



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 4, 2004

Contact: Public Relations
202-268-2155
Release No: 38
www.usps.com

BIOHAZARD DETECTION SYSTEM DEPLOYMENT RESUMES

STATEMENT OF AZEEZALY S. JAFFER VICE PRESIDENT, PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS U.S. POSTAL SERVICE JUNE 4, 2004

Nationwide installation of the U.S. Postal Service's Biohazard Detection System (BDS) has resumed, following a slight delay for testing to determine why some systems were producing "inconclusive" test results. The Postal Service Engineering group, working with BDS equipment contractors, has identified and corrected the anomalies.

"Inconclusive" test results did not mean there was a threat in the mail: They simply meant that a small, but unacceptable, number of tests had to be rerun to obtain conclusive results. Had anthrax been present, it would have been detected by the BDS. BDS has proven that it consistently and reliably detects anthrax in the mail.

The Postal Service will continue to monitor BDS performance as deployment resumes to ensure the systems are operating properly. In addition, a future enhancement is planned that will further improve system performance.

Our goal through the testing, implementation, and everyday use of the Biohazard Detection System has been the safety of every Postal Service employee and the customers we serve. That's why it was critical that the system operate properly before installation continued.

BDS is a fully contained, automated system designed to identify biohazards in the mail to provide an added level of protection to our employees. A total of 283 sites nationwide are scheduled to receive the system.

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