Facility Access & Shipment Tracking (FAST)
Customer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
April 2011

1. **What is the customer registration process for FAST?**
To initiate the customer registration process, new FAST users must access the **Business Customer Gateway (BCG)**. The BCG allows users to register for services available through the Gateway. To register for FAST, navigate to www.usps.com and click the **Business Customer Gateway** hyperlink in the bottom right corner. On the *Business Customer Gateway* page, users must click the **Sign Up** button to proceed to the *New User Sign Up* page. In order to access the *Select a Business Service* page and sign up for the "Schedule a Mailing Appointment (FAST)" service, users must complete all the required fields on the *New User Sign Up* pages.

2. **How long will it take to begin scheduling appointments in FAST?**
It should take no more than two hours for a Mailer's Customer Registration ID (CRID) to be activated. Once this has been completed, the mailer will be able to start scheduling appointments in FAST.

3. **When can I schedule an appointment in FAST?**
An appointment may be scheduled online or through Web Services one hour to 14 days prior to the appointment date and time.

4. **When can I update or cancel an appointment in FAST?**
An appointment may be updated or cancelled online or through Web Services up to one hour prior to the scheduled appointment time.

5. **How can I determine which facility I should take my mail to?**
There are two sources in FAST for this information - The FAST Facility Profile and the Mail Direction Search Report. Each Facility Profile has an *Additional Information* page containing all information related to processing responsibilities and redirections. The Mail Direction Search, located in the Reports section of FAST allows users to determine where mail should be dropped. Users may view current and future drop entry points by ZIP, Discount, Mail Shape, Mail Class and Effective Date combinations.

6. **What number do I enter in the Drop Shipment Appointment Number box on the USPS Form 8125?**
The 9-digit appointment number that is displayed on the *Appointment Confirmation* page should be entered in the Drop Shipment Appointment Number box on the USPS Form 8125.

Please note: If a mailer is releasing their mail to a consolidator, the consolidator must make the appointment in FAST. Also, only one appointment per truck is allowed for a drop shipment.

7. **What happens if my truck gets turned away for not having an appointment number on the USPS Form 8125?**
The truck should not be turned away. An appointment number or Scheduler ID should be noted on the PS Form 8125 in order for facilities to accept drop shipment appointments. Facilities will instruct transporters to obtain an appointment number or Scheduler ID prior to accepting drop shipments. At destination it is not required for each 8125 to have an appointment number in the case of multiple loads/8125s for one shipment. In this case, the appointment number is taken from the top 8125 in the stack and circled. Even though all 8125s will be signed and dated as being received, any other appointment numbers in the stack will be marked as No Shows.

8. **What is the process for requesting a recurring appointment?**
A recurring appointment is a drop shipment that arrives consistently on the same day or days of the week, during the same time period with approximately the same mail contents on the same type of transportation.

When a user makes the request online, the user specifies the details of the recurring appointment. The scheduler can either:

- Enter the logistics information of the recurring appointment (facility, frequency, time of day, etc) and the recurring content associated to the recurring appointment, **or**
- Enter only the logistics information and have mail owners and/or mail preparers enter the content information for the recurring appointment request.

Once the logistics and the content information have been created, the recurring appointment is submitted to the USPS facility for review and approval. A recurring appointment without contents will not be reviewed. The destination facility will respond to the request within 7 days. A recurring appointment is established at the discretion of the destination facility. If approved, the scheduler is sent an approval email and FAST will create a master record of the recurring appointment in the system.

9. When is an appointment rejected?
Per the Publication 804, a drop shipment can be refused under the following circumstances:

- Pallet Integrity (unstable, leaning, or broken pallets, or the load is deemed unsafe)
- Missing USPS Form 8125 (if the USPS Form 8125 is faxed, the shipment should be accepted)
- Damaged or Wet Mail

In addition, mailers have the responsibility of verifying that their vehicle size is compatible with the destination facility's dock and assisting in unloading the vehicle if required. The mailer's shipment can be refused if they fail to meet these responsibilities. For further information, users may access the Publication 804 through the Resources section of the FAST site.

10. Why aren't the recurring appointments that I set up generated?
Recurring appointments rely on slot and volume capacity and are subject to all the rules of a regular appointment. When a recurring appointment is created, the facility should verify that their constraints have a slot for that appointment type at the hour requested, as well as sufficient volume capacity to include the appointment. If there is not enough slot or volume capacity at the required date and time, the recurring appointment will be declined. Also, all recurring appointments must have associated content; requests for recurring appointments without content will not be reviewed. If a recurring appointment has been created but there is no content associated to it, the recurring appointment will be declined. In addition, recurring appointments for a facility that contains mail that is redirected to another facility after the Grace Period End Date will be declined.

11. What can I do if my recurring appointment is declined?
If a recurring appointment is declined, users must first make sure that they have content associated to the appointment and that it is going to the correct facility. If both of these conditions are met, users are encouraged to contact the facility to make sure there are sufficient slots and volume capacity to accommodate the requested appointment.

12. When is an appointment considered on time?
A shipment should arrive within 30 minutes of the scheduled appointment. An appointment arriving early may be accepted at the discretion of the facility. Appointments arriving more than 30 minutes after the scheduled appointment time are considered late. Late arriving appointments are placed in queue and unloaded when operationally feasible. Appointments for Periodicals take precedence over other mail classes.

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13.   What is FAST Web Services and how can I start using this functionality?
FAST Web Services provides a bi-directional communication between the Industry and FAST. This integrates capabilities into the users software that allow schedulers to inquire, create, update, and cancel appointment requests, while also providing all necessary details about the mail content for the appointments.

In order to begin submitting Web Services messages in the FAST production environment, users must first test their desired messages in the FAST testing environment (TEM). Web Services Testing is a two phased testing effort.

- **Phase 1:** Corporations perform connectivity testing and scenario testing with *PostalOne!* by using Web Services.
- **Phase 2:** Corporations submit their Mail.XML messages and create appointments via Web Services. At this time, FAST will ensure that the submitted messages are valid.

For more information and instructions please contact the FAST Help Desk via email at FAST@usps.gov or phone 1-877-569-6614 or visit the *PostalOne!* Site:

14.   Where can I view closeout information?
Closeout information is available online in FAST for 90 days. This information may be viewed in the FAST Appointment Status Report and the Closeout Data Report. Users can also query their closeout information via Web Services.

15.   Who do I contact with questions regarding FAST?
Technical issues with the FAST online application, such as problems accessing the FAST system, error messages or **Scheduling** issues, such as problems with schedule availability should be directed to the FAST Help Desk via phone 1-877-569-6614 or email FAST@usps.gov.

16.   How can I gain access to FAST, or if I forgot my password, how can I have my password reset or sent to me?
The Business Customer Gateway maintains all customer information, including passwords. Users who have forgotten their password, should click the *I forgot my password* link on the main FAST landing page to retrieve or reset their current password.