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OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

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March 17, 2017

John Greenewald, Jr.



via email: [john@greenewald.com](mailto:john@greenewald.com)

RE: FOIA No. 2017-IGFP-00271

Dear Mr. Greenewald Jr.:

This responds to your February 28 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of Inspector General for a copy of Audit Report number NL-AR-16-001 currently posted on our Website, [www.uspsoig.gov](http://www.uspsoig.gov). Specifically, you indicated you believe the redactions applied to this report are improper because no FOIA Exemptions are cited.

The Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments of 1996 (commonly known as E-FOIA) does not compel agencies to note which exemption, if any, is being applied to information redacted from posted documents.

I have reviewed the requested report, consisting of 20 pages, under established FOIA guidelines, and determined all redactions were applied under FOIA Exemption b(3)<sup>1</sup> Title 39 U.S.C § 265.6, 410(c)(2). I am attaching a courtesy copy for your convenience.

If you have any questions regarding the processing of this request you may contact me and/or the FOIA Public Liaison at 703-248-2410. You may also contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) at the National Archives and Records Administration to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, Room 2510, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov); telephone at 202-741-5770; toll free at 1-877-684-6448; or facsimile at 202-741-5769.

If you are not satisfied with my action on your FOIA request, you may file an administrative appeal by writing to the attention of Gladis Griffith, Deputy General Counsel, 1735 N. Lynn Street, Arlington, VA 22209-2020, within 90 days of the date of this letter. We accept written

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<sup>1</sup> Exemption (b)(3) provides that agencies may withhold records that are exempted from disclosure by another statute that "establishes particular criteria for withholding or refers to particular types of matters to be withheld." Title 39 U.S.C § 265.6, 410(c)(2) provides that "information of a commercial nature, including trade secrets, whether or not obtained from a person outside the Postal Service, which under good business practice would not be publicly disclosed," is exempt from the disclosure requirements of the FOIA. This exemption was enacted as part of the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 and operates both independently and as an exempting statute.

appeals via U.S. Mail; e-mail to [FOIA@uspsoig.gov](mailto:FOIA@uspsoig.gov); or fax to 703-248-4626. Include the initial request number (e.g., 20XX-IGXX-00XXX) and the date of this letter. Explain what specific action the FOIA Office took that you are appealing. Mark all correspondence "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

Sincerely,

Tanya Hefley  
Government Information Analyst

Attachments



**OFFICE OF  
INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

**Transportation  
Strategic  
Planning**

**Audit Report**

Report Number  
NL-AR-16-001

May 20, 2016

VISION  
STRATEGY  
IMPLEMENTATION  
**SUCCESS**  
MISSION  
GOAL





# OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

## Highlights

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

**The Postal Service needs to improve its strategy to optimize its transportation network.**

**DRIVE Initiative 1.13 projected savings through FY 2015**

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2) **of [redacted] million, or [redacted] percent of the overall \$1 billion goal.**

**However, it only realized [redacted] million of those savings.**

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

## Background

In response to declining mail volume, the U.S. Postal Service is challenged with rightsizing its transportation network and adjusting its [redacted] while reducing costs and maintaining delivery service. In fiscal year (FY) 2011, the Postal Service established 36 Delivering Results, Innovation, Value, and Efficiency (DRIVE) initiatives to improve its business strategy. DRIVE aims to bring revenue in line with expenses through strategic initiatives with measurable outcomes. Each initiative has process roadmaps that track whether initiatives remain on schedule and achieve their objectives.

The strategy for rightsizing the transportation network is DRIVE Initiative 1.13, Ground Transportation. This initiative is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017. In FY 2015, annual network transportation costs of about [redacted] billion were the Postal Service's largest operating expense after compensation and benefits. (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

During our audit we did a comparative analysis of strategic planning best practices used by 15 international posts, corporations, and advisory boards. We found that effective strategies include contingency planning.

Our objective was to evaluate the Postal Service's strategy to effectively optimize its [redacted] network.

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

## What the OIG Found

The Postal Service needs to improve its strategy to optimize its transportation network. DRIVE Initiative 1.13 projected savings through FY 2015 of [redacted] million, or [redacted] percent of the overall (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2) \$1 billion goal. However, it only realized [redacted] million of those savings. (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

Specifically, in FY 2014, the Postal Service did not meet projected cost savings in six of its eight Transportation process roadmaps, resulting in a savings shortfall of [redacted] million. In FY 2015, six (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2) roadmaps and two more process roadmaps did not meet projected cost savings, resulting in a savings shortfall of [redacted] million. (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2) Finally, in Quarter 1, FY 2016, none of the roadmaps realized projected cost savings, resulting in an additional savings shortfall of [redacted] million. (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

The surface transportation manager said that an [redacted] and [redacted] contributed to

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)



# OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

## UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

the savings shortfall. We are reviewing transportation costs in relation to service standard changes in a separate audit and may review the Postal Service's progress on transportation savings programs in the future.

In addition, we found the transportation optimization strategy did not have a contingency plan to re-evaluate program process roadmaps when they did not yield the projected savings. Contingency planning helps management mitigate unexpected events and achieve goals.

### What the OIG Recommended

We recommended the vice president, Network Operations, update the 1.13 section of DRIVE 1 - Optimize Network Operations to include an achievable projected transportation cost reduction goal and contingency planning to mitigate unexpected events in FYs 2016 and 2017.

# Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

May 20, 2016

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** ROBERT CINTRON  
VICE PRESIDENT, NETWORK OPERATIONS

E-Signed by Michael L. Thompson  
VERIFY authenticity with eSign Desktop  
*Michael L. Thompson*

**FROM:** Michael L. Thompson  
Deputy Assistant Inspector General  
for Mission Operations

**SUBJECT:** Audit Report – Transportation Strategic Planning  
(Report Number NL-AR-16-001)

This report presents the results of our review of Transportation Strategic Planning (Project Number 15XG041NO000).

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Margaret B. McDavid, acting director, Transportation, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Corporate Audit and Response Management

# Table of Contents

Cover	
Highlights.....	1
Background.....	1
What the OIG Found.....	1
What the OIG Recommended.....	2
Transmittal Letter.....	3
Table of Contents.....	4
Finding.....	5
Introduction .....	5
Summary.....	5
Transportation Strategy .....	5
Recommendation .....	10
Management's Comments .....	10
Evaluation of Management's Comments .....	10
Appendices.....	11
Appendix A: Additional Information .....	12
Background.....	12
Objective, Scope, and Methodology .....	13
Prior Audit Coverage .....	14
Appendix B: Management's Comments.....	15
Contact Information .....	17

## Finding

**Our objective was to evaluate the Postal Service's strategy to effectively optimize its [redacted] transportation network.**

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

## Introduction

This report presents the results of our self-initiated audit of the U.S. Postal Service's transportation strategic planning (Project Number 15XG041NO000). Our objective was to evaluate the Postal Service's strategy to effectively optimize its [redacted] transportation network. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about this audit.

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

In response to declining mail volume, the Postal Service is challenged to right size its transportation network and adjust its [redacted] while reducing costs and maintaining service. In fiscal year (FY) 2011, the Postal Service established 36 Delivering Results, Innovation, Value, and Efficiency (DRIVE) initiatives to improve its business strategy. DRIVE initiatives aim to bring revenue in line with expenses by FY 2016 through strategic initiatives with measurable outcomes. Each strategic initiative has process roadmaps that track whether initiatives remain on schedule and achieve their objectives. The strategy for right sizing the transportation network is DRIVE Initiative 1.13, Ground Transportation. This initiative is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017.

## Summary

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

The Postal Service needs to improve its strategy to optimize its transportation network. DRIVE Initiative 1.13 projected a savings through FY 2015 of [redacted] million, or [redacted] percent of the \$1 billion goal. However, it only realized savings of [redacted] million, which is just [redacted] percent of the savings goal.

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

Specifically, in FY 2014, the Postal Service did not meet projected cost savings in six of its eight Transportation process roadmaps, resulting in a savings shortfall of \$80 million. Further, in FY 2015, there are eight roadmaps that did not meet projected cost savings, resulting in a savings shortfall of \$104 million.

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

In Quarter (Q) 1, FY 2016, none of the roadmaps realized projected cost savings, resulting in an additional shortfall of [redacted] million.

The surface transportation manager indicated that an [redacted] and [redacted] programs contributed to the savings shortfall. We are reviewing transportation costs in relation to service standard changes in a separate audit and may review the Postal Service's progress on transportation savings programs in the future. In addition, the transportation optimization strategy did not have contingency plans to re-evaluate program process roadmaps that did not yield projected savings.

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

Our research on the strategic planning best practices used by 15 international posts, corporations, and advisory boards showed that effective strategies include contingency planning. This helps management mitigate unexpected events and achieve goals.

## Transportation Strategy

The Postal Service's DRIVE Initiative 1.13 — which is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017 — could be more effective. Since implementing the initiative, the Postal Service has not met projected cost savings. Specifically, in FY 2014, the Postal Service did not meet projected cost savings in six of its eight process roadmaps, resulting in a savings shortfall of [redacted] million. The six process roadmaps are:

***In FY 2015, of 10 process roadmaps, six process roadmaps and two additional process roadmaps did not meet projected cost savings, resulting in a savings shortfall of [redacted] million.***

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)


- [redacted] (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)
- [redacted] (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)
- [redacted] (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)
- [redacted] (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)
- [redacted] (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)
- [redacted] (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

Further, in FY 2015, of 10 process roadmaps, six process roadmaps and two additional process roadmaps [redacted] did not meet projected cost savings, resulting in a savings shortfall of [redacted] million. (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

The process roadmaps that comprise DRIVE Initiative 1.13, described in more detail below, are loaded into an enterprise-wide, web-based tracking tool that provides quarterly major milestones with results (see [Figure 1](#) for projected and actual savings in FY 2014 and [Figure 2](#) for projected and actual savings in FY 2015).

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)


Figure 1. DRIVE 1.13 FY 2014 Roadmaps<sup>1</sup>

		\$1 Billion FY14 Quarterly Metrics Snapshot				
CLICK on the Project name to view additional information.						
PROJECTS		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to create cost savings through reductions in [redacted] and [redacted] mileage and fuel costs.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2) [redacted] - process roadmap plan is to reduce the number of [redacted]s to streamline the system. (b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)				
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to use excess trailer capacity and reduce duplicative trips, eliminate excess workhours.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2) [redacted] - process roadmap plan is to use excess trailer capacity and reduce duplicative trips. (b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)				
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to right size the trailer fleet to increase use.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2) [redacted] - process roadmap plan is to complete a comparative analysis of insourcing versus outsourcing. (b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)				
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to optimize [redacted] processes in the network and explore the feasibility of nationwide implementation by FY 2016. (b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to identify and implement opportunities for compressed natural gas or alternative fuel conversion of the postal fleet. (b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)				
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$23,255,146 Actual: \$8,787,463	\$26,590,454 Actual: \$13,873,984	\$34,263,088 Actual: \$19,818,048	\$66,023,851 Actual: \$27,486,772	\$150,132,539 Actual: \$69,966,267
					<b>RESET</b>	<b>SHOW ALL</b>

Source: Postal Service.

<sup>1</sup> This initiative is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017.


Figure 2. DRIVE 1.13 FY 2015 Roadmaps<sup>2</sup>

 <b>UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.</b>		<b>\$1 Billion FY15 Quarterly Metrics Snapshot</b>				
CLICK on the Roadmap name to view additional information.						
ROADMAP		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to identify and implement opportunities for compressed natural gas or alternative fuel conversion of the postal fleet.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		[redacted] Process roadmap plan is to identify transportation cost savings resulting from shifting the mode of transportation from air to surface.				
		[redacted] Process roadmap plan is to identify air transportation cost savings through analysis of additional charter options and implementation of new commercial air stops.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to reduce the number of [redacted] to streamline the system.				
		[redacted] - Process roadmap plan is to use excess trailer capacity and reduce duplicative trips, eliminate excess work hours.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to use excess trailer capacity and reduce duplicative trips.				
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to right size the trailer fleet to increase use.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to complete a comparative analysis of insourcing versus outsourcing.				
		[redacted] - process roadmap plan is to optimize [redacted] processes in the network and explore the feasibility of nationwide implementation by FY 2016.				
(b)(3): 39 USC 410 (c)(2)		[redacted] process roadmap plan is to create cost savings through reductions in [redacted] and [redacted] mileage and fuel costs.				
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$23,260,000</b> Actual: \$18,251,815	<b>\$32,379,315</b> Actual: \$15,990,430	<b>\$31,879,315</b> Actual: \$18,562,548	<b>\$91,549,271</b> Actual: \$21,985,459	<b>\$179,067,901</b> Actual: \$74,790,252

Source: Postal Service.

<sup>2</sup> This initiative is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017.


Figure 1. DRIVE 1.13 FY 2014 Roadmaps<sup>1</sup>

 <b>\$1 Billion FY14 Quarterly Metrics Snapshot</b>					
PROJECTS	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$85,308 Actual: \$0	\$85,308 Actual: \$0	\$85,308 Actual: \$0	\$255,924 Actual: \$0
	\$6,000,000 Actual: \$1,495,269	\$0 Actual: \$1,533,873	\$0 Actual: \$3,775,837	\$27,873,320 Actual: \$3,694,502	\$33,873,320 Actual: \$10,499,481
	\$8,750,000 Actual: \$6,248,977	\$11,250,000 Actual: \$9,936,772	\$11,250,000 Actual: \$11,086,568	\$13,968,354 Actual: \$8,115,943	\$45,218,654 Actual: \$35,388,260
	\$2,500,000 Actual: \$0	\$7,600,000 Actual: \$81,160	\$15,200,000 Actual: \$110,902	\$15,275,979 Actual: \$333,324	\$40,575,979 Actual: \$525,386
	\$2,500,000 Actual: \$310,242	\$3,150,000 Actual: \$566,137	\$3,211,581 Actual: \$1,019,059	\$3,250,000 Actual: \$1,350,570	\$12,111,581 Actual: \$3,246,008
	\$3,500,000 Actual: \$729,043	\$4,500,000 Actual: \$1,756,042	\$4,500,000 Actual: \$3,825,682	\$5,054,391 Actual: \$13,314,180	\$17,554,391 Actual: \$19,624,947
	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$500,000 Actual: \$678,253	\$5000,000 Actual: \$678,253
	\$5,146 Actual: \$3,932	\$5,146 Actual: \$0	\$16,199 Actual: \$0	\$16,199 Actual: \$0	\$42,690 Actual: \$3,932
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$23,255,146 Actual: \$8,787,463	\$26,590,454 Actual: \$13,873,984	\$34,263,088 Actual: \$19,818,048	\$66,023,851 Actual: \$27,486,772	\$150,132,539 Actual: \$69,966,267

Source: Postal Service.

<sup>1</sup> This initiative is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017.

Figure 2. DRIVE 1.13 FY 2015 Roadmaps<sup>2</sup>

 <b>\$1 Billion FY15 Quarterly Metrics Snapshot</b>					
ROADMAP	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)	\$10,000 Actual: \$57,100	\$10,000 Actual: \$(33,654)	\$10,000 Actual: \$18	\$276,340 Actual: \$(60,855)	\$306,340 Actual: \$(37,391)
	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$4,000,000 Actual: \$759,126	\$6,000,000 Actual: \$759,126	\$7,062,384 Actual: \$759,126	\$17,062,384 Actual: \$2,277,378
	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$5,119,315 Actual: \$519,226	\$5,119,315 Actual: \$3,488,873	\$6,823,754 Actual: \$6,184,811	\$17,062,384 Actual: \$10,192,910
	\$2,000,000 Actual: \$2,210,851	\$2,000,000 Actual: \$1,891,208	\$2,000,000 Actual: \$100,551	\$23,863,568 Actual: \$0	\$29,863,568 Actual: \$4,202,610
	\$7,000,000 Actual: \$12,729,162	\$7,000,000 Actual: \$7,518,758	\$8,000,000 Actual: \$9,054,233	\$8,145,869 Actual: \$8,973,415	\$30,145,869 Actual: \$38,275,568
	\$8,750,000 Actual: \$(17,316)	\$8,750,000 Actual: \$3,048,141	\$8,750,000 Actual: \$3,197,377	\$8,750,000 Actual: \$3,760,219	\$35,000,000 Actual: \$9,988,421
	\$1,000,000 Actual: \$1,248,731	\$1,000,000 Actual: \$171,135	\$2,000,000 Actual: \$838,955	\$2,202,835 Actual: \$583,336	\$6,202,835 Actual: \$2,842,157
	\$4,500,000 Actual: \$698,684	\$4,500,000 Actual: 2,116,490	\$0 Actual: \$1,093,663	\$33,674,521 Actual: \$1,081,077	\$42,674,521 Actual: \$4,989,914
	\$0 Actual: \$1,342,603	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$0 Actual: \$29,752	\$0 Actual: \$704,331	\$0 Actual: \$2,058,686
	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$0 Actual: \$0	\$750,000 Actual: \$0	\$750,000 Actual: \$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$23,260,000 Actual: \$18,251,815	\$32,379,315 Actual: \$15,990,430	\$31,879,315 Actual: \$18,562,548	\$91,549,271 Actual: \$21,985,459	\$179,067,901 Actual: \$74,790,252

Source: Postal Service.

<sup>2</sup> This initiative is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion from FY 2014 through FY 2017.

An increase (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) contributed to the savings shortfall.

The surface transportation manager said that an increase (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) contributed to the savings shortfall. In addition, the transportation optimization strategy did not have a contingency plan to re-evaluate program process roadmaps when they did not yield the projected savings. As a result, in FYs 2014 and 2015, the Postal Service had a total savings shortfall of (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) million. Finally, in Q1, FY 2016, none of the roadmaps realized projected cost savings, resulting in an additional savings shortfall of (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) million. (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)

We did a comparative analysis of strategic planning best practices used by 15 international posts, corporations, and advisory boards. The organizations had some differences, but we found they shared similar practices and all stressed the need to measure and monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives in place and continually assess processes to identify performance gaps that need improvement. Finally, we found that effective strategies include contingency planning to help management mitigate unexpected events and achieve goals (see Table 1. for a list of the organizations from which we gathered best practices information).

**Table 1: Best Practices Resources**

International Posts	Corporations	Advisory Boards
Canada Post	DHL	Authenticity Consulting, LLC
Deutsche Post AG	FedEx	Center for Applied Research
La Poste	Hexaware Technologies	Corporate Executive Board
Royal Mail plc	Houston Chronicle	Executive Consultancy Service
Universal Postal Union	United Parcel Service	
	The World Bank	

Source: Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) analysis.

# Recommendation

***We recommend management update the 1.13 section of DRIVE to include an achievable projected transportation cost reduction goal and contingency planning to mitigate unexpected events in FYs 2016 and 2017.***

We recommend the vice president, Network Operations:

1. Update the 1.13 section of Delivering Results, Innovation, Value, and Efficiency Initiative 1 (Optimize Network Operations) to include an achievable projected transportation cost reduction goal and contingency planning to mitigate unexpected events in fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

## Management's Comments

Management disagreed with the finding and recommendation.

Regarding the finding, management stated that by not acknowledging the change in mail mix shape and the significant impact of shape and costs, the report oversimplifies the challenge as simply one of responding to a decline in overall volume. Management stated that their underlying concern is the OIG's failure to acknowledge and consider that the goals set up in the DRIVE process are aggressive stretch goals. Management also stated that, although they did not meet the overall \$1 billion DRIVE goals by [REDACTED] million for FYs 2014 and 2015, they met the internal, more realistic budget targets, which would seem to be a more appropriate benchmark for analysis. Further, management requested that the OIG give serious consideration to not publishing this report because it falls short of offering any constructive information or guidance.

(b)(3);39 USC 410

Regarding the recommendation, management stated that they use DRIVE as a tool to push the organization as quickly as possible to achieve strategic goals. If management made the DRIVE process less aggressive, the Postal Service would become more conservative and not pursue some of the more complex, risky — but higher return — initiatives.

See [Appendix B](#) for management's comments in their entirety.

## Evaluation of Management's Comments

The OIG considers management's comments unresponsive to the finding and the recommendation in the report.

Regarding management's disagreement with our finding, during our audit, the surface transportation manager indicated that an increase in [REDACTED] among other factors, contributed to the savings shortfall. However, the transportation optimization strategy did not have a contingency plan to re-evaluate program process roadmaps when they did not yield the projected savings.

Regarding not publishing the report due to its lack of constructive information or guidance, the audit included an analysis of strategic planning best practices. These practices stress the need to measure and monitor the effectiveness of the initiatives in place and continually assess processes to identify performance gaps that need improvement. We also found that effective strategies include contingency planning to help management mitigate unexpected events and achieve goals.

Regarding the recommendation and management's concern about the failure to acknowledge and consider that the DRIVE goals are aggressive stretch goals, our analysis indicated that DRIVE is a tool for bringing revenue in line with expenses through strategic initiatives with measurable outcomes. The absence of realistic goals increases the risk that the Postal Service will not meet its performance goals.

We view the disagreement on the recommendation as unresolved but do not plan to pursue it through the formal audit resolution process. We consider the recommendation closed with the issuance of this report.

(b)(3);39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

# Appendices

*Click on the appendix title  
to the right to navigate  
to the section content.*

Appendix A: Additional Information .....	12
Background .....	12
Objective, Scope, and Methodology .....	13
Prior Audit Coverage .....	14
Appendix B: Management's Comments.....	15

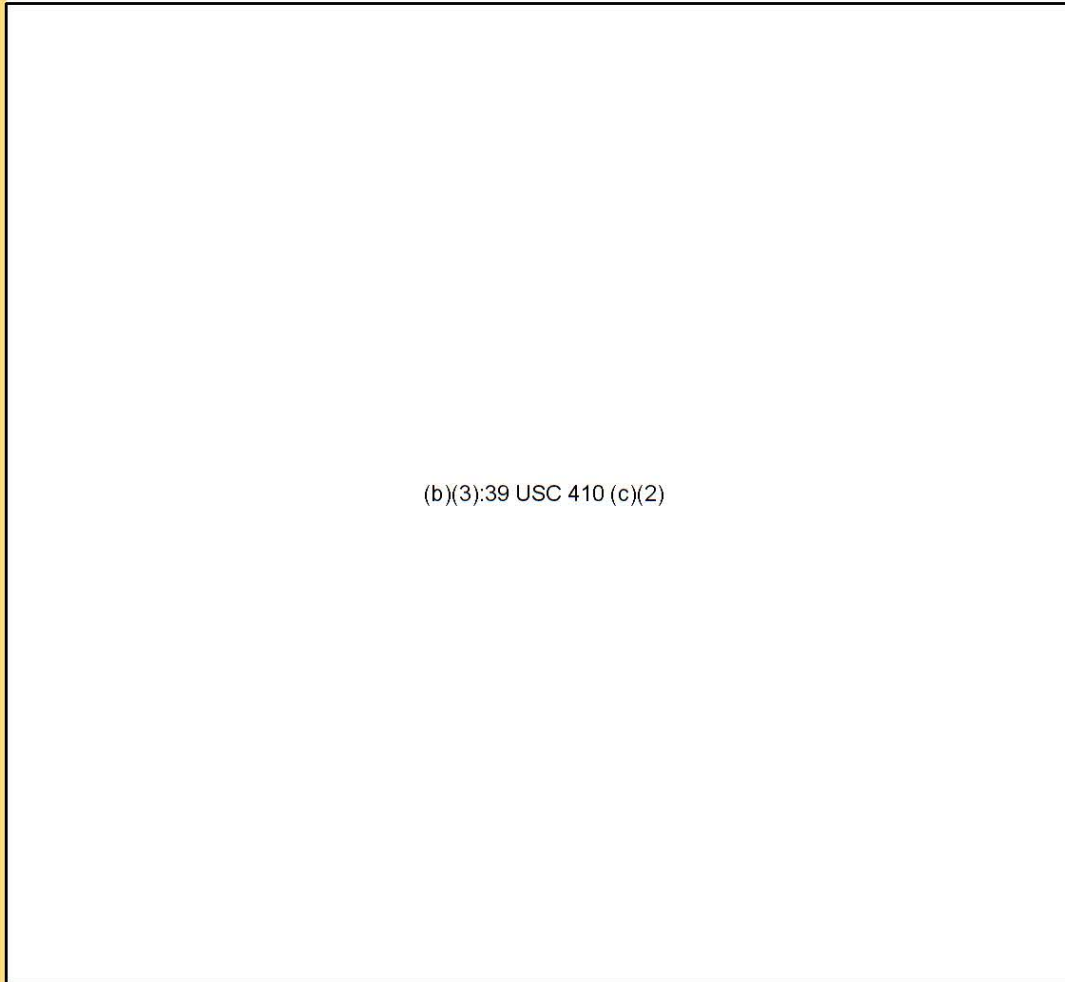
## Appendix A: Additional Information

### Background

(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)

In FY 2015, the Postal Service's (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) was its network transportation costs of about (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) billion (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2). (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) were the largest expense<sup>3</sup>. This cost included (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2). See Figure 3 for the components of network transportation. In response to declining mail volume, the Postal Service is challenged to right size its transportation network and adjust its (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) while reducing costs and maintaining service.

**Figure 3: Transportation Components of Network Operations**



Source: OIG analysis.

(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2)

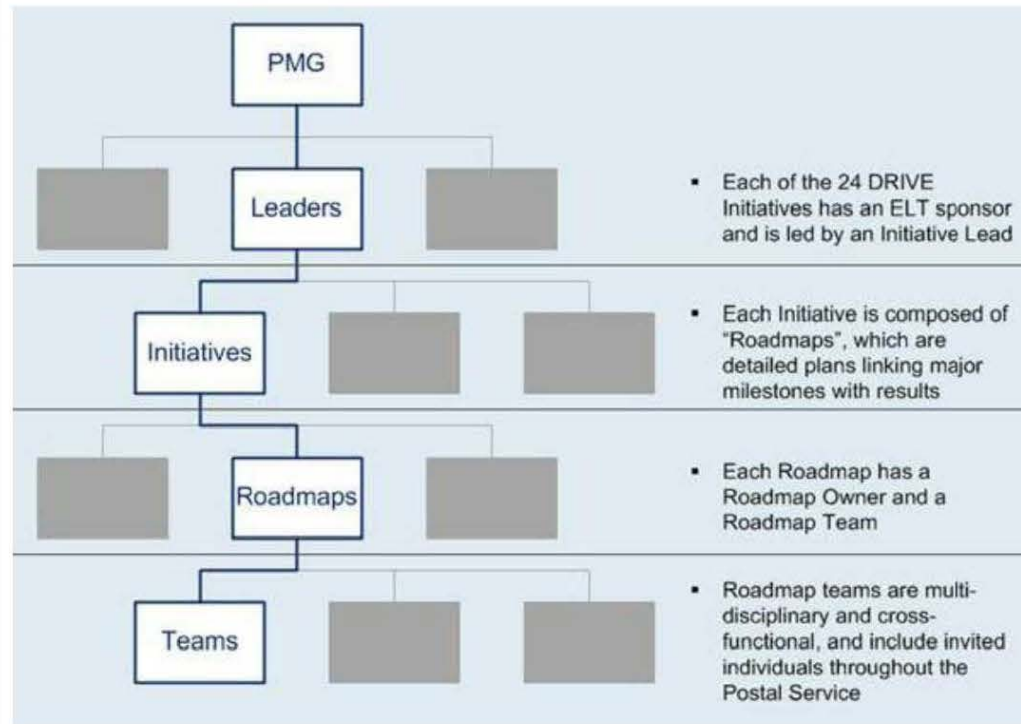
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was second at (b)(3):39 USC 410 (c)(2) billion, 2015 Report on Annual 10-K, U.S. Postal Service.

In FY 2011, the Postal Service established 36 DRIVE initiatives to improve its business strategy. DRIVE initiatives aim to bring revenue in line with expenses by FY 2016 through strategic initiatives with measurable outcomes. Each strategic initiative has process roadmaps that track whether initiatives remain on schedule and achieve their objectives.

The strategy for right sizing the transportation network is DRIVE Initiative 1.13, which is designed to reduce transportation spending by \$1 billion beginning from FY 2014 through FY 2017. The initiative was composed of eight to ten process roadmaps linking major milestones with results (see Figure 4 for the DRIVE structure).

**Figure 4: DRIVE Structure**



Source: Postal Service analysis.

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

## Objective, Scope, and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate the Postal Service's strategy to effectively optimize its [redacted] transportation network. Specifically, we assessed Network Operations' strategy to determine if it had a comprehensive plan linked to the Postal Service's overall strategic and business goals to optimize transportation. The scope for this audit was FYs 2014 and 2015 and Q1, FY 2016, DRIVE 1.13 - \$1 Billion Ground Transportation Initiative roadmaps and measured goals.

To accomplish our objective, we:

- Reviewed procedures and criteria related to establishing DRIVE initiatives.
- Interviewed the vice president, Network Operations, to obtain information regarding Network Operations' current and planned initiatives and to understand how the initiatives are prioritized or associated to provide an overall strategy to meet long-term goals.
- Interviewed the Postal Service's strategic planning director to determine how Network Operations' strategic planning contributes to the Postal Service's overall strategic plan.
- Interviewed the manager, Surface Transportation, to discuss the objective of DRIVE Initiative 1.13.
- Obtained and reviewed FYs 2014 and 2015 and Q1, FY 2016, roadmap metrics to determine if projected goals were met.<sup>4</sup>
- Reviewed, compared, and analyzed the strategic planning information of 15 international posts, corporations, and advisory boards to identify best practices.
- Reviewed, compared, and analyzed 15 trade and industry organization articles and reports to identify industry initiatives and best practices that may apply to the Postal Service.
- Discussed strategic planning best practices with external stakeholders.

We conducted this performance audit from August 2015 through May 2016, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards and included such tests of internal controls as we considered necessary under the circumstances. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objective. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on April 14, 2016, and included their comments where appropriate.

We did not assess the reliability of any computer-generated data for the purposes of this report.

## Prior Audit Coverage

The OIG did not identify any prior audits or reviews related to the objective of this audit.

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4. We plan to review and evaluate each roadmap detailed process in future separate reviews to help facilitate Postal Service development of plans to mitigate unexpected events and ensure project goals are achieved.

## Appendix B: Management's Comments

LINDA M. MALONE  
VICE PRESIDENT, NETWORK OPERATIONS



May 11, 2016

LORI LAU DILLARD  
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: Draft Audit Report – Transportation Strategic Planning  
(Report Number NO-AT-16-Draft)

Thank you for providing the Postal Service with the opportunity to review and comment on the subject draft report.

Management has several issues with the report as written. If postal management is to be subjected to criticism for its response to mail volume trends, it seems only fair that the criticism reflect the multi-faceted nature of those trends. The initial "Background" paragraph states that:

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2) In response to declining mail volume, the Postal Service is challenged with rightsizing its transportation network and adjusting its [redacted] while reducing costs and maintaining delivery service. (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

While First-Class Mail letter and flat volume (in pieces) has declined, overall cubic volume of mail has increased because of the concurrent growth in packages. By not acknowledging this change in mail mix shape and the significant impact of shape and costs, the report oversimplifies the challenge as simply one of responding to a decline in overall volume. The entire effort under the \$1 Billion strategy for the Delivering Results, Innovation, Value and Efficiency (DRIVE) initiative is indeed to reduce costs while maintaining service but it is being done by reducing and better planning underutilized assets as both the size and the nature of the mailstream change.

A second underlying concern with the audit is its failure to acknowledge and consider that the goals set up in the DRIVE process -- which it criticizes management for not achieving -- are aggressive stretch goals. DRIVE is utilized by management to maximize the organization's pursuit of its strategic goals by intentionally setting very high objectives to achieve. As a process, DRIVE is meant to push the organization farther and faster toward improvement than if more modest, easier-to-achieve targets were established. For example, the Postal Service planned as part of its FY15 budget cycle to save [redacted] million as part of the overall \$1 billion DRIVE initiative. In fact, we saved [redacted] million in costs, exceeding the goal by [redacted]. Had management not set aggressive (b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

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(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410  
(c)(2)

DRIVE goals, it is very unlikely that all of the [redacted] million in savings in FY15 would have been achieved. Although, we did not meet the overall \$1 billion DRIVE goals by [redacted] for FY14 and FY15, we met our internal more realistic budget targets, which would seem to be a more appropriate benchmark for analysis.

(b)(3):39 USC 410

(c)(2)

(b)(3):39 USC 410

(c)(2)

If the OIG's approach to auditing is to evaluate management on the basis of whether its stretch goals have been achieved, such an approach could counter-productively influence managers to establish lower cost savings goals to avoid future similar criticism. Such a result would be unfortunate, as it would lead to less aggressive pursuit of savings and leave savings opportunities on the table.

Although the audit faults management for not achieving its overall cost savings goal and recommends the establishment of contingencies, the audit does not constructively identify any potential savings opportunities that were not already specified by management.

By any objective standard, the report falls short of offering any constructive information or guidance. Accordingly, we respectfully urge that serious consideration be given to not publishing the report at all.

**Recommendation 1:**

We recommend the Vice President, Network Operations:

1. Update the 1.13 section of Delivering Results, Innovation, Value, and Efficiency Initiative 1 (*Optimize Network Operations*) to include an achievable projected transportation cost reduction goal and contingency planning to mitigate unexpected events in fiscal years 2016 and 2017.

**Management Response/Action Plan:**

Management disagrees with this recommendation. DRIVE is used as a tool to push the organization as quickly as possible to achieve our strategic goals. The budget process allows for a mechanism for providing more achievable goals. If we change the DRIVE process to become less aggressive we will certainly become more conservative and not pursue some of the more complex, riskier but higher return initiatives.

**Target Implementation Date:**

N/A

**Responsible Manager:**

N/A

  
Linda M. Malone



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