S900 Special Postal Services

S940 Mailpiece Information

S941 Confirm Service

Summary S941 describes Confirm service, including procedures for subscribing and barcode requirements.

1.0 BASIC INFORMATION

Description
1.1 Confirm is a service that provides an authorized subscriber with data electronically collected from the optical scanning of specially barcoded mailpieces as they pass through certain automated mail processing operations. Scanned data can include the postal facility where such pieces are processed, the postal operation used to process the pieces, the date and time when the pieces are processed, and the numeric equivalent of two barcodes that help to identify the specific pieces. Any piece intended to generate scanned data must meet the appropriate physical characteristics and standards in S941, although not every properly prepared piece is guaranteed such data or complete data. Confirm does not provide proof of delivery.

Available Service and Handling
1.2 Confirm is available only to authorized subscribers as described in 1.3. Service applications are described in 1.6 and subscription levels in 1.7. Confirm may be used for one or more pieces in a mailing. Mail prepared for Confirm is dispatched and handled in transit as ordinary mail unless combined with a service available for the class of mail and rate claimed that requires different handling.

Authorization
1.3 Confirm requires USPS authorization after applicable fees are paid and technical requirements for certification are met. For certification, a mailer must submit for evaluation and approval mailpieces bearing both PLANET Code barcodes and POSTNET barcodes to the National Customer Support Center (see G043 for address). Certification also includes, if applicable, evaluation and approval of the electronic format and uploading of the Advance Shipping Notice (ASN) file and the associated shipment identification barcode printed on required documentation accompanying mailings. Confirm may be used only after authorization is received, and information generated from the service is provided only if the standards for participation are met.

Availability
1.4 Confirm is available to authorized subscribers for tracking automation-compatible letter-size or flat-size mail in the following classes:

a. First-Class Mail (including Priority Mail).

b. Periodicals.

c. Standard Mail.

d. Package Services.

Additional Services
1.5 Confirm does not preclude or require the use of any special service available for the class of mail and rate claimed.

Service Applications
1.6 Two service applications are available:

a. Origin Confirm for incoming mail. This use notifies the subscribing mailer of various movements of individual reply pieces, such as business reply mail being returned by customers, before delivery to the Confirm subscriber.

b. Destination Confirm for outgoing mail. This use notifies the subscribing mailer of various movements of individual pieces, such as letter-size or flat-size pieces in a specific mailing, from the entry of the mailing to final automated processing steps of the pieces before delivery to the destination address.

Subscription Levels
1.7 Confirm is available in three distinct subscription levels as defined below. A mailer may subscribe to one or more of these levels at the same time, at different times, or at overlapping times:

a. *Silver Subscription.* The Silver subscription level has a term of 3 consecutive months, includes one five-digit identification code assigned by the USPS, and provides up to 15 million scans. A mailer subscribing to this level may also:
   (1) License additional identification codes for a term of 3 consecutive months or until the expiration of the underlying subscription, whichever occurs first.
   (2) License additional scans in blocks of 2 million scans at any time before the underlying subscription expires. Unused scans expire at the end of the subscription term.

b. *Gold Subscription.* The Gold subscription level has a term of 12 consecutive months, includes one five-digit identification code assigned by the USPS, and provides up to 50 million scans. A mailer subscribing to this level may also:
   (1) License additional identification codes for a term of 3 consecutive months or until the expiration of the underlying subscription, whichever occurs first.
   (2) License additional scans in blocks of 6 million scans at any time before the underlying subscription expires. Unused scans expire at the end of the subscription term.
   (3) Raise the subscription level to a Platinum subscription level at any time before the expiration of the Gold subscription by paying the difference of the respective subscription fees. This change in service level does not extend the term of the underlying initial subscription.

c. *Platinum Subscription.* The Platinum subscription level has a term of 12 consecutive months, includes three five-digit identification numbers assigned by the USPS, and provides an unlimited number of scans. A mailer subscribing to this level may also license additional identification codes for a term of 3 consecutive months or until the expiration of the underlying subscription, whichever occurs first.

Fees and Postage
1.8 The Confirm subscription fees as defined in 1.7 and shown in R900 must be paid in advance. These subscription fees are in addition to other postage and fees.

Deposit
1.9 The class of mail and rate claimed and the postage payment method used determine the point of deposit or entry.

2.0 BARCODES

General Barcode Requirement
2.1 At the time of mailing, each piece in a mailing that is intended to generate Confirm information must bear a PLANET Code barcode. The USPS does not apply subscriber PLANET Code barcodes to mail after deposit by the subscriber. The use of POSTNET barcodes, which must meet the applicable specifications in C840, is as follows:

a. Origin Confirm pieces must bear both a PLANET Code barcode and a POSTNET barcode at the time of mailing. For business reply mail, the POSTNET barcode must correspond to the subscriber's business reply mail ZIP+4 codes assigned by the USPS under S922. For all other reply mail, the POSTNET barcode must correspond to the appropriate 5-digit ZIP Code, ZIP+4 code, or delivery point code for the delivery address.

b. Destination Confirm pieces must bear a PLANET Code barcode and, if required by the rate claimed at the time of mailing, an appropriate POSTNET barcode that corresponds to the delivery address. If a POSTNET barcode is not required by the rate claimed, the mailer has the option to apply the POSTNET barcode to such pieces for optimal Confirm information if the barcode correctly corresponds to the delivery address.

POSTNET Barcode
2.2

The type of POSTNET barcode (e.g., ZIP+4 barcode or delivery point barcode) and the placement of the barcode on a Confirm piece must meet the standards for the rate claimed. If two POSTNET barcodes are applied to the same piece, they must meet these standards:

a. Only one POSTNET barcode may be used in the address block as provided in 2.6.

b. The second POSTNET barcode must be placed outside the address block in a position meeting the applicable standards in C840 for letter-size mail or flat-size mail.

PLANET Code Barcode Use
2.3

Only one PLANET Code barcode may appear on a Confirm piece. For letter-size mail, the PLANET Code barcode may be placed in any position permitted in C840 for a POSTNET barcode except the lower right corner barcode clear zone. For flat-size mail, the PLANET Code barcode may appear in any position of the piece permitted for a POSTNET barcode in C840. Any PLANET Code barcode printed on mail for Confirm information must:

a. Be generated by the method used to receive USPS barcode certification during the application process in 1.3.

b. Meet the barcode specifications in 2.4.

c. Meet the format specifications in 2.5.

PLANET Code Barcode Specifications
2.4

The PLANET Code barcode symbology, which is the inverse of the POSTNET barcode symbology, uses a unique combination of three tall and two short bars to define each digit from 0 to 9. PLANET Code barcodes must meet the same dimensional specifications (including pitch, tilt, and baseline positioning) and print specifications (including reflectance) as required in C840 for POSTNET barcodes and in Publication 197, *Customer Guide to Confirm Service.* Publication 197 is available from the National Customer Support Center (see G043 for address).

PLANET Code Barcode Format
2.5

PLANET Code barcodes must meet the following format standards required in Publication 197 for service type:

a. Origin Confirm mailpieces (incoming reply mail) require these data fields in the following order from left to right:
   (1) Mailpiece type identification: two digits; identifies type of reply mail (courtesy reply mail, business reply mail (BRM), or Qualified BRM) and physical characteristic of piece (letter, card, or flat); defined by USPS.
   (2) Customer identification: nine or eleven digits; identifies mailpiece; defined by subscriber.

(3) Check digit: one digit; defined as the number which, when added to the sum of the other digits in the barcode, results in a total that is a multiple of 10.

b. Destination Confirm mailpieces (outgoing mail) require these data fields in the following order from left to right:
   (1) Mailpiece type identification: two digits; identifies class of mail and physical characteristic of piece (letter, card, or flat); defined by USPS.
   (2) Identification code: five digits; identifies mailer; assigned by USPS.
   (3) Mailing: four (or six) digits; identifies specific mailing; defined by subscriber.
   (4) Check digit: one digit; defined as the number which, when added to the sum of the other digits in the barcode, results in a total that is a multiple of 10.

Address Block Barcoding
2.6

If both a PLANET Code barcode and a POSTNET barcode are used as part of the delivery address block, the following standards must be met:

a. One barcode must placed in the upper part of the address block in one of two positions:
   (1) Between the top address line (the first line of the delivery address block usually containing the recipient's name or attention line) and any keyline, optional endorsement line, or carrier route information line directly above the top address line.
   (2) Directly above any keyline, optional endorsement line, or carrier route information line that is directly above the top address line.

b. The other barcode must always be placed directly below the bottom address line (the city, state, and ZIP Code line).

c. Both barcodes must maintain a minimum clearance of 1/25 inch directly above and below the barcodes.

d. The entire address block must be placed on the piece under the applicable standards in C840. The barcodes and address block, along with any keyline, optional endorsement line, or carrier route information line, must maintain the other applicable minimum clearances under C840, including clearances for inserts in window envelopes.

Reply Mail Barcodes
2.7

Reply pieces prepared for the Origin Confirm service application under 1.6 must meet any applicable format and barcode standards as follows:

a. For business reply mail (BRM), S922.

b. For Qualified BRM, S922.

c. For courtesy reply mail (CRM), C100.

3.0 ADVANCE SHIPPING NOTICE

Purpose
3.1

Every mailing for which Destination Confirm information is desired requires the electronic submission of an Advanced Shipping Notice (ASN), in a specific file format, before or at the time of the mailing. This electronic notice enables the USPS to match mailing data provided by the mailer with actual scans taken on Confirm pieces in the mailing and to generate various reports for analysis from the matched data. A test file transmission must be uploaded and approved before Confirm mailings may be made as provided in 1.3.

Data Format
3.2 The ASN data file is a single data file in comma-delimited flat file format. Each record is made up of a single row of data consisting of 16 data elements (fields) as defined in Publication 197. ASN data include specific mailer-generated information about each Destination Confirm mailing, such as drop location, drop date, mailer identification, volume, presort level, and number of pieces bearing PLANET Code barcodes.

Shipment ID Barcode
3.3 In addition to an electronic ASN transmission for each mailing, an ASN Shipment ID barcode (used as a shipment identification) must be printed on the documentation accompanying the mailing. This documentation is either Form 8125 for mail prepared as a plant-verified drop shipment or Form 3152-A for mail entered and verified at a business mail entry unit. The USPS scans the ASN Shipment ID barcode to “start the clock” for the Destination Confirm mailing and to provide the base point for recording the actual processing time used for the mail. ASN Shipment ID barcode symbology is USS Code 128 Subset B and must meet the technical specifications in Publication 197.

4.0 DELIVERY

Any mailpiece prepared for Confirm is delivered as ordinary mail unless combined with any available service subject to D042.