

# POSTAL NEWS

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- 1. Qatar signs up as postal congress host. April 7, 2009.**
- 2. Itella Logistics - EMS Customer Care Award. April 7, 2009.**
- 3. Deutsche Post/DHL Seeks Royal Mail Stake. April 7, 2009.**
- 4. Postal merger faces tough opposition. April 8, 2009.**
- 5. Postal Service looks to consolidate city carrier routes . April 7, 2009.**

## **1. Qatar signs up as postal congress host**

Gulf times

By Ramesh Mathew

The apex body of world postal corporations, Universal Postal Union (UPU), and Q-Post yesterday signed a formal contract to host the 25th Universal Postal Congress in Doha in 2012.

According to a statement received by Gulf Times from the UPU yesterday, the signing took place at the UPU's International Bureau in Berne, Switzerland, where Qatari Minister for Business and Trade HE Sheikh Fahd bin Jassim bin Mohamed al-Thani and UPU director general Edouard Dayan exchanged documents. Q-Post chairman Ali Mohamed al-Ali was present.

Qatari Ambassador to Switzerland Abdulla Fala al-Dosari also attended the ceremony. Al-Dosari is also a special representative of Qatar to the UN and international organisations in Switzerland.

Al-Ali will be the chairman of the 25th UPU Congress. It is the first time that an Arab country is hosting the meeting. More than 2,000 delegates from the UPU's 191 member countries are expected for the October 2012 event. The decision to hold it in Doha was taken at the 24th Congress held in Geneva last August.

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## **2. Itella Logistics - EMS Customer Care Award**

07 April 2009 by Franz Groter - © Hellmail.co.uk

Finland: The customer service unit functioning in Itella Logistics' foreign mail terminal has been awarded the EMS Customer Care Award by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) for the unit's operations in 2008.

Awards were distributed in three different groups based on the number of customer surveys. Finland (Itella) was number one in the "small group" category. Other

countries receiving awards included Japan (large group) and Singapore (medium group).

The EMS Customer Care Award is based on evaluations provided by the users of the customer service in question. Itella's EMS customer service has performed in an expert, matter-of-fact and quick way. The award for best customer service was now distributed for the first time at the end of March in Bern, Switzerland.

Itella also received Silver Certification for the quality level of its Express Mail Service quality in Finland. The evaluations paid special attention to on-time, traceable deliveries, and to the processing of customer surveys. Read more in UPU's release.

Express Mail Service (EMS) is an express service for urgent items to more than 180 countries. Itella Corporation is a member of EMS Cooperative under the Universal Postal Union (UPU),

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### **3. Deutsche Post/DHL Seeks Royal Mail Stake**

Bruce Barnard | Apr 7, 2009 3:24PM GMT

German carrier may bid to privatize UK postal company

London -- Germany's Deutsche Post emerged as a potential bidder for a stake in Royal Mail, boosting the UK government's attempt to partially privatize the state-owned postal company.

The parent of express and logistics giant DHL has joined a short list including TNT, the Dutch express company, and CVC, a private equity company, reported to be interested in acquiring a 30 percent stake in Royal Mail.

Deutsche Post has declined to comment on German press reports that a team headed by finance director John Allan has discussed an investment in Royal Mail with British officials.

CVC is already active in the European postal industry, which is boosting its logistics operations to generate additional revenue before the European Union's mail market is liberalized in 2011. It recently sold its holding in Post Danmark, the Danish mail company, and increased its stake in Belgium's De Post/La Poste to just below 50 percent.

The UK government hopes to raise around \$4 billion from the sale, but opposition from many lawmakers in the ruling Labour Party could yet scuttle the deal when Parliament votes on the privatization.

The government says indicative bids are due in April and firm offers are expected in the summer.

Business minister Peter Mandelson says a strategic partner would provide additional investment to prepare Royal Mail for the liberalization of the European Union's postal market.

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April 8

#### **4. Postal merger faces tough opposition**

By Jen Marckini jmarckini@timesleader.com

Staff Writer

**WILKES-BARRE** – Several business owners and workers spoke out at a Thursday night meeting disagreeing with a mail processing study that would eliminate jobs and reassign positions at the local postal facility.

A study conducted by the U.S. Postal Service supports consolidating redundant operations from the Wilkes-Barre processing facility into the Scranton facility. City Mayor Thomas Leighton said the consolidation would negatively affect local businesses.

“We have employers that really rely on getting their mail out,” said Leighton, who attended the meeting at Best Western Genetti Hotel. “That’s why it’s important for the future of the city, while we’re going under revitalization, that we maintain this kind of service.”

According to the study, all mail processing operations in Wilkes-Barre would be transferred to the Scranton and Lehigh Valley facility.

The proposed annual savings, according to the draft of the study, shows a savings of approximately \$3.9 million. The Postal Service projects a net decrease of 44 positions. A five-minute video was presented about redundant operations at the local facility. Ray Daiutolo, a regional spokesman of the Postal Service, said the Postal Service is underutilizing its Wilkes-Barre facilities.

“We’re underutilizing our facility because of volume reductions in Scranton and the same thing in Lehigh Valley,” Daiutolo said. “What we’re looking at is, is there a way to combine some of those operations together in one of those facilities?”

After the video, questions, comments and few answers were opened to the public. Some USPS customers and owners of small businesses asked how bulk mailing would affect their business.

“The intent of the study is designed so that it doesn’t affect service,” Daiutolo said. Another concern was if jobs would be affected.

Some employees may have to be reassigned or relocated, up to 191 positions according to a union representative, depending on their job position and depending if the consolidation were to go through.

John Kishel, president of the Postal Workers Local 175, said the move must improve mailing efficiency and service.

“If this move is done here it does neither,” Kishel said at the meeting. “Why pick on us? Why come down here when we have dedicated employees and supervisors whose goal is out to make sure that service standards are kept up.”

The study, which started in Jan. 7, supports consolidating some mail processing operations currently being performed at the Wilkes-Barre processing facility.

Postal officials say the results of the informational study may be practical to consolidate.

The Postal Service projected a loss this year of more than \$5.8 billion.

People are paying their bills online now, according to Burke, which has contributed to that factor, along with the economic recession.

## **5. Postal Service looks to consolidate city carrier routes**

By GREGG CARLSTROM

April 07, 2009

The U.S. Postal Service could reach an agreement with one of its largest unions as early as this week to consolidate letter carrier routes in the face of dropping mail volume, according to Postmaster General John Potter.

The Postal Service is negotiating with the National Association of Letter Carriers, which represents more than 214,000 city letter carriers. It would merge some of the routes in the city delivery networks, a move that will reduce the total number of routes but won't impact universal service. Letter carriers are delivering 4.7 pieces of mail per address today, compared with 5.9 pieces in 2000.

"We're evaluating the volume of mail and making changes to routes," Potter said today in an interview, "reducing them based on the fact that there's less delivery."

Potter couldn't say exactly how many routes would be affected. The Postal Service recently reached a similar route-merging agreement with its rural letter carriers; those changes are scheduled to go into effect next month.

Potter also told Federal Times that the Postal Service doesn't plan to offer incentives to employees under its latest round of early retirement offers. The Postal Service is offering early retirement to 150,000 employees; officials said last month they expect between 10,000 and 15,000 employees to accept the offer.

The Postal Service's last round of early retirements did not include incentives. And Potter said incentives are not realistic this year, either.

"Our employees would love some kind of a windfall, but the fact is, we can't afford to," Potter said.

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