

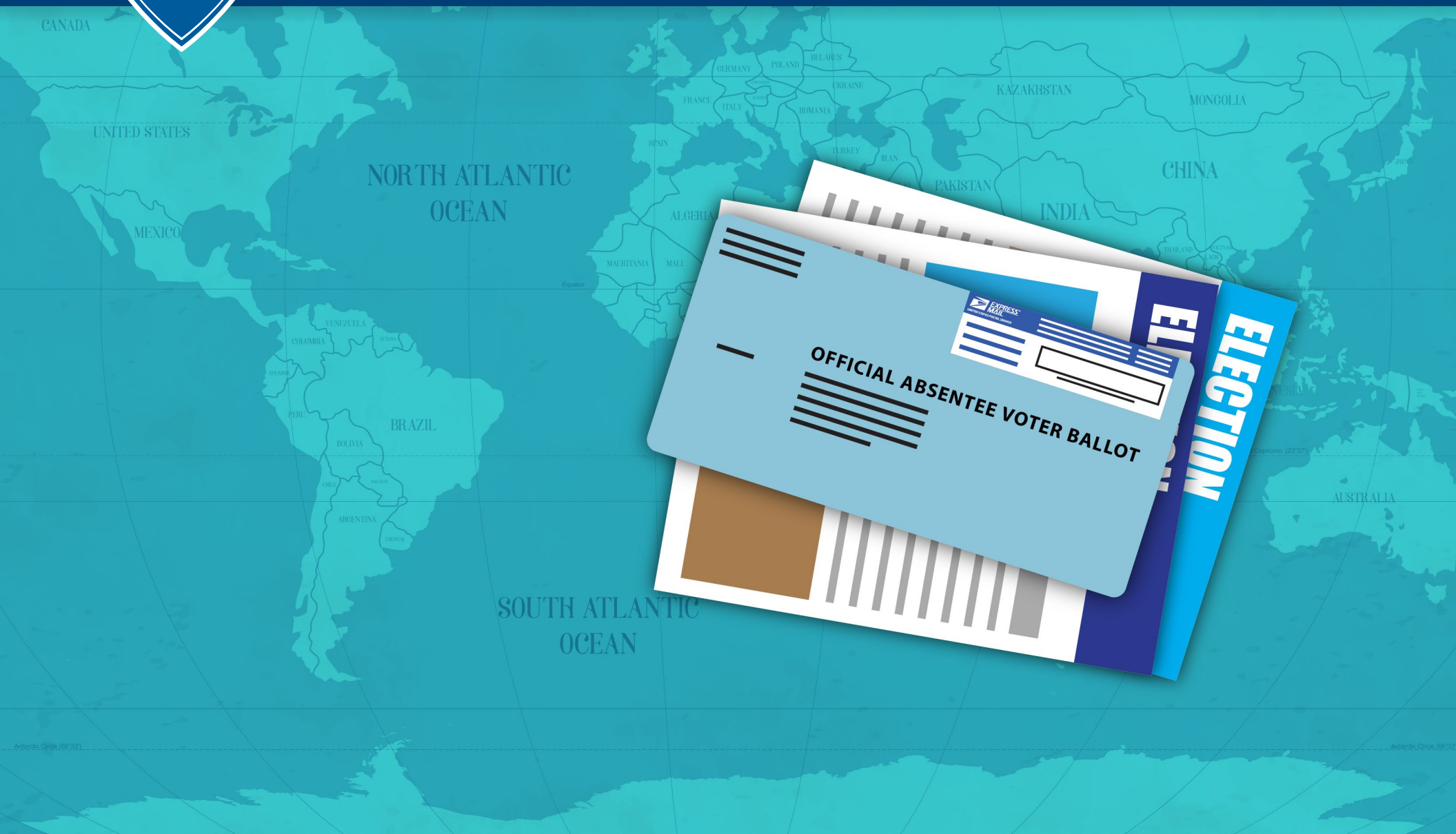


Office of Inspector General | United States Postal Service

## Audit Report

# International Election Mail Observations for the 2020 General and 2021 Georgia Senate Runoff Elections

Report Number 21-007-R21 | April 29, 2021



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# Highlights

## Objective

Our objective was to evaluate the U.S. Postal Service's international mail operations during the 2020 general election and the state of Georgia Senate runoff elections.

The Postal Service processes international election and political mail for eligible U.S. citizens throughout the world, including military and diplomatic members and their families. International election and political mail are typically processed at one of the five International Service Centers (ISC) located in New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, or Los Angeles. Most outbound and inbound international military and diplomatic election mail (about 80 percent) for the 2020 general election was processed through the Chicago ISC.

International election mail has distinct processing procedures that are different than those for domestic election mail. For example, U.S. election offices are expected to send out international absentee ballots at least 45 days prior to a federal election (i.e., September 18, 2020, for this general election). Also, certain international inbound military election ballots qualify for Express Mail service based on a partnership between the Postal Service and Department of Defense.

This project is a follow-up to our September 2020 report on *Military, Diplomatic, and Other International Election Mail* (Report Number [20-271-R20](#)) which raised concerns about the Postal Service's readiness to process international election mail and evaluated how the novel coronavirus disease outbreak (COVID-19) pandemic significantly impacted international mail service and operations.

The Postal Service reported processing and delivering record numbers of ballots during the 2020-2021 election season — over 135 million ballots. Within that total were ballots of international origin, including 62,139 for the general election and 1,055 for the Georgia Senate runoffs. These figures included only those mailings with trackable barcodes processed for either the general election or the subsequent Georgia Senate runoff elections. The total number of ballots processed without a barcode is unknown.

## Finding

The Postal Service successfully processed international election mail for the 2020 general election and 2021 Georgia runoff elections, including international military and diplomatic election ballots. We did not observe any materially significant election mail delays and determined the Postal Service took timely corrective actions related to short-term operational readiness and staffing availability at the Chicago ISC as recommended in our September 2020 report. With regard to military and diplomatic ballots of international origin that qualify for tracking capabilities, Postal Service data reported a delivery scan for over 98 percent of deliverable ballots for the general election and nearly 97 percent for the Georgia Senate runoffs. Mail officials from the Departments of State and Defense stated they were generally satisfied with the Postal Service's international election mail processing.

Successful election mail processing was a result of the following key operational adjustments made at the ISCs which were in addition to normal operations:

- *Identifying and culling:* Staff were placed at various entry points to identify and cull ballots for expedited processing and enhanced tracking. This process often involved bypassing normal inbound mail processing automation and instead having employees visually identify and cull these ballots.
- *Documenting and tracking:* Due to limitations regarding the Postal Service's tracking of international election ballots (as noted in our September 2020 report), Chicago ISC employees developed an ad hoc system to document ballot acceptance and processing by taking a picture and/or photocopying each inbound ballot. While these actions required additional resources and time, staff performed these enhanced documenting and tracking steps in a manner that did not negatively impact the processing of these ballots.
- *Cancelling and routing:* Postal Service national leadership made an operational mandate on October 29, 2020, to utilize its Express Mail network to expeditiously process domestic and international ballots. This decision pushed additional volumes to the ISCs to take advantage of their Express Mail functionality — volumes that normally would have gone to another

facility — and placed additional cost burdens on the ISCs. ISC management quickly implemented cancellation and routing procedures to handle these new volumes.

- **Staffing:** Managers effectively used a combination of additional workhours (regular and overtime) and employee staffing flexibilities to meet the extra operational demands. These efforts were particularly impactful at the Chicago ISC based on the short-term operational readiness and staffing availability issues we raised in our September 2020 report.

The Postal Service also implemented a variety of monitoring and oversight mechanisms for international election mail across all ISCs. These controls and tools included dedicated election teams and daily self-audits, clearance checklists, and logs to ensure compliance to their Election and Political Mail readiness procedures. For example, the Chicago ISC had an 8- to 10-person dedicated election team for each 8-hour operational tour. While most of these adjustments resumed at the ISCs in late December in preparation for the Georgia Senate runoff elections, some were downscaled due to the lower number of ballots and the higher international peak-season holiday volumes that continued into mid-January.

Although ballots were successfully processed within the ISC, we observed the following factors — delayed entry by mailers, limited international transportation, domestic network delays, and non-uniform envelopes — that may have impacted timeliness but were outside the control of the ISC:

- **Delayed entry by mailers:** Postal Service officials noted some international ballots were entered by mailers close to the November 3 general election date and these entry delays posed risks to the ballots being transported, processed, and delivered by designated election deadlines. We addressed this issue in more detail as part of our March 2021 report on the Postal Service's domestic election performance *Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election* (Report Number [20-318-R21](#)), and recommended the Postal Service continue to educate state and local election officials on mailing deadlines.

- **Limited transportation:** Access to international transportation lanes for certain countries was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions which included embargos and lane capacity reductions. For example, on November 2, a ballot arrived at the Chicago ISC for an absentee voter in Zimbabwe. However, the next available outbound transportation lift would not occur until November 7. We discussed these COVID-19-related international transportation issues in more detail in our September 2020 report.
- **Domestic network delays:** We observed a small number of ballots destined for foreign addresses that were delayed in the domestic mail stream before arrival at the ISC, including ballots which were cancelled at a mail processing plant up to 33 days before arriving at the Chicago ISC. We discussed examples of similar delays in the domestic mail processing network in our March 2021 report on the Postal Service's domestic election service performance. Management attributed delays to insufficient staffing and increased manual sortation. We concluded the majority of the ballot mail we observed were processed and delivered timely and that over 98 percent of identifiable ballots were processed in time to meet their service standard during the week of the general election.
- **Non-uniform envelopes:** Manual culling and identification of ballots was challenging because ballot shape and color was not uniform — e.g., some ballots were letter shaped, flat shaped, in preprinted return envelopes, in standard envelopes, handwritten, or typed. We discussed this issue in greater detail in our August 2020 election preparedness report, *Processing Readiness of Election and Political Mail During the 2020 General Elections*, and recommended management leverage existing partnerships with state and local election officials to create a separate Election Mail product that would support uniform mail processing, including mandatory tracking and proper design.

Given these extraordinary operational challenges and the mitigating strategies necessary to successfully process Election Mail in 2020 and 2021, it will be vital for the Postal Service to conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to



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identify operational strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle.

Subsequent to our fieldwork in late March 2021, Postal Service staff at the Kalamazoo (MI) Processing and Distribution Center unexpectedly found a sack of international inbound ballots for the November 2020 general election on a pallet with empty sacks. The sack had an “election mail” tag and was unopened (the original banding seal was intact). Upon review, the sack contained 25 ballots destined for various election offices throughout the U.S. across 12 states. Though not material to the total number of international ballots processed, the Postal Service was unable to determine what caused the improper processing of these ballots. The last scan for these ballots showed arrival at the Dulles (VA) International Airport on October 15, 2020. The operational risks and vulnerabilities that led to this mishandling should be addressed as part of the after-action evaluation.

## Recommendation

We recommended management conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to identify strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle.

# Transmittal Letter



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

April 29, 2021

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** MIKE L. BARBER  
VICE PRESIDENT, PROCESSING AND  
MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

*Amanda H. Stafford*

**FROM:** Amanda H. Stafford  
Acting Deputy Assistant Inspector General  
for Retail, Delivery and Marketing

**SUBJECT:** Audit Report – International Election Mail Observations for the  
2020 General and 2021 Georgia Senate Runoff Elections  
(Report Number 21-007-R21)

This report presents the results of our audit of International Election Mail Observations for the 2020 General and 2021 Georgia Senate Runoff Elections.

We appreciate the cooperation and courtesies provided by your staff. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Janet Sorensen, Director, Sales, Marketing and International, or me at 703-248-2100.

Attachment

cc: Corporate Audit Response Management  
Postmaster General

# Results

## Introduction/Objective

The U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a series of audits to assess the U.S. Postal Service's preparedness and performance during the November 2020 national general election and the January 2021 state of Georgia Senate runoff elections. This report presents the results of our self-initiated audit of International Election Mail Observations for the 2020 General and 2021 Georgia Senate Runoff Elections (Project Number 21-007).

This project is a follow-up to our September 2020 report on *Military, Diplomatic, and Other International Election Mail*<sup>1</sup>, which raised concerns about the Postal Service's readiness to process international election mail and evaluated how the novel coronavirus disease outbreak (COVID-19) pandemic significantly impacted international mail service and operations. This report focuses on international election mail-related operations at the Postal Service's International Service Centers (ISC) during the November 2020 General Election and the subsequent Georgia Senate runoff elections in early January 2021.<sup>2</sup> Our objective was to evaluate the Postal Service's international mail operations during these elections. See [Appendix A](#) for additional information about this audit.

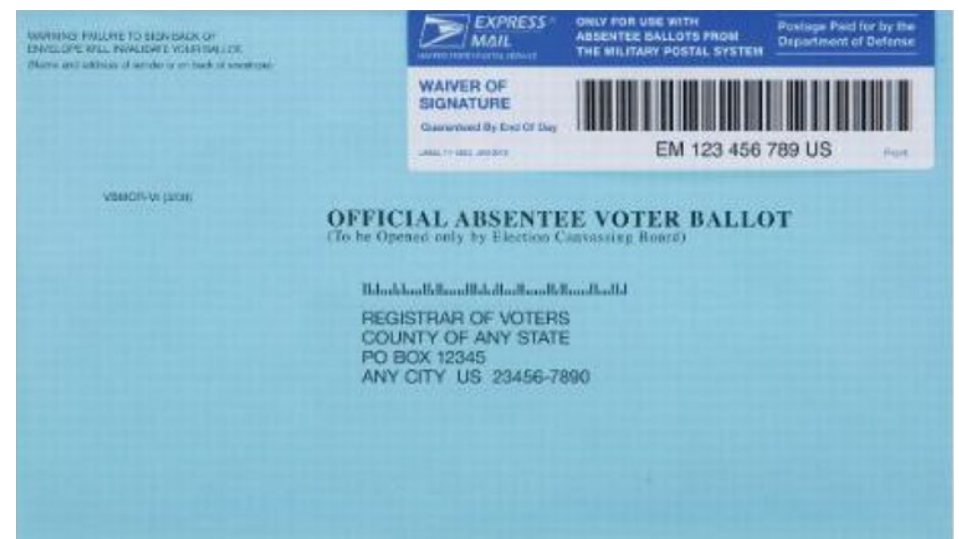
## Background

The Postal Service processes international election and political mail for eligible U.S. citizens throughout the world, including military and diplomatic members and their families. International election and political mail are typically processed at one of the five ISCs located in New York, Miami, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Most outbound and inbound international military and diplomatic election mail (about 80 percent) for the 2020 general election was processed through the Chicago ISC.

International election mail has distinct processing procedures that are different than those for domestic mail. For example, U.S. election offices are expected to send out international absentee ballots at least 45 days prior to a federal election

(i.e., September 18, 2020, for this general election). Also, certain international inbound military election ballots qualify for Express Mail service based on a partnership between the Postal Service and Department of Defense (DoD); these ballots are to be affixed with a special Express Mail label<sup>3</sup> (see Figure 1) to ensure they receive expedited service and enhanced tracking. Other international or diplomatic election mail is processed in the normal international mail stream.

**Figure 1. Example of International Inbound Military Absentee Ballot with 11-DoD Express Mail Label**



Source: U.S. Postal Service.

The 2020-2021 election season posed unique operational challenges to the Postal Service, election offices, and international absentee voters. These challenges that required significant focus and attention by the Postal Service included COVID-19-related operational, staffing, and transportation issues; the record increase in the use of election mail; the additional Georgia runoff elections; and the overall increased scrutiny of election mail.

1 U.S. Postal Service OIG, *Military, Diplomatic, and Other International Election Mail* (Report Number 20-271-R20, dated September 30, 2020).

2 Unless noted, our work excluded detailed reviews of domestic election mail operations or other international mail operations at the ISCs.

3 Through a joint federal agency initiative between the Postal Service and the DoD, military personnel at foreign military postal locations can return absentee ballots via Express Mail service using the 11-DoD Express Mail label. This label is to be affixed to the top of the absentee ballot. These mailings are to be delivered on the day they arrive at the local Post Office facility and provide customers increased tracking capabilities.

The Postal Service reported processing and delivering record numbers of ballots during the 2020-2021 election season — over 135 million. We recently reported on the domestic processing and performance of these mailings as part of our *Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election*<sup>4</sup> report. A small portion of these ballots were for eligible U.S. citizens residing internationally. Postal Service data showed over 63,500 trackable international election mail pieces, including 62,139 for the general election and 1,055 for the state of Georgia Senate runoffs.<sup>5</sup> These figures included only those mailings with the 11-DoD trackable barcodes processed for either the general election or the subsequent Georgia Senate runoff elections. The total number of ballots processed without a barcode is unknown. We previously reported on limitations regarding the Postal Service's tracking of international election ballots.<sup>6</sup> The Postal Service subsequently implemented corrective actions to expand its tracking and reporting capabilities in February 2021.<sup>7</sup>

## Finding #1: International Election Mail Performance

The Postal Service successfully processed international election mail for the 2020 general election and 2021 Georgia runoff elections, including international military and diplomatic election ballots. We did not observe any materially significant election mail delays and determined the Postal Service took timely corrective actions related to short-term operational readiness and staffing availability at the Chicago ISC as recommended in our September 2020 report. With regard to military and diplomatic ballots of international origin that qualify for tracking capabilities, Postal Service data reported a delivery scan for over 98 percent of deliverable ballots for the general election and nearly 97 percent for the Georgia Senate runoffs. Mail officials from the Departments of State and Defense also stated they were generally satisfied with the Postal Service's international election mail processing.

Successful election mail processing at the ISCs was a result of key operational adjustments which included manual identification and culling of ballots, manual tracking of election mail pieces, implementation of cancellation operations, and additional staffing. These adjustments were necessary to mitigate the potential risk of ballots not being returned to the local election offices in a timely, reliable manner.

## Operational Adjustments

ISC management made operational adjustments between October and December 2020 to ensure the ballots for the general election were timely identified and processed. These adjustments were outside normal operations and involved a number of manual processes. For example, we observed the following at the Chicago ISC:

- *Identifying and culling:* Staff were placed at various entry points at the facility to identify and cull ballots for expedited processing and enhanced tracking. This process often involved bypassing normal inbound mail processing automation and instead having employees visually identify and cull these ballots.
- *Documenting and tracking:* Staff took measures to document and track election pieces, including developing an ad hoc system to document ballot acceptance and processing by taking a picture and/or photocopying each inbound ballot (see [Figure 2](#)). These actions helped to mitigate issues we

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***“ISC management made operational adjustments between October and December 2020 to ensure the ballots for the general election were timely identified and processed.”***

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4 U.S. Postal Service OIG, *Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election* (Report Number 20-318-R21, dated March 5, 2021).

5 The Postal Service also reported 348 ballots for other elections after the general election such as those in Texas and Louisiana. Our election mail figures only include those mailings with trackable barcodes processed for both the general election and the subsequent Georgia state runoff elections. The total number of ballots processed without a barcode is unknown.

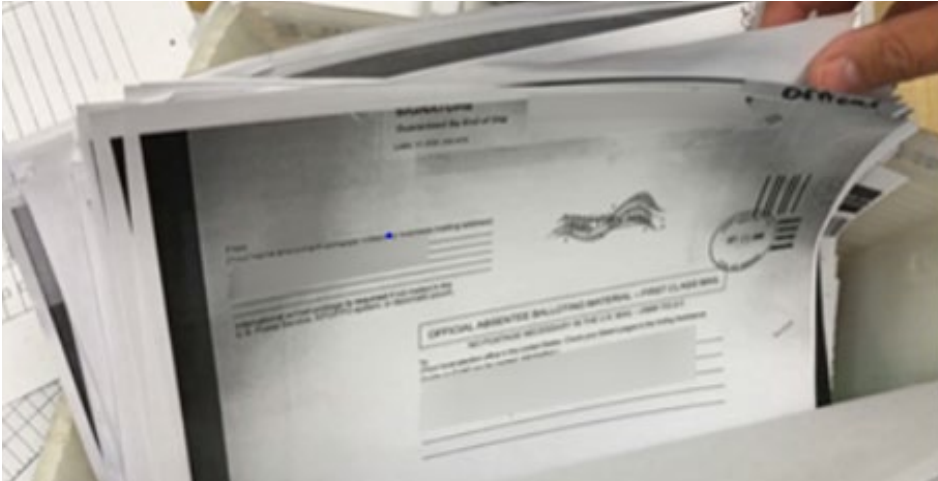
6 U.S. Postal Service OIG, *Military, Diplomatic, and Other International Election Mail* (Report Number 20-271-R20, dated September 30, 2020).

7 Regarding tracking for non-DoD ballots, the Postal Service developed tracking capabilities via an election mail Service Type Identifier (STID) embedded in the Intelligent Mail barcodes affixed to applicable return ballots. The STID allows for the tracking of various scan events within the Postal Service network from origin carrier to delivery. These tracking capabilities for international ballots were not fully in place for the 2020 general election.



raised in our September 2020 report<sup>8</sup> related to the Postal Service's limited ability to track international election ballots.

**Figure 2. Photocopied Ballots at the Chicago ISC**



Source: OIG staff picture taken on September 29, 2020, at the Chicago ISC.

While these actions required additional resources and time, staff performed these enhanced documenting and tracking steps in a manner that did not negatively impact the processing of these ballots.

- **Cancelling and routing:** Postal Service national leadership made an operational mandate on October 29, 2020, to transport domestic and international ballots using the Express Mail network. This decision pushed additional domestic election mail volumes to the ISCs to take advantage of their Express Mail functionality — volumes that normally would have gone to another facility — and placed additional cost burdens on the ISCs. ISC management quickly implemented cancellation and routing procedures to handle these new volumes.
- **Staffing:** Managers effectively used a combination of additional workhours (regular and overtime) and employee staffing flexibilities to complete the extra

operational demands. These efforts were particularly valuable at the Chicago ISC based on the short-term operational readiness and staffing availability issues we raised in our September 2020 report. The additional workhours and staffing flexibilities helped offset continued staffing availability issues, as employee availability continued to average 71.7 percent, or about 8.3 percent below the Postal Service's 80 percent operational target.<sup>9</sup> The available staff were crucial to effective identification, culling, documenting, tracking, cancelling, and routing of international election mail.

The Postal Service also implemented a variety of monitoring and oversight mechanisms for international election mail across all ISCs. These controls and tools included dedicated election teams and daily self-audits, clearance checklists, and logs to ensure compliance to their Election and Political Mail readiness procedures. For example, the Chicago ISC had an 8- to 10-person dedicated election team for each 8-hour operational tour, and Chicago ISC staff consistently completed all related Postal Service-required election mail checklists and logs.

While most of these adjustments resumed at the ISCs in late December in preparation for the Georgia Senate runoff elections, some were downscaled due to the lower number of ballots and the higher international peak-season holiday volumes that continued into mid-January. For example, identification and culling operations were streamlined and the election mail teams at the Chicago ISC were downscaled to 2 staff per tour.

### International Election Mail Processing Challenges

Although ballots were successfully processed within the ISC, we observed the following factors including delayed entry by mailers, limited international

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***“The Postal Service also implemented a variety of monitoring and oversight mechanisms for international election mail across all ISCs.”***

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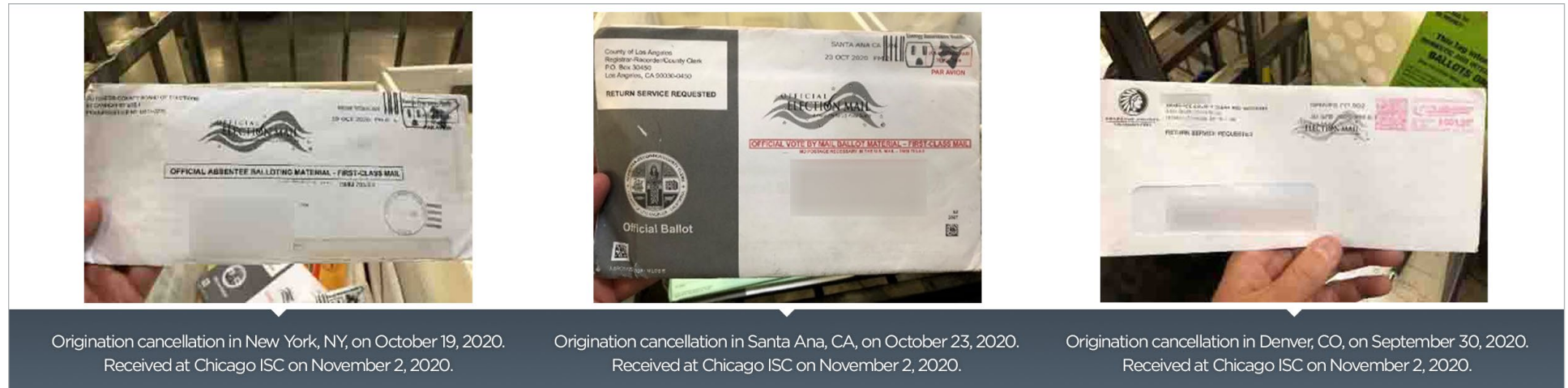
<sup>8</sup> U.S. Postal Service OIG, *Military, Diplomatic, and Other International Election Mail* (Report Number 20-271-R20, dated September 30, 2020).

<sup>9</sup> Postal Service employee availability data between October 4-November 21, 2020.

transportation, domestic network delays, and non-uniform envelopes that may have impacted timeliness but were outside the control of the ISC:

- **Delayed entry by mailers:** Postal Service officials noted some international ballots for the General Election were entered by mailers close to the November 3 general election date and these entry delays posed risks to the ballots being transported, processed, and delivered by designated election deadlines. We addressed this issue in more detail as part of our March 2021 report on the Postal Service's domestic election performance (*Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election*), and recommended that the Postal Service continue to educate state and local election officials on mailing deadlines.<sup>10</sup>
- **Limited transportation:** Access to international transportation lanes for certain countries was limited due to COVID-19 restrictions and other considerations. For example, on November 2 a ballot arrived at the Chicago ISC for an absentee voter in Zimbabwe. However, the next available outbound transportation (flight) would not occur until November 7 (which would have been four days after the election). Transportation for other outbound ballots may have been limited due to a lack of outbound air transportation or the country not accepting U.S. mailings (under embargo). We discussed these COVID-19-related international transportation issues in more detail in our September 2020 report.
- **Domestic network delays:** We observed a small number of ballots destined for foreign addresses that were delayed in the domestic mail stream before arrival at the ISC, including ballots which were cancelled at a mail processing plant up to 33 days before arriving at the Chicago ISC (see Figure 3). We discussed examples of similar delays in the domestic mail processing network in our March 2021 report on the Postal Service's domestic election service performance.<sup>11</sup> Management attributed delays to insufficient staffing and increased manual sortation. We concluded the majority of the ballot mail we observed were processed and delivered timely and that over 98 percent of identifiable ballots were processed in time to meet their service standard during the week of the general election. Delays in the domestic network prior to getting the ballots to the ISC to be mailed out internationally are harder to recover from than for those ballots that remain within the country.

**Figure 3. Delayed Outbound Election Mail (routed to the Chicago ISC for international delivery)**



Sources: OIG staff pictures taken November 2, 2020, at the Chicago ISC.

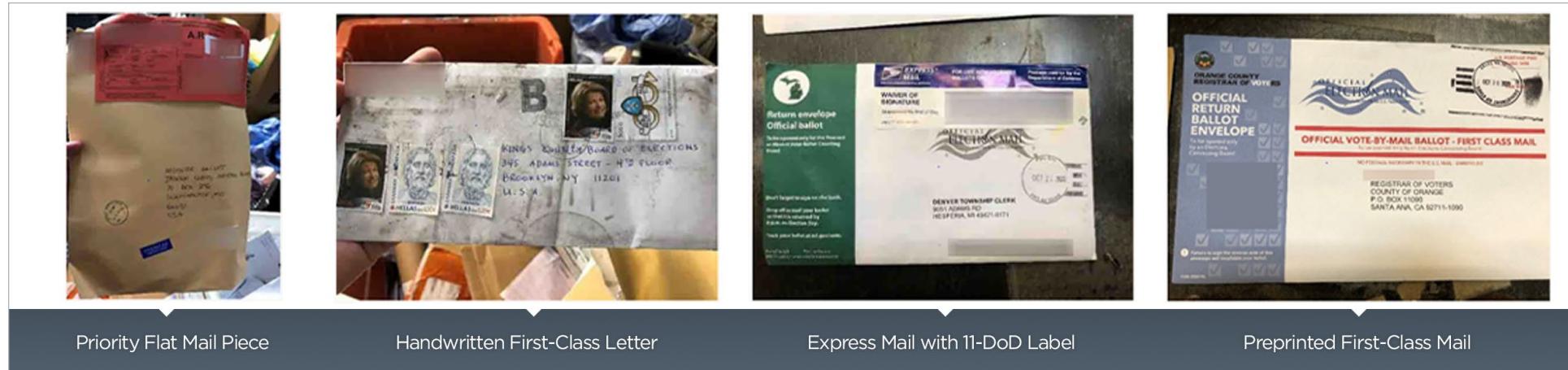
<sup>10</sup> U.S. Postal Service OIG, *Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election* (Report Number 20-318-R21, dated March 5, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Postal Service OIG, *Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election* (Report Number 20-318-R21, dated March 5, 2021).

- *Non-uniform envelopes:* Manual culling and identification was challenging because ballot shape and color was not uniform — e.g., some ballots were letter shaped, flat shaped, in preprinted return envelopes, in standard envelopes, handwritten, or typed (see Figure 4). We discussed this issue in greater detail in our August 2020 election preparedness report (*Processing*

*Readiness of Election and Political Mail During the 2020 General Elections*) and recommended management leverage existing partnerships with state and local election officials to create a separate Election Mail product that would support uniform mail processing, including mandatory tracking and proper design.

**Figure 4. Examples of Inbound Election Mail (routed to the Chicago ISC for domestic delivery)**



Sources: OIG staff pictures taken November 2, 2020, at the Chicago ISC.

Given these extraordinary operational challenges and the mitigating strategies necessary to successfully process Election Mail in 2020 and 2021, it will be vital for the Postal Service to conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to identify operational strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle.

Subsequent to our fieldwork in late March 2021, Postal Service staff at the Kalamazoo (MI) Processing and Distribution Center unexpectedly found a sack of international inbound ballots for the November 2020 general election on a pallet with empty sacks. The sack had an “election mail” tag and was unopened (the original banding seal was intact). Upon review, the sack contained 25 ballots destined for various election offices throughout the U.S. across 12 states. Though not material to the total number of international ballots processed, the

Postal Service was unable to determine what caused the improper processing of these ballots. The last scan for these ballots showed arrival at the Dulles (VA) International Airport on October 15, 2020. The operational risks and vulnerabilities that led to this mishandling should be addressed as part of the after-action evaluation.

### Recommendation #1

We recommend the **Vice President, Processing and Maintenance Operations**, conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to identify strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle.

## Management's Comments

Management agreed with the finding and recommendation. Management stated they were aware of the risks and general costs associated with the operational adjustments made to ensure timely delivery of election ballots and mail received during the general election and Georgia Senate Runoff election.

Regarding the recommendation, management stated they will conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to identify strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle. An operational after-action evaluation will be scheduled within the next 30 days between all ISCs; the Director, International Processing Operations; the Director, Processing Operations; and the Election Mail coordinator. The target implementation date is April 30, 2021.

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

## Evaluation of Management's Comments

The OIG considers management's comments responsive to the recommendation.

The recommendation requires OIG concurrence before closure. Consequently, the OIG requests written confirmation when corrective actions are completed. The recommendation should not be closed in the Postal Service's follow-up tracking system until the OIG provides written confirmation that the recommendation can be closed.



# Appendices

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# Appendix A: Additional Information

## Scope and Methodology

Our objective was to evaluate the U.S. Postal Service's international mail operations during the 2020 general election and the state of Georgia Senate Runoff elections. To accomplish our objective, we performed the following between October 2020 and February 2021:

- Reviewed Postal Service policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities related to processing of international election mail, including military and diplomatic election mail.
- Observed international election mail operations at the Chicago ISC between October 2020 and February 2021.
- Reviewed Postal Service processing and operational plans for international election mail.
- Reviewed Postal Service international election mail data, including employee availability and delayed mail data from the Tour Turnover and Ramp reports and discussed this data with local Postal Service officials.
- Interviewed Postal Service Headquarters officials and managers and staff at the Chicago ISC. These discussions included planning and performance during the general election and Georgia Senate runoff elections mailing season. We also interviewed management at the New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Miami ISCs.

- Interviewed Department of Defense and State officials about their perspectives on international military and diplomatic election mail.
- Reviewed past audit work from the Postal Service OIG, Department of Defense OIG, and the Government Accountability Office.

We conducted this performance audit from October 2020 through April 2021 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 objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We discussed our observations and conclusions with management on March 16, 2021 and April 16, 2021 and included their comments where appropriate.

We assessed the reliability of international election and political mail data by reviewing Postal Service-provided data and other Postal Service tracking reports. We also reviewed employee availability and delayed mail data at the Chicago ISC from the Ramp and Tour Turnover reports. We discussed this data with Postal Service officials and determined the data were sufficiently reliable for the purposes of this report.

## Prior Audit Coverage

Report Title	Objective	Report Number	Final Report Date	Monetary Impact
<i>Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the November 2020 General Election</i>	Evaluate the U.S. Postal Service's service performance of Election and Political Mail during the November 2020 general election. We also evaluated the handling of mail for the Georgia Senate runoff election held on January 5, 2021.	<a href="#">20-318-R21</a>	3/5/2021	None
<i>Military, Diplomatic, and Other International Election Mail</i>	Evaluate the U.S. Postal Service's preparedness for processing international election mail.	<a href="#">20-271-R20</a>	9/30/2020	None
<i>Processing Readiness of Election and Political Mail During the 2020 General Elections</i>	Evaluate the Postal Service's readiness for timely processing of Election and Political Mail for the 2020 General Elections.	<a href="#">20-225-R20</a>	8/31/2020	None
<i>Management Alert - Timeliness of Ballot Mail in the Milwaukee Processing &amp; Distribution Center Service Area</i>	Determine the cause of delayed ballot mail in the Milwaukee, WI P&DC service area for the spring election and presidential primary of April 7, 2020.	<a href="#">20-235-R20</a>	7/7/2020	None
<i>Service Performance of Election and Political Mail During the 2018 Midterm and Special Elections</i>	Evaluate the Postal Service's performance in processing Election and Political Mail for the 2018 midterm and special elections.	<a href="#">19XG010NO000-R20</a>	11/4/2019	None
<i>Processing Readiness for Election and Political Mail for the 2018 Midterm Elections</i>	Evaluate the Postal Service's readiness for timely processing of Election and Political Mail for the 2018 Midterm Elections.	<a href="#">NO-AR-18-007</a>	6/5/2018	None

# Appendix B: Management's Comments

Director, International Processing Operations



April 5, 2021

JOSEPH WOLSKI  
DIRECTOR, AUDIT OPERATIONS

SUBJECT: OIG Audit – International Election Mail Observations for the 2020 General and 2021 Georgia Senate Runoff Elections; Project Number 21-007-DRAFT

This memo is in response to the subject audit conducted by the Office of Inspector General.

The USPS generally agrees with the findings and recommendation of the audit.

The USPS is aware of the operational risks and general costs associated with the operational adjustments made to ensure timely delivery of election ballots and mail received during the general election and Georgia Senate Runoff Election. However, we agree with the recommendation to conduct a complete after-action evaluation to ensure all operational adjustments, costs, and risks and all possible strategies and best practices that should be implemented in the next election cycle are identified.

Recommendation #1:

We recommend the Vice President, Processing and Maintenance Operations, conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to identify strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle.

Management Response/Action Plan:

We agree to conduct an after-action evaluation to understand the operational risks and costs to deliver international ballots timely, as well as to identify strategies and best practices that can be implemented during the next election cycle.

An after-action evaluation of operations during the General Election and Georgia Senate Runoff Election will be scheduled within the next 30 days between all ISCs, the Director, International Processing Operations, Director, Processing Operations and Election Mail Coordinator.

Target Implementation Date:

April 30, 2021

Responsible Official:

Jeffrey Becker  
Director, International Processing Operations

Please contact me if you have any questions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Becker", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeffrey Becker

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

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1735 North Lynn Street  
Arlington, VA 22209-2020  
(703) 248-2100

For media inquiries, please email  
[press@uspsoig.gov](mailto:press@uspsoig.gov) or call 703-248-2100