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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Oct. 21, 2008

Postal Service announces deadlines for holiday mail to U.S. troops stationed overseas

\$2 discount using Priority Mail Large Flat-Rate Boxes

DENVER, CO—The U.S. Postal Service announces its recommended mailing dates for delivery by Christmas to our U.S. military troops serving overseas at APO/FPO addresses. (See deadlines below.)

Holiday mail for our U.S. troops stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan should be sent by Dec. 4 for arrival by Christmas. Holiday mail going to other military overseas APO/FPO locations should be sent by Dec. 11. Except for Iraq and Afghanistan, Express Mail can also be used to mail packages to other overseas military locations until Dec. 18 for delivery by Christmas.

The Postal Service has not announced the official deadlines for mailing overseas to other international countries yet but will soon. **As for domestic deadlines and using regular mail, send holiday cards, letters and packages going to U.S. destinations by December 20 for delivery by Christmas. Using Express Mail, you still have time to mail packages to certain U.S. locations until Dec. 23.**

Mail sent to overseas military addresses is charged at domestic mail prices. The domestic mail price for the largest Flat-Rate Priority Mail box is \$12.95, but for packages sent to military APO/FPO addresses overseas the price is reduced to only \$10.95.

Flat-Rate Priority Mail boxes offer the best price/bargain in holiday shipping. Customers can use Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes to ship anywhere in the U.S., or to our troops overseas. The contents for Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes can be any weight for one low rate. If it fits, it ships.

Flat-Rate boxes are free at any Post Office, or can be ordered online at usps.com. Postage, labels and customs forms can be printed online any time using Click-N-Ship at www.usps.com/clicknship.

The Postal Service also offers Delivery Confirmation service for almost all APO/FPO destinations. Delivery Confirmation provides customers with the date, ZIP Code and time the package was delivered. This information can be accessed online at usps.com.

The U.S. Postal Service also offers a **FREE Military Care Kit** to make it easier for postal customers to send care packages to our troops stationed in the U.S. and around the world. Each kit contains Priority Mail boxes and Flat-Rate boxes, Priority Mail labels, a roll of Priority Mail tape, and customs forms with envelopes. This kit may be ordered free by calling 1-800-610-8734.

All packages and mail must be addressed to individual service members by name, in accordance with U.S. Dept. of Defense regulations. All military overseas units are assigned an APO or FPO ZIP Code and, in many cases, that ZIP Code travels with the unit. The Postal Service places APO/FPO mail on special transportation to be delivered to our military troops overseas as soon as possible.

2008 OVERSEAS MILITARY HOLIDAY MAILING DEADLINES

HOLIDAY MAILING DEADLINES

Military and U.S. Postal officials have announced this year's deadlines for mailing letters and parcels to military members overseas in order to ensure it gets there by December 25th. Here are the deadlines:

First-Class letters and cards: Dec. 11
Express Mail Military Service: Dec. 19
Priority Mail: Dec. 19
Parcel Post: Nov. 13
Parcel Airlift Mail: Dec. 4
Space Available Mail: Nov. 27

For APO/FPO AE addresses with the ZIP code 093 (Iraq, Afghanistan, and surrounding areas):

First-Class letters and cards: Dec. 4
Priority Mail: Dec. 4
Parcel Post: Nov. 13
Parcel Airlift Mail: Dec. 2
Space Available Mail: Nov. 27
Express Mail Military Service is not available for those areas.

Military Overseas Mailing and Packaging Tips

- Be sure to order a FREE Military Care Package Kit from USPS by calling 1-800-610-8734.
- Priority Mail packaging products, including the Priority Mail Flat-Rate boxes, offer the best shipping value, and can be obtained FREE at any Post Office, or through *usps.com*. Customers receive a \$2 discount for using the Priority Mail Large Flat-Rate Box to mail to any overseas military address, no matter the weight of the box, for just \$10.95.
- To save gas and a trip to the Post Office, you can mail your packages from your home or business using Click-N-Ship with FREE package pickup. All you need is a computer with internet access and a printer, a weight scale and credit card. Prepare your packages and go to *usps.com/clicknship*.
- If you use a regular box, use one strong enough to protect the contents with no writing on the outside.
- Cushion contents with newspaper, bubble wrap, or styrofoam. Pack tightly to avoid shifting.
- Package food items like cookies, fudge, candies, etc. securely in leak-proof containers.
- Use pressure-sensitive or nylon-reinforced packing tape.
- Do not use wrapping paper, string, masking tape, or cellophane tape outside the package.
- Print the complete military service member's name, unit, and APO/FPO delivery address, and your return address on one side only of the package.
- Place a return address label inside the package.
- Stuff fragile items, like vases, with newspaper or packing material to avoid damage
- Remove batteries from toys/appliances. Wrap and place them next to the items inside.
- Purchase insurance and delivery confirmation service for reassurance of package delivery.
- Mail addressed to military Post Offices overseas is subject to certain conditions or restrictions regarding content, preparation and handling. APO/FPO addresses generally require customs forms.
- Purchase other packaging products, including tape, envelopes, padded bags, corrugated boxes, and cushioning material from your Post Office. Some locations offer decorative holiday boxes.
- Call 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777) or go to *usps.com* for more holiday mailing information.

Please Note: For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/welcome.htm.

An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits every address in the nation — 146 million homes and businesses. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to pay for operating expenses, not tax dollars. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$75 billion and delivers nearly half the world's mail.