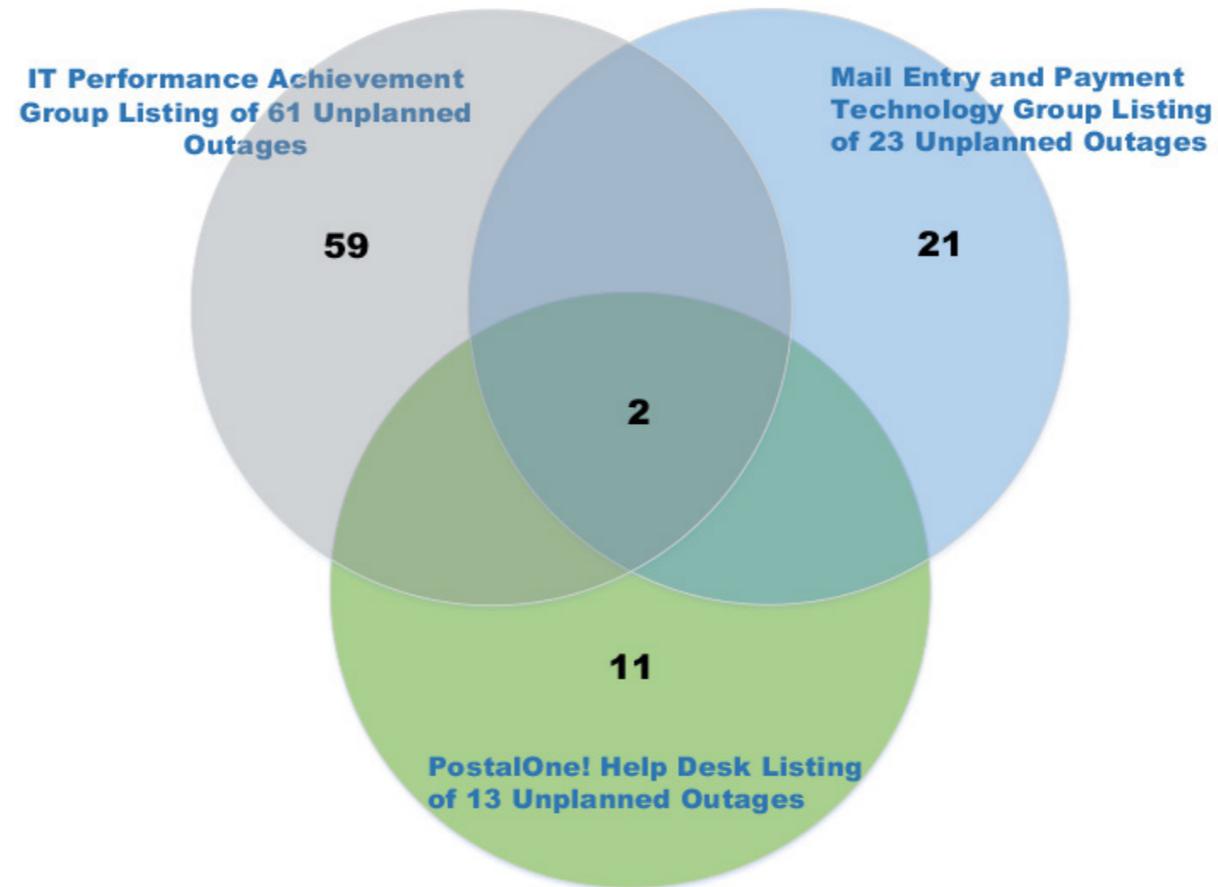
16 Industry best practices include all downtime, except for factors outside of the operator's reasonable control, such as natural catastrophe, internet access, or third-party actions.

17 According to industry best practices, downtime due to planned maintenance should be no more than 200 hours, and unplanned maintenance should be no more than 4 hours for organizations maintaining an acceptable level of availability. *Increase Availability through Best-in-Class Benchmarking and by Targeting Causes of Downtime*, Gartner, September 2014. We calculated possible deferred or lost revenue of \$213,085,236 million for the 1,135 (1,339-204) additional hours of downtime based on these best practices. Gartner, a leading IT research and advisory company, stated the average cost to an organization for a network outage is \$5,600 per minute. *Ensure Cost Balances Out With Risk in High-Availability Data Centers*, Gartner, February 11, 2013.

18 In the absence of actual downtime information, we used FY 2015 blackout information and FY 2015 outages the Postal Service provided to the OIG to determine downtime hours.

19 Best practices recommend four hours of unplanned downtime based on 99.95 percent availability. *Increase Availability Through Best-in-Class Benchmarking and by Targeting Causes of Downtime*. Gartner, September 26, 2014.

**Figure 1: Three Inconsistent Listings for PostalOne!-BCSS Unplanned Outages**



Sources: U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) illustration of the Postal Service's FY 2015 listing of unplanned outages.

Management has not developed a formal process for mitigating and resolving systemic issues that increase planned<sup>20</sup> and unplanned downtime and has no reliable method to track PostalOne!-BCSS availability in ServiceNow to assess the impact of downtime on business mailers. ServiceNow is the official tool used to document and manage change, incident, problem, release, configuration, and service request activities. This system provides management with information regarding these activities for PostalOne!-BCSS and other applications. PostalOne!-BCSS downtime negatively affects the movement of mail, business operations, and the Postal Service brand, which could result in \$213,085,236 in deferred or lost revenue.

In addition, business mailers may not know the status of their mail submissions or have access to mailer scorecard information. Representatives from mailer organizations provided anecdotal feedback on how they are affected by downtime; and discussed instances where pallets were refused, mailer scorecards were not updated timely, and mailpieces could not be reconciled to electronic postage statements.

<sup>20</sup> Planned downtime consists of blackout maintenance hours used for implementing maintenance and releases.

## PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System Communication Process

The Postal Service does not have an effective process for notifying all users<sup>21</sup> when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable.<sup>22</sup> Management did not fully utilize existing resources to communicate system outages<sup>23</sup> to all PostalOne!-BCSS users. For example, during FY 2015 when the system was not available:

**The Postal Service does not have an effective process for notifying all PostalOne!-BCSS users when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable. When an outage occurred in FY 2015, management sent email notifications to only 1% of the PostalOne!-BCSS users on their distribution list.**

- Notifications were never posted on the Business Customer Gateway<sup>24</sup> landing page or the Rapid Information Bulletin Board System (RIBBS).<sup>25</sup>
- There was no external status dashboard for business mailers.<sup>26</sup> Management has this data on an internal status dashboard; however, it is only available to individuals with access to the Postal Service's internal network.
- The PostalOne! Help Desk sent email notifications to the 4,326<sup>27</sup> PostalOne!-BCSS users on their distribution list when an outage occurred,<sup>28</sup> representing less than 1 percent of the total 584,087 PostalOne!-BCSS internal and external users.
- For each outage, the PostalOne!-BCSS contingency plan requires four separate notifications to be sent to users reporting the status of the outage. According to Help Desk records, there were 13 PostalOne!-BCSS unplanned outages in FY 2015.

The PostalOne! Help Desk did not send the four required email notifications<sup>29</sup> to the 4,326 users during the outage periods (see Table 1).

**Table 1: FY 2015 Email Notification for 13 Unplanned Outages**

Date Sent	Postal Service Email Notifications Subject Line	Notification of Incident and Impact	Expectation of System Restoration	Notification of System Restoration Progress	Notification of System Restoration
10/27/2014	Errors and Alarms In Webmetrics and TMart **Update**				X
12/29/2014	PostalOne! Issues: CI# 280766	X			
3/5/2015	PostalOne! Help Desk Winter Storm Event March 5, 2015	X			

21 The PostalOne!-BCSS users include internal users (Postal Service employees and contractors) and external users (business mailers).

22 <sup>16</sup> Handbook AS-805, *Information Security*, Section 10-2.3, May 2015; *PostalOne!-BCSS External Contingency Plan*, Version 1, Section 1-2, November 7, 2013; and *PostalOne!-BCSS Internal Contingency Plan*, Version 2.0, Section 1-2, November 4, 2013.

23 System outages consist of planned and unplanned outages.

24 The Business Customer Gateway provides a landing page that users view when gaining access to the PostalOne!-BCSS system.

25 A web-based computing resource providing services for information sharing with the mailing industry.

26 As best practices, the industry established service dashboards providing customers with real-time status on service availability and outages. Customers can access web pages to view service status dashboards that include normal operation, performance issues, service disruptions, and historical data on outages. Customers can also subscribe to status notifications through phone, text messages, and RSS feeds.

27 Management informed us that business mailers must contact the Postal Service to receive email notifications from the PostalOne! Help Desk.

28 Management informed us outage email notifications were also sent from the User Group/Work Group and Industry Alert email distribution listings during FY 2015 as a courtesy; however, historical records were not maintained to support that notifications were sent for each outage and all users were notified.

29 The four notification emails include initial notification, expected restoration, restoration progress, and system restoration.

Date Sent	Postal Service Email Notifications Subject Line	Notification of Incident and Impact	Expectation of System Restoration	Notification of System Restoration Progress	Notification of System Restoration
6/2/2015	PostalOne! Communication for 41.0.4.1 Client Build	x	x		
7/6/2015	PostalOne! MID Issue Status: ***RESOLVED****				x
8/11/2015	Seamless Acceptance and Service Performance (SASP) System Outage Notification (No Bridge)	x			
8/17/2015	PostalOne! Performance Issue or Outage: CI# 680182	x			
8/18/2015	PostalOne! Performance Issue or Outage: CI# 684794	x			
8/19/2015	PostalOne! Performance Issue or Outage: CI# 685548	x			
8/24/2015	SASP Microstrategy Reports	x			
8/25/2015	SASP Application CI 694796	x			
9/13/2015	SASP Update	x			x
9/22/2015	PostalOne! Help Desk Known Issues	x	x		x
<b>Total Email Notifications Provided</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>

Source: OIG analysis of PostalOne! Help Desk listing of unplanned outages and email notifications for FY 2015.

- The MEPT group identified 15 additional unplanned outages not shown in [Table 1](#); however, they could not show that any of the four email notifications were sent to users for these outages. For the combined 28 outages, management only sent 17 of the 112 (28 x 4) required email notifications to the users on their distribution list.

In a recent matter, management did not follow their communication process to notify business mailers about inaccurate mail direction data<sup>30</sup> and their ability to continue shipping mail to expiring DDUs<sup>31</sup> in a timely manner.<sup>32</sup> The Facility Access and Shipment Tracking (FAST)<sup>33</sup> May 2016 mail direction data file inaccurately listed about 10,329 DDUs with expiration dates of April 30, 2016. Based on the data provided, it appeared to the mailers that they could no longer ship mail at these facilities. Postal Service management notified the mailers when the issue was resolved 30 days later and new mail direction data was available. However, management did not notify mailers of the initial incident and the 30-day grace period to continue shipping mail to expiring DDUs.

These issues occurred because existing contingency plans did not provide detailed guidance on notification procedures for communicating outages and availability issues. Specifically, the plans did not identify the responsibilities of all business areas

<sup>30</sup> Mail direction data includes information on all Postal Service facilities available to ship mail and current rates. Mailers use this data to plan their mail shipments and determine applicable discounts.

<sup>31</sup> DDU's are postal facilities that receive, sort, and deliver the mail destined to individual recipients.

<sup>32</sup> The PostalOne!-BCSS contingency plan requires four notifications during outages and system related issues, which were not provided for this incident.

<sup>33</sup> The FAST, accessed through the PostalOne!-BCSS application, is used to schedule appointments to ship mail and monitor appointment data for postal facilities.

***PostalOne!-BCSS related contracts did not include IT clauses required by policy.***

involved in the communication process, or the timeframe and frequency for notifying users of an outage or availability issue. In addition, management did not recognize the importance of establishing methods for informing all users of PostalOne!-BCSS outages or availability issues.

Without proper guidance and timely notification of outages and availability issues, business mailers delay implementing the contingency plan to record mail submissions, which could cause them to incur additional labor and transportation costs and impact the mailer scorecard. See [Appendix B](#) for more details on the PostalOne!-BCSS communication process for planned, unplanned, and mailer outages.

### **Contract Clauses**

Three PostalOne!-BCSS related contracts<sup>34</sup> did not include required IT clauses as required by policy.<sup>35</sup> Specifically Clauses 4-18, *IT Accessibility Standards*,<sup>36</sup> and 4-19, *Information Security Requirements*,<sup>37</sup> were missing from one contract.<sup>38</sup> In addition, Clause 4-18 was missing from the second contract,<sup>39</sup> and Clause 4-19 was missing from the third contract.<sup>40</sup> This occurred because the original contracting officers believed these contract clauses were not applicable to the contracts. Without the required IT clauses in PostalOne!-BCSS related contracts, the data in the system is at increased risk of exposure or misuse. The PostalOne!-BCSS portion of the three contracts is about \$7.8 million.

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34 Contract numbers 1BITSW-09-B-0042, 1BITSV-15-B-0002, and 1BITSW-09-B-0007.

35 U.S. Postal Service Supplying Principles and Practices, dated August 7, 2015 page 477 states that Clause 4-18 be included in all IT contracts and Clause 4-19 be included in all contracts for IT and other information processing and information gathering services when personally identifiable or other sensitive information would be generated or collected during contract performance.

36 U.S. Postal Service Supplying Principles and Practices, page 477, dated August 7, 2015, states that Clause 4-18, Information Technology Accessibility Standards, requires suppliers to conform to the applicable provisions of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board's Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards (36 CFR part 1194) and should be included in all IT contracts.

37 U.S. Postal Service Supplying Principles and Practices Clause 4-19, Information Security Requirements, requires suppliers to comply with Handbooks AS-805 and AS-805A in completing the Business Impact Assessment, meeting information security requirements, and mitigating all security vulnerabilities.

38 Clauses 4-18 and 4-19 were missing from Contract Number 1BITSW-09-B-0042.

39 Clause 4-18 was missing from Contract Number 1BITSV-15-B-0002.

40 Clause 4-19 was missing from Contract Number 1BITSW-09-B-0007.

# Recommendations

***We recommend management develop a plan with milestones for resolving systemic and recurring PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System availability issues.***

We recommend the vice president, Mail Entry and Payment Technology, coordinate with the vice president, Information Technology, to:

1. Develop a plan with milestones for resolving systemic and recurring PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System availability issues.
2. Implement a formal, centralized process in ServiceNow for tracking PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System outages and downtime.
3. Establish policies and procedures that define enterprise-wide system availability statuses for downtime, uptime, and outages.
4. Develop detailed PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System notification policies to provide specific roles and responsibilities for relevant business areas and identify the timeframe and frequency for customer notifications when an outage or availability issues occur.

We recommend the vice president, Mail Entry and Payment Technology, coordinate with the vice president, Information Technology, to:

5. Establish and execute protocols for notifying all users when the PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System (BCSS) is unavailable, including posting notifications on the PostalOne!-BCSS Business Customer Gateway and the Rapid Information Bulletin Board System; and provide near real time availability information to customers on a continuous basis.

We recommend the vice president, Mail Entry and Payment Technology, coordinate with the vice president, Information Technology, and direct the manager, Information Technology Performance Achievement, to:

6. Develop a plan to calculate PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System availability in accordance with best practices and include blackout maintenance hours on the daily chief information officer scorecards reported to the Postal Service Executive Leadership Team.

We recommend the vice president, Supply Management, direct contract officers to:

7. Include all required information technology clauses in the three PostalOne!-Business Customer Support System contracts.

## Management's Comments

Management agreed with the Availability, Communication Process findings and recommendations 1 through 6. Management partially agreed with the contract finding and recommendation 7.

Regarding recommendation 1, management stated they are actively developing a plan to address availability issues with PostalOne!-BCSS and will publish the plan with all milestones by September 2016.

Regarding recommendation 2, management stated they have implemented a formal, centralized process for tracking PostalOne!-BCSS critical services availability metrics. The targeted implementation date is December 2016.

Regarding recommendation 3, management stated they will publish a management instruction that includes definitions of enterprise-wide system availability statuses by December 2016.

Regarding recommendation 4, management stated they have defined relevant roles and responsibilities designed to identify timelines and frequencies for customer notifications when an outage occurs in their MEPT/IT Communication Plan System and Application Issues/Outages document. The targeted implementation date is September 2016.

Regarding recommendation 5, management stated various external and internal communication processes have been outlined in the MEPT/IT Communication Plan System & Application Issues/Outages document. Also, notifications will be posted on the landing pages of the PostalOne! Business Customer Gateway and FAST and the PostalPro and BMA web pages. The targeted implementation date is September 2016.

Regarding recommendation 6, management stated they will include a system availability calculation that includes planned downtime on the daily CIO scorecards reported to the Postal Service Executive Leadership Team. The targeted implementation date is March 2017.

Regarding recommendation 7, management agreed with including Clauses 4-18, Information Technology Accessibility Standards, and 4-19, Information Security Requirements, in two of the three PostalOne!-BCSS related contracts noted, but disagreed with including Clause 4-18 in contract 1BITSV-15-B-0002. Management stated this contract is for professional services, not for any covered products or the use of such products to a significant extent. The targeted implementation date is October 2016. See Appendix D for management's comments in their entirety.

## **Evaluation of Management's Comments**

The OIG considers management's comments to recommendations 1 and 6 to be responsive and the proposed corrective actions should resolve the issues identified in the report. The OIG considers management's comments to recommendation 7 to be non-responsive and will not resolve the issues identified in the report.

Regarding recommendation 2, we generally agree with management's comments; however, in addition to availability issues, our recommendation indicates the implementation of a formal, centralized process in ServiceNow for tracking PostalOne!-BCSS outages and downtime is necessary. If implemented as recommended, actions taken should resolve the issues identified in the report.

Regarding recommendation 3, we generally agree with management's comments; however, our recommendation states that management should specifically define availability statuses for downtime, uptime, and outages. If implemented as recommended, actions taken should resolve the issues identified in the report.

Regarding recommendation 4, we generally agree with management's comments; however, our recommendation indicates that notification policies should also cover instances when availability issues occur. If implemented as recommended, actions taken should resolve the issues identified in the report.

Regarding recommendation 5, we generally agree with management's comments; however, this recommendation also indicates that notifications should be posted on the Rapid Information Bulletin Board System. If implemented as recommended, actions taken should resolve the issues identified in the report.

Regarding recommendation 7, the OIG recognizes contract 1BITSV-15-B-0002 as a professional services contract. However, this contract is for IT services such as technical design, code development, system integration testing, and configuration management. The Postal Service's Supplying Principles and Practices (SP&P), Section 8-4.10, states that all IT contracts must include Clause 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards. Section 8-4.1 defines IT as "encompassing all types and categories of computer, networking, telecommunications systems, hardware, firmware, software, and services." Therefore, the OIG believes that contract 1BITSV-15-B-0002 is an IT services contract and should include Clause 4-18, as required by the SP&P. We view the partial disagreement with this recommendation as unresponsive; however, we do not plan to pursue this issue through the formal audit resolution process.

All recommendations require OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. Recommendations should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendations can be closed.

# Appendices

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## Appendix A: Additional Information

### Background

Business mailers and business mail acceptance employees use PostalOne!-BCSS to enter postage statements, deposits, and other financial transactions necessary to process and manage business mail. During FY 2015, the Postal Service processed about 14 million transactions and generated over \$40.9 billion in revenue through PostalOne!-BCSS.

The MEPT group is responsible for managing the PostalOne!-BCSS system. It also manages the system's contingency operations and the process for communicating with all users, and defines the requirements that drive IT support for PostalOne!-BCSS. MEPT and IT support and services for PostalOne!-BCSS include:

- **PostalOne!-BCSS Internal and External Contingency Plans.** The internal contingency plan is intended to instruct field-level acceptance clerks, supervisors, and managers on how to adhere to acceptance policies and procedures during a system outage. The external contingency plan is intended to provide information to the mailer on the modified acceptance policies and procedures for use during a system or mailer outage, or system delayed file transmission. These plans are designed to both manually support acceptance operations and provide support for system restoration
- **PostalOne!-BCSS Monitoring Services.** PostalOne!-BCSS availability is monitored continuously by checking the status for internal and external customer access to the system using a vendor monitoring tool. Monitoring tools for determining internal access status are in Eagan, MN, and San Mateo, CA, while 45 monitoring locations around the country determine external access status. The vendor who owns the monitoring tools selects these locations.
- **The mailer scorecard process.** The Postal Service has four key initiatives to streamline the acceptance, induction, and verification of commercial mailings that may result in a postage assessment. Each initiative evaluates mail quality and mail preparation against established thresholds. The Postal Service provides mailers with access to the mailer scorecard, which displays a dashboard view of the results of the letter and flat mailing activity within each of these initiatives over a calendar month. This view is available to both the mailer who submitted the electronic documentation for the mailing and the mail owner.

Because of the volume of transactions processed through PostalOne!-BCSS, it is critical that the system be continuously available to business mailers and units. Management's goal is to have the system available to users 99.95 percent of the time. Management uses a vendor to monitor PostalOne!-BCSS availability by checking the status for access to the system on a continuous basis. The results of the system status checks are reported on the CIO daily scorecard as the system availability.

The system may be unavailable when issues related to the application, hardware, configuration, and network occur. When PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable, users should be notified and instructed to use a manual contingency plan, which requires data to be subsequently entered when the system becomes available again. Management is currently undergoing activities to enhance some existing functionalities in PostalOne!-BCSS.<sup>41</sup>

### Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to determine the effectiveness of support for PostalOne!-BCSS operational availability. Our audit scope was the Postal Service's support of PostalOne!-BCSS and communication between the Postal Service and PostalOne!-BCSS users from FY 2014 to FY 2015.

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<sup>41</sup> These functionalities and enhancements include payment modernization, informed visibility, package revenue assurance, enterprise payment systems, data visibility and reporting, and seamless acceptance Intelligent Mail barcodes.

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Interviewed appropriate personnel and evaluated relevant policies and procedures for managing and maintaining PostalOne!-BCSS.
- Obtained and analyzed information related to PostalOne!-BCSS availability, blackout maintenance hours, outages, incident tickets, change management, and communication activities for FY 2014 and FY 2015.
- Obtained and evaluated PostalOne!-BCSS internal and external contingency plans to identify the requirements for submitting mail when PostalOne!-BCSS is unavailable and to evaluate the communication process.
- Identified PostalOne!-BCSS planned and unplanned downtime by obtaining associated availability, blackout maintenance hours, outage, incident tickets, and change management data.
- Reviewed CIO scorecard reports to determine if PostalOne!-BCSS met the established 99.95 percent availability goal.
- Determined the adjusted CIO scorecard availability percentages based on maintenance hours.
- Obtained and reviewed all contracts associated with PostalOne!-BCSS to evaluate monitoring, availability, and IT requirements.
- Evaluated the PostalOne!-BCSS communication process to determine if all users were notified of outages.
- Conducted a limited review of the mailer scorecard process and procedures.<sup>42</sup>
- Researched and obtained best practices for communicating system outages and maintaining operational availability.
- Interviewed the mailer community to determine how they are affected by PostalOne!-BCSS downtime.
- Interviewed appropriate personnel responsible for the FAST mail direction data and the communication process to obtain information on concerns expressed by the mailers regarding the accuracy of mail direction data and the ability to ship mail.

We conducted this performance audit from September 2015 through August 2016, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included tests of internal controls as we considered necessary under the circumstances. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on June 2, 2016, and included their comments where appropriate.

We assessed the reliability of computer-generated ServiceNow unplanned downtime data. We interviewed an agency official knowledgeable about the data, reviewed related documentation and recalculated downtime hours to attest the reliability of the data. We determined the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

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<sup>42</sup> The mailer scorecard is a microstrategy report that displays results of mail quality verifications across key initiatives including full-service, move update, eInduction, and seamless acceptance. Microstrategy reports summarize mailing performance history, allowing mailers to view trending and error information on mailings.

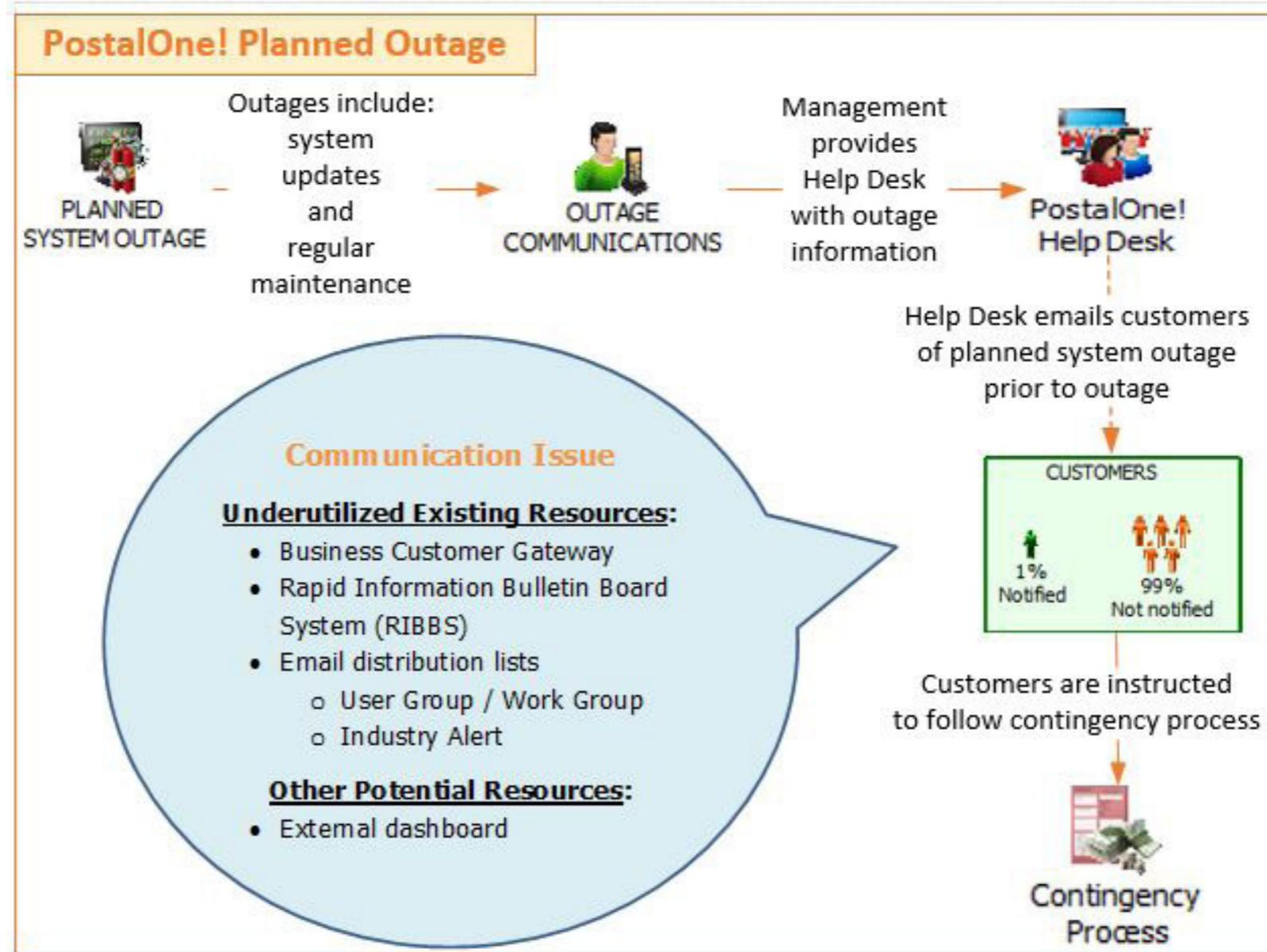
## Prior Audit Coverage

The OIG did not identify any prior audits or reviews related to the objective of this audit.

**Appendix B:  
PostalOne!-Business  
Customer Support  
System Communication  
Process for Outages**

Figure 2 illustrates the communication process when planned system outages occur, showing each stage in the process from the time the planned outage occurs to implementation of the contingency plan. The figure also shows that the Help Desk notified only 1 percent of customers<sup>43</sup> (or 4,326 of 584,087) of system outages in FY 2015.

**Figure 2: Planned System Outage Communication Process**

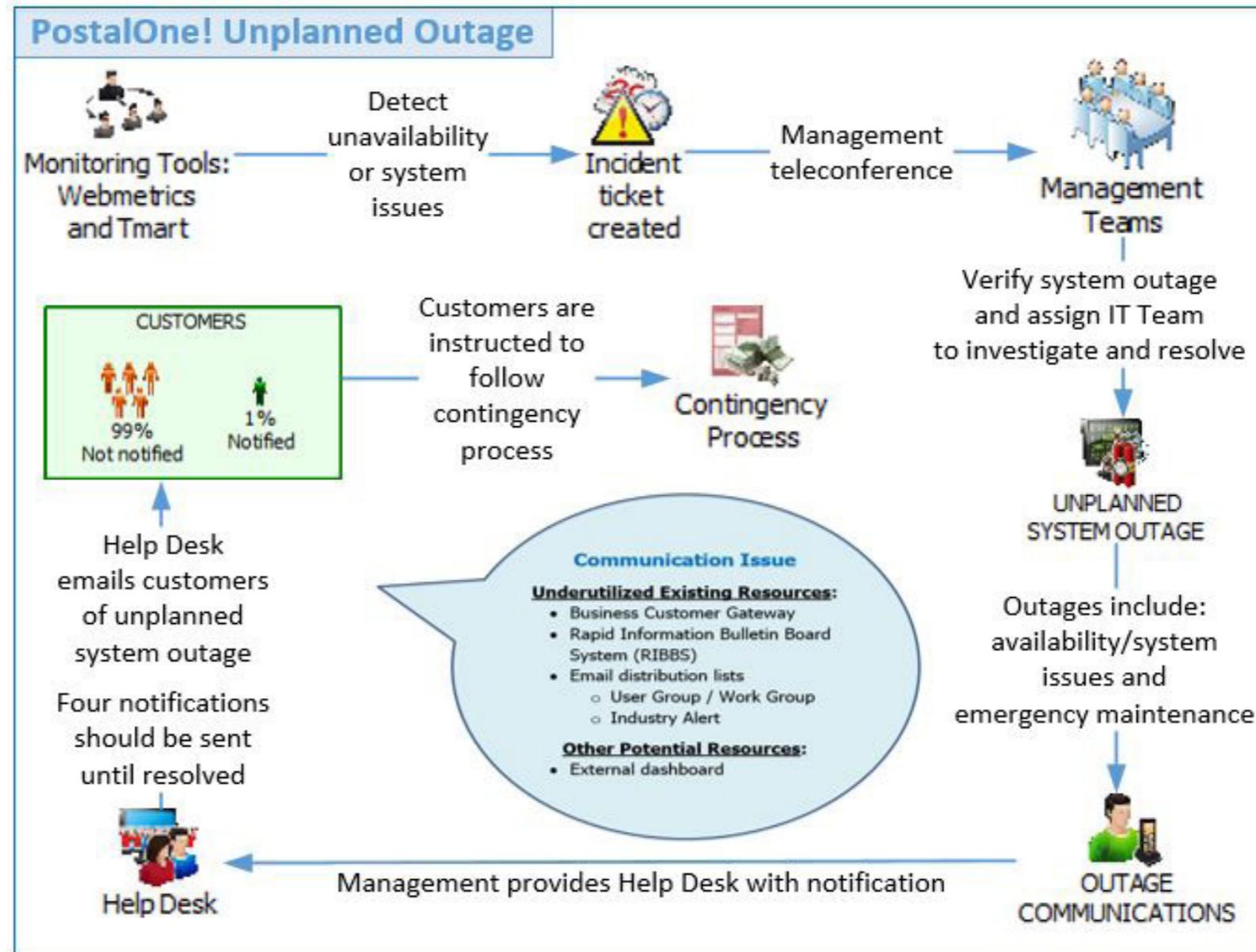


Source: OIG illustration of PostalOne!-BCSS contingency process for planned outages based on Postal Service interviews.

43 For the purposes of Figures 2, 3, and 4, customers consist of Business Mail Entry Unit employees and business mailers.

Figure 3 illustrates the communication process when unplanned system outages occur. It shows each stage in the process, from the time the monitoring tool detects an outage to implementation of the contingency plan. The figure also shows that the Help Desk notified only 1 percent of customers (or 4,326 of 584,087) of system outages in FY 2015.

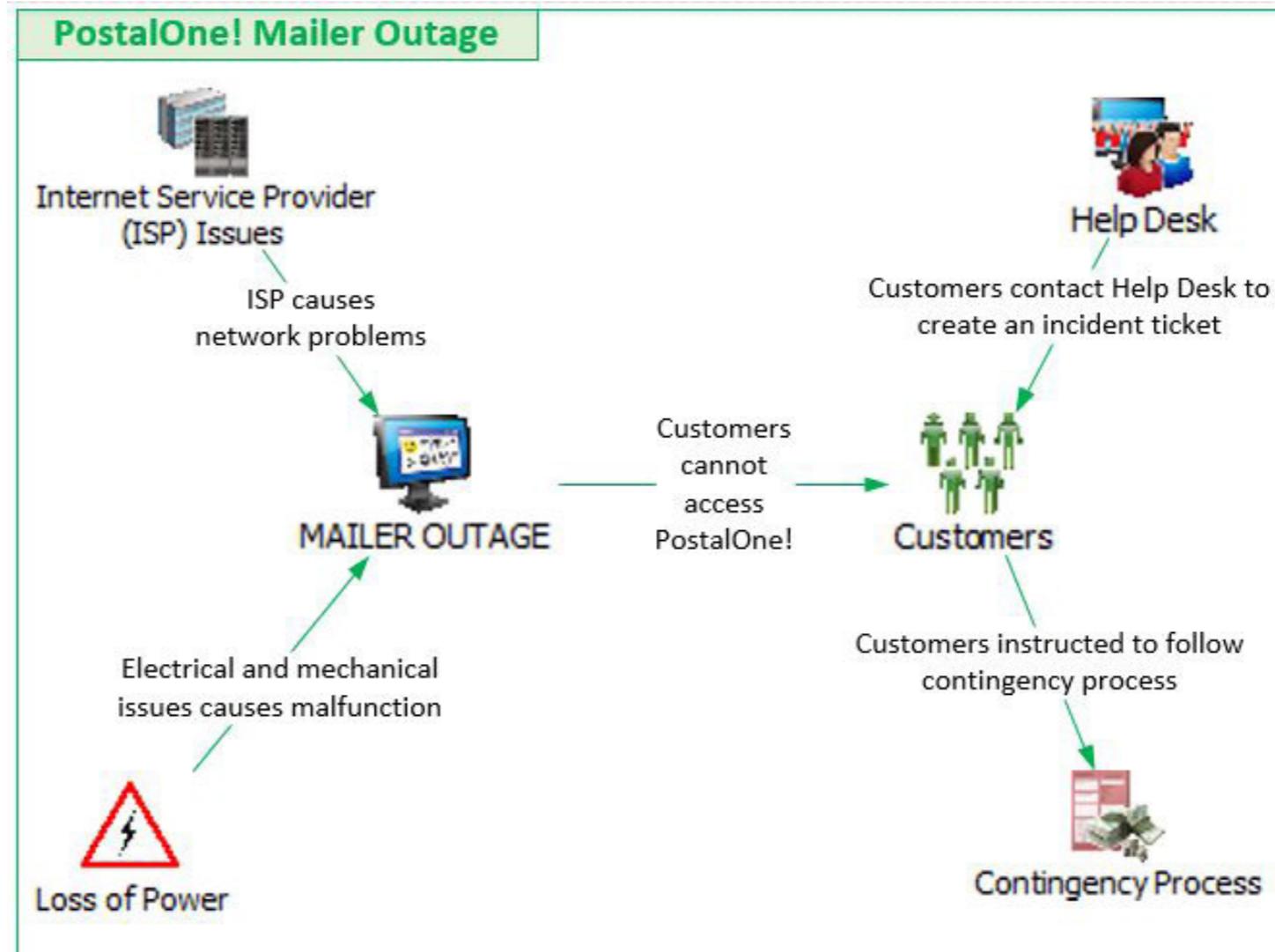
**Figure 3: Unplanned System Outage Communication Process**



Source: OIG illustration of PostalOne!-BCSS contingency process for unplanned outages based on Postal Service interviews.

Figure 4 illustrates the communication process when mailer outages occur due to items beyond the Postal Service's control. Figure 4 shows each stage in the process, from the time the customer cannot access the system due to loss of power or Internet access to implementation of the contingency plan.

**Figure 4: Mailer Outage Communication Process**



Source: OIG illustration of PostalOne!-BCSS contingency process for mailer outages.

**Appendix C:  
Fiscal Year 2015  
Chief Information  
Officer Scorecard**

Table 2 lists dates for 22 (of 252) CIO scorecards with daily average availability scores of less than 99.95 percent. The availability scores range from 76.03 to 99.92 percent and do not include planned downtime (blackout request hours).

**Table 2. FY 2015 CIO Scorecards Not Meeting Availability Goal**

<b>CIO Scorecard Date</b>	<b>Internal Percentage</b>	<b>External Percentage</b>	<b>Average Percentage</b>
October 27, 2014	100	95.88	97.94
November 4, 2014	100	99.38	99.69
December 29, 2014	80.21	97.47	88.84
January 1, 2015	100	89.59	94.79
February 1, 2015	91.67	100	95.83
February 10, 2015	99.47	99.58	99.53
February 16, 2015	86.59	76.77	81.68
March 16, 2015	99.57	99.58	99.58
April 29, 2015	100	84.21	92.11
April 30, 2015	100	97.20	98.60
May 14, 2015	98.93	100	99.47
May 31, 2015	99.47	100	99.73
June 25, 2015	98.94	97.59	98.27
July 22, 2015	100	95.83	97.92
July 26, 2015	98.73	100	99.36
August 5, 2015	98.72	95.83	97.28
August 17, 2015	99.83	100	99.92
August 19, 2015	87.68	64.38	76.03
August 24, 2015	98.57	100	99.29
September 21, 2015	100	92.71	96.36
September 28, 2015	100	93.75	96.88
September 29, 2015	100	83.33	91.67

Source: OIG analysis of CIO scorecards.

Table 3 provides the results of adjusted availability calculations for 61 FY 2015 PostalOne!-BCSS CIO Scorecards reporting 100 percent availability. To calculate the adjusted availability percentages, we deducted the hours and minutes associated with blackout maintenance hours on these dates.

**Table 3. Adjusted FY 2015 CIO Scorecard Percentages Using Maintenance Hours**

**Quarter 1**

CIO Scorecard Dates	Blackout Maintenance Hours for PostalOne!	Adjusted Availability Percentage <sup>44</sup>
October 9, 2014	4:00	83.33
October 21, 2014	4:00	83.33
October 26, 2014	8:00	66.67
November 2, 2014	8:00	66.67
November 3, 2014	7:00	70.83
November 4, 2014	7:00	70.83
November 19, 2014	1:30	93.75
November 30, 2014	12:55	46.18
December 1, 2014	4:00	83.33
December 4, 2014	4:00	83.33
December 11, 2014	4:00	83.33
December 22, 2014	4:00	83.33

**Quarter 2**

CIO Scorecard Dates	Blackout Maintenance Hours for PostalOne!	Adjusted Availability Percentage
January 25, 2015	10:00	58.33
January 26, 2015	1:00	95.83
January 27, 2015	4:00	83.33
February 5, 2015	4:00	83.33
February 6, 2015	2:00	91.67
February 19, 2015	4:00	83.33
March 12, 2015	4:00	83.33
March 22, 2015	4:25	81.60
March 23, 2015	4:00	83.33
March 26, 2015	4:00	83.33

<sup>44</sup> We calculated the adjusted availability percentage by dividing the maintenance hours by 24 hours in a day, and subtracting it from 1, then multiplying by 100. For example, our calculation for the four maintenance hours on October 9 2014 was:  $4/24 = .1667$ ;  $1 - .1667 = .83333$ ;  $.8333 \times 100 = 83.33$  percent availability.

**Quarter 3**

CIO Scorecard Dates	Blackout Maintenance Hours for PostalOne!	Adjusted Availability Percentage
April 9, 2015	4:00	83.33
April 23, 2015	4:00	83.33
April 26, 2015	6:00	75.00
April 27, 2015	8:59	62.57
April 28, 2015	8:59	62.57
May 7, 2015	4:00	83.33
May 16, 2015*	1:00	95.83
May 17, 2015*	16:53	29.65
May 19, 2015	4:00	83.33
May 21, 2015	4:00	83.33
May 28, 2015	5:30	77.08
June 1, 2015	12:00	50.00
June 4, 2015	4:00	83.33
June 10, 2015	4:00	83.33
June 14, 2015	15:20	36.11
June 15, 2015	17:01	29.10
June 18, 2015	5:00	79.17
June 22, 2015	2:40	88.89
June 24, 2015	4:41	80.49
June 30, 2015	6:00	75.00

**Quarter 4**

CIO Scorecard Dates	Blackout Maintenance Hours for PostalOne!	Adjusted availability percentage
July 6, 2015	4:00	83.33
July 16, 2015	7:00	70.83
July 21, 2015	6:00	75.00
July 30, 2015	7:30	68.75
August 2, 2015	13:00	45.83
August 4, 2015	4:30	81.25
August 7, 2015*	11:00	54.17

August 8, 2015*	24:00	0.00
August 9, 2015*	18:00	25.00
August 30, 2015	21:00	12.50
August 31, 2015	24:00	0.00
September 1, 2015	24:00	0.00
September 2, 2015	24:00	0.00
September 3, 2015	17:00	29.17
September 17, 2015	5:00	79.17
September 18, 2015*	24:00	0.00
September 19, 2015*	24:00	0.00
September 20, 2015*	24:00	0.00
September 21, 2015	24:00	0.00
September 22, 2015	12:00	50.00
September 24, 2015	4:00	83.33
September 27, 2015	8:00	66.67
September 29, 2015	4:30	81.25
September 30, 2015	3:00	87.50

Source: OIG analysis of FY 2015 CIO Scorecard reports and FY 2015 Blackout Request information provided by the Postal Service.

\*The following three sets of dates occurred on weekends and the average 100% availability percentages were reported on three CIO Scorecards: 1) May 16-17, 2015; 2) August 7-9, 2015; 3) September 18-20, 2015.

## Appendix D: Management's Comments



July 29, 2016

SHERRY FULLWOOD  
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS (A)

SUBJECT: Response to Draft Report: *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System Availability (IT-AR-16-DRAFT)

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this report. With regards to Recommendation 7, Supply Management agrees in part with the report's findings, recommendation and monetary impact and will address it below.

The report identifies three (3) contracts that did not include Clause 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards and/or Clause 4-19: Information Security Requirements. When contracts 1BITSW-09-B-0042 and 1BITSW-09-B-0007 were created, the Contracting Officer at the time believed the clauses were not applicable to the licenses and products being purchased. After further review, Supply Management agrees to ensure both clauses are included in contracts 1BITSW-09-B-0042 and 1BITSW-09-B-0007. However, Supply Management disagrees with the report's findings, recommendation and monetary impact with regards to contract 1BITSV-15-B-0002.

Contract 1BITSV-15-B-0002 includes Clause 4-19: Information Security Requirements but did not include Clause 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards. The Office of Inspector General's (OIG) report indicates that without both of these clauses "the data in the system is at increased risk of exposure or misuse." Clause 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards requires compliance with 36 CFR Part 1194, which implements the Section 508 standards of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those standards set forth requirements which make electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public. Because Clause 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards only addresses the *accessibility* of electronic and information technology to people with disabilities, and not the *security* of USPS data or systems, not having this clause in the contract does not place data in the USPS system at an increased risk of exposure or misuse. The supplier is not providing any covered products (e.g., computers, networking or telecommunications systems, applications or operating systems) or the use, to a significant extent, of such product in the performance of a service. Rather, the supplier's scope of work under the contract is limited to furnishing professional services to USPS. Therefore, we disagree with \$7,449,056 of the \$7,783,620 of unsupported questioned costs of the monetary impact that is referred to in the report.

### OIG RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Recommendation [1]:**

Develop a plan with milestones for resolving systemic and recurring *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System availability issues.

#### **Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management agrees with the recommendation. Information Technology has already been actively developing a plan to address availability issues with *PostalOne!*-BCSS. Many of these milestones have already been completed and the plan with all milestones will be published by the target date.

**Target Implementation Date:**

September 2016

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, St. Louis Solutions Center

**Recommendation [2]:**

Implement a formal, centralized process in ServiceNow for tracking *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System availability issues.

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management agrees with the recommendation and has already implemented a formal, centralized process for tracking *PostalOne!* Business Customer Support System critical services availability metrics in real time on the CIO dashboard in ServiceNow.

**Target Implementation Date:**

December 2016

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, Information Technology Performance Achievement

**Recommendation [3]:**

Establish policies and procedures that define enterprise-wide system availability statuses for downtime, uptime, and outages.

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management agrees with the recommendation and will publish a management instruction that includes definitions of enterprise-wide system availability statuses.

**Target Implementation Date:**

December 2016

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, Information Technology Performance Achievement

**Recommendation [4]:**

Develop detailed *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System notification policies to provide specific roles and responsibilities for relevant business areas and identify the timeframe and frequency for customer notifications when an outage or availability issues occur.

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management agrees with the recommendation and has defined relevant roles and responsibilities designed to identify timelines and frequencies for customer notifications when an outage occurs in a document titled MEPT/IT Communication Plan System & Application Issues/Outages.

**Target Implementation Date:**

September 2016

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, Mail Entry

**Recommendation [5]:**

Establish and execute protocols for notifying all users when the *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System (BCSS) is unavailable, including posting notifications on the *PostalOne!*-BCSS Business Customer Gateway and the Rapid Information Bulletin Board System; and provide near real time availability information to customers on a continuous basis. Management will request closure of this recommendation with the issue of the final report

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management agrees with the recommendation. Procedures outlined in the MEPT/IT Communication Plan System & Application Issues/Outages document indicate various External and Internal communications processes that include email distribution to *PostalOne!* users, FAST users and Mailer Technical Advisory Committee members. Notifications will be posted on the following system landing pages: *PostalOne!*, Business Customer Gateway and FAST. Notifications will be posted on the PostalPro and BMA webpages.

**Target Implementation Date:**

September 2016

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, Mail Entry

**Recommendation [6]:**

Develop a plan to calculate *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System availability in accordance with best practices and include planned downtime on the daily chief information officer scorecards reported to the Postal Service Executive Leadership Team.

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management agrees with the recommendation and will include a system availability calculation that includes planned downtime on the daily chief information officer scorecards reported to the Postal Service Executive Leadership Team.

**Target Implementation Date:**

March 2017

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, Information Technology Performance Achievement

**Recommendation 7:**

Include all required information technology clauses in the three *PostalOne!*-Business Customer Support System contracts.

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

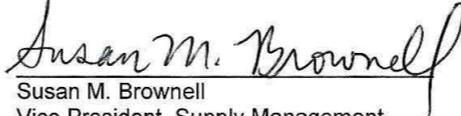
Management agrees in part with this recommendation. We have started communications with the suppliers of contracts 1BITSW-09-B-0042 to negotiate the inclusion of Clauses 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards and 4-19: Information Security Requirements and 1BITSW-09-B-0007 to include Clause 4-19: Information Security Requirements. Providing no outlying issues from the negotiations, those two contracts will be modified accordingly. Management disagrees with the recommendation to modify contract 1BITSV-15-B-0002 to include Clause 4-18: Information Technology Accessibility Standards. This contract is for professional services and not for providing any covered products (e.g., computers, networking or telecommunications systems, applications or operating systems) or the use, to a significant extent, of such product in the performance of a service.

**Target Implementation Date:**

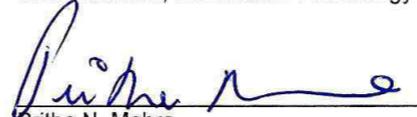
October 2016

**Responsible Official:**

Manager, Technology Infrastructure Portfolio, Supply Management

  
Susan M. Brownell  
Vice President, Supply Management

  
Jeffrey C. Johnson  
Vice President, Information Technology

  
Pritha N. Mehra  
Vice President, Mail Entry and Payment Technology



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