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# **POSTAL NEWS**

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## **POSTAL GOVERNORS APPROVE MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS**

WASHINGTON – The U. S. Postal Service Board of Governors approved several major capital projects today at its monthly meeting.

The Board approved funding for Surface Visibility, the third phase of the Surface Air Support System (SASS). Surface Visibility is the third piece of the overall Transportation Visibility strategy. In the first phase, an infrastructure was developed to track FedEx and Amtrak shipments. In the second phase, SASS was expanded to include commercial air visibility. In this phase, the systems will track several visibility points from container loading to the unloading of both Postal Service and postal customer trailers. Wireless scanners will be used to capture data. The system will be deployed at 129 facilities.

To further increase efficiency of the Postal Service's letter automation program and keep pace with an annual average increase of 1.8 million delivery points, the Board approved funding to purchase 1,587 stacker modules for 955 Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS) machines and 2,041 tray carts that will serve as supporting equipment. The addition of this equipment in mail processing facilities will allow a greater portion of letter mail to be sorted to Delivery Point Sequence – the order in which letter carriers deliver the mail.

Funding was also approved for the design, fabrication, and installation of a reconfigured Airline Receiving Concourse and Tray Line System at the New York International Service Center at John F. Kennedy International Airport. The New York International Service Center – which has experienced a 41 percent increase in mail volume over the past three years – processes an average of two million pieces of mail per day and serves as a transfer point for almost 12,000 trays of mail each day. The existing material handling system was first installed in the late 1970s, with additional tray lines added in 1983.

The Board also approved funds to expand the existing Arlington, Virginia, Main Post Office (MPO) to consolidate mail delivery operations currently split among three postal facilities – the MPO and the Buckingham and Rosslyn stations – and to renovate the historic MPO lobby. The expanded facility will provide 39,900 square feet of space, plus parking for customers, postal vehicles and employees. Funding was also included to expand and renovate the retail lobby at Buckingham Station. The new facility will be part of a larger development which will be privately owned.

And, to ensure uninterrupted operations at the Busse Surface Hub in Chicago, the Board approved funding to extend the lease for that facility for six years. The hub processes Priority Mail and serves as a surface hub for mail processing and distribution centers in the Chicago Metropolitan area. The current annual lease was due to expire in November 2004.

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