



National Infrastructure Protection Plan

Postal and Shipping Sector

The Postal and Shipping Sector is one of 18 critical infrastructure sectors established under the authority of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7 (HSPD-7). Each sector is managed by a Sector-Specific Agency (SSA) that provides sector-level performance feedback to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to enable assessment of national, cross-sector critical infrastructure protection and resilience programs. In accordance with the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), each SSA is responsible for developing and implementing a Sector-Specific Plan (SSP), in collaboration with public and private sector partners, and for encouraging the development of appropriate information-sharing and analysis mechanisms.

Sector Overview

The Postal and Shipping Sector is an integral component of the U.S. economy, employing more than 1.8 million people and earning direct revenues of more than \$217 billion per year. The Postal and Shipping Sector moves over 574 million messages, products, and financial transactions each day. Postal and shipping activity is differentiated from general cargo operations by its focus on letter and flat mail, publications, and small- and medium-size packages and by service from millions of senders to nearly 152 million destinations. The sector is highly concentrated, with a handful of providers holding over 90 percent of the market share.

Sector-specific assets include: over 400 high-volume automated processing facilities; over 40,000 local delivery units; many and varied collection, acceptance, and retail operations; over 50,000 transport vehicles including vans, trucks, tractor trailers, and aircraft; and information and communications networks.

Every sector of the economy depends on the service providers in the Postal and Shipping Sector to deliver time-

sensitive letters, packages and other shipments. In particular, the Banking and Finance, Commercial Facilities, Government Facilities, and Healthcare and Public Health Sectors rely heavily on the Postal and Shipping Sector for the shipment and delivery of critical documents and packages.

Major interdependencies with other sectors include those with the Communications, Energy, Information Technology, and Transportation Systems Sectors. The Postal and Shipping Sector itself relies on: (1) the Transportation Systems Sector for the movement of mail and packages by air, road, or rail; (2) the Energy Sector for power; and (3) the Communications and Information Technology Sectors for supporting logistics operations and automatic identification and sorting. As key customers, the sectors work together to ensure that their efforts support each other.

Sector Partnerships

The Postal and Shipping Sector has an informal Sector Coordinating Council (SCC) that is comprised of the major industry providers (UPS, United States Postal Service (USPS),

FedEx, and DHL) that are responsible for approximately 94 percent of the market. The SCC works with DHS and other Federal agencies to ensure that the efforts of the private sector are informed by Federal activities and vice versa. This council also serves as a critical mechanism for ensuring that the concerns and perspectives of the private sector are considered in Federal actions.

Several government agencies have formed the Postal and Shipping Government Coordinating Council (GCC), including DHS (Transportation Security Administration (TSA), Office of Infrastructure Protection, Science and Technology Directorate, Management Directorate, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Customs and Border Protection, Mail Management Program, and the DHS Office of Grants and Training); the Departments of Commerce, Defense, Health and Human Services (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration), Interior, Justice (FBI), State, and Transportation; and a representative of the State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Government Coordinating Council. The objective of the GCC is to promote effective government coordination of postal and shipping security strategies; identify gaps and activities; establish policies and standards, program metrics, and performance reporting criteria; and foster effective communications and partnerships across government and between government and the private sector.

Critical Infrastructure Protection Issues

The Postal and Shipping Sector delivers to virtually every national and international location. Accordingly, postal and shipping personnel have trusted access to almost all public and private facilities in their roles as collectors and distributors of the Nation's postal commerce. To ensure ease of access to and use of the system for its customers, the sector maintains an extremely large number of collection points at which parcels and letters can be inserted for delivery. These collection facilities present a vast array of relatively anonymous entry points at which terrorists could insert dangerous materials for delivery to intended targets.

Priority Programs

Within the Postal and Shipping Sector, protective programs exist primarily on two distinct levels: (1) overarching, sector-wide protective programs led by TSA as the SSA; and (2) protective programs that are driven by industry partners and, for the most part, performed voluntarily by asset owners and operators. High-priority, sector-wide programs include:

- **Exercises.** The Postal and Shipping Sector has conducted several exercises in partnership with government and private sector stakeholders. In 2010, the sector joined in the planning for the National Level Exercise 2011 earthquake scenario.

The sector is also planning a research and development (R&D) workshop for SCC members to discuss DHS priorities and opportunities to conduct R&D for the sector.

- **Information Sharing.** The Postal and Shipping Sector has established a portal on the Homeland Security Information Network and a Sharepoint site enabling collaboration and information sharing between the SSA, public and private sector partners, and other critical infrastructure sectors.

TSA joined with the USPS and others in actively responding to issues affecting the sector.

- **Global Mail.** Two packages containing IEDs destined for aircraft were found in late October 2010. In response, a set of working groups was formed to address the processes, technology, and coordination necessary to identify vulnerabilities of mail moving globally on passenger and all-cargo aircraft and recommend actions to refine current procedures and reduce backlogs. The group includes more than 40 domestic and international contributors representing government and private sector entities, postal operators, and passenger and all-cargo air carriers.
- **Domestic Mail.** TSA began an initiative with the USPS to conduct a risk assessment of U.S. mail, including airmail assignments made at USPS and mailer facilities, the transit operations, and the handling of such mail by air carriers.

USPS protective programs include initiatives such as Biological Detection Systems in 272 processing and distribution centers, threat mail identification programs, a facility risk-rating model, facility security surveys, commercial mailer reviews, observation of mail conditions, Airport Mail Security Review Program, Aviation Mail Security Program, Personnel Screening Review Program, Financial Security Review Program, and a Security Force Assessment Survey.

Although the specifics are generally considered proprietary and of a commercially sensitive nature, private sector partners are implementing protective initiatives and programs. General examples include physical vulnerability mitigation measures, additional security measures for the handling and storage of hazardous materials, closed-circuit surveillance systems, and cybersecurity and personnel security measures.

For questions or more information, please contact NIPP@dhs.gov or visit www.dhs.gov/nipp.



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