Report of the Technology Subcommittee
Final Recommendations to the Commission

The Technology Subcommittee submits the following recommendations to the Commission:

1. ***Automation Technology.*** *The Subcommittee recommends that the Postal Service balance capital expenditures on new automation technology with consideration of outsourcing elements of the processing network. The Postal Service should neither acquire excess capacity that would only be used during peak periods nor undertake functions that the private sector could perform more effectively and at less cost than the Postal Service itself. Nonetheless, the Subcommittee acknowledges the steps the Postal Service has taken to automate its system for processing single-piece letter mail and welcomes the progress made in the automation of the processing of flats and packages. The Subcommittee recommends the continued development of an effective merging system that is responsive to customer needs and culminates in one bundle of mixed letters and flats for each delivery point.*

2. ***Processing Standardization.*** *The Subcommittee recommends that the Postal Service study the problem of mail processing with the possible goal of redesign of the whole mail system, using the latest in 21st century technology. The Subcommittee further recommends that the Postal Service examine every one of its "legacy systems" and question its purpose and whether it is needed. In addition, the Subcommittee recommends that mail processing redesign include a standard or common footprint for each processing facility, with an identical level of technology and machinery in each. This would allow easy shifting of personnel to manage the mail flow more efficiently. The Subcommittee views this redesign study as complementary to the Postal Service's current network rationalization initiative.*

3. ***Intelligent Mail.*** *The Subcommittee notes that the ability of the Postal Service to track individual pieces of mail can improve internal efficiency and satisfy postal customers that mail is delivered to the right location and on time. The Subcommittee recognizes that technology to achieve this goal exists today and is now being used by some of the competitors of the Postal Service. The Subcommittee recommends that the Postal Service work to put mail tracking technology in place on a timely and more comprehensive basis, so that it is available to all users, large and small, at an affordable price.*

4. ***The Transportation Network.*** *The Subcommittee recommends that the Postal Service integrate its facility automation efforts with its transportation network by using Intelligent Mail technology, GPS, and onboard computer technology. The Subcommittee also recommends that the Postal Service put in place a cost-effective system capable of tracking every vehicle on its route and allowing each vehicle to communicate in real time, either by voice or electronic communication, with appropriate fixed facilities.*

5.   ***Improved USPS Website and Personalized Stamps.*** *The Subcommittee recommends that postal services available at Post Offices should also be generally available on the USPS website and at Postal Service kiosks and contract stations at reasonable prices for all postal customers, from the individual to the large mailer. The Subcommittee recommends the development and production of "personalized" stamps that are made available through appropriate sources, beginning with the USPS website. These stamps should be offered to postal customers at a reasonable premium.*

6.   ***Security.*** *The Subcommittee believes that the events of 9/11 and the Postal Service anthrax incidents have increased the need to ensure security in the mail system. The Subcommittee believes that a more secure system could be built using sender identified mail. The Subcommittee recommends that the Postal Service, in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security, explore the use of sender identification for every piece of mail, commercial and retail.*

7.   ***Evaluation, Acquisition and Deployment of Technology.*** *The Subcommittee acknowledges that the Postal Service recently created the new Mailing Technology Strategy Council to provide assessments of technology trends. It recommends that the Council be strengthened to be an independent advisory body empowered to do more than provide assessments. The Subcommittee believes the Council should not only originate ideas for improving the mail system, but should accept them from all sources, including the individual Postal Service user. It should study, evaluate and recommend to the Postmaster General technologies that could be used to upgrade the mail system. The Subcommittee recommends that the Postal Service management provide an annual report to the Board of Directors on the work of the Mailing Technology Strategy Council.*