

POSTAL NEWS

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1. UK Post Bank Widely Supported Say CWU

24 March 2009 by Sarah Sharpe - © Hellmail.co.uk

The Communication Workers Union, which represents thousands of postal workers, today added its voice to calls for a 'Post Bank' to help secure the future of the UK's post office network.

A new poll reveals that some 74 per cent of voters supported the idea with only 15 percent against the idea. The poll, published by Politicshome indicates widespread support for the concept which would see an alternative to commercial banks.

Billy Hayes, CWU general secretary, said:

“This is an idea whose time has come. The Post Bank provides solutions for people who are disillusioned with traditional banking as well as a sustainable future for the Post Office. This poll clearly shows the popularity and demand across the political board for a People’s Post Bank.”

The government is providing up to £1.7bn of funding to the Post Office network, including £150m a year to help support a network of around 11,500 branches to 2011 and has said that it will continue to support the non-commercial network beyond this date.

Business Secretary Lord Mandelson said: "I am passionate about the Post Office and strongly believe that if the right steps are taken there is a positive future for the network. But nostalgia is not a currency that will enable the Post Office to thrive.

"The Post Office's trusted brand, unrivalled network, experienced staff and the new technology being purchased for the DVLA contract (announced yesterday) put the company in an excellent position to bid for other work. It can turn itself into a real front office for Government."

No firm plans have been made by government to approve the introduction of a 'peoples bank' but there are signs it may be warming to the idea. Both the CWU and

the National Federation for Subpostmasters are presently putting pressure on government to act swiftly but Lord Mandelson may see it as an opportunity to help drive through his controversial Postal Services Bill which would see up to 49% of Royal Mail sold to another postal operator. The NFSP has warned that any further delay could see a new wave of closures as subpostmasters struggle to find business during the recession.

The Post Bank coalition, whose members include the CWU, Federation of Small Businesses, National Pensioners Convention, nef (the new economics foundation), PIRC and Unite the union, launched their proposal for a permanent publicly-owned Post Bank based on the post office network On Tuesday 17th March, to answer both concerns around secure and equitable finance and the future of the Post Office.

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2. Deutsche Post DHL Welcomes Dutch Mail Liberation

24 March 2009 by Franz Groter - © Hellmail.co.uk

Deutsche Post DHL said it welcomes the announcement by the Dutch government to fully open up the Dutch mail market on 1 April 2009.

Deutsche Post DHL has been operating in the Dutch mail market for a number of years through its subsidiaries DHL Global Mail and Selekt Mail and is one of the leading mail service providers operating there today.

'Today's decision is good for our customers and for Global Mail, since more competition means more choice, more service, better quality and lower prices,' according to Thomas Kipp, CEO Global Mail Europe.

The liberalisation announced some time ago is long overdue, since the German mail market has been unrestricted to competition since the start of 2008, including to Dutch mail company TNT. In contrast, Deutsche Post has so far been unable to enter into free and fair competition in the Netherlands. With its subsidiaries Deutsche Post DHL is excellently positioned to compete in the Netherlands and will now make good use of the opportunities on offer to benefit its customers.

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3. Belgian La Poste Committed To Greener Service

25 March 2009 by Sarah Sharpe - © Hellmail.co.uk

Belgian postal operator La Poste says it is committed to limiting to the maximum the impact of its activities on the environment. The company has announced its objectives aimed at reducing its emissions of CO2 by 35% before 2012.

Already on track to improve its carbon footprint it anticipates a decrease in consumption of energy over the 2005-2012 period of at least 7.5%.

In addition, La Poste has decided to only use recycled paper or paper from managed forests.

In July 2005, La Poste concluded an agreement with the Belgian government to reduce its energy by 7,5% before 2012 and gas emissions by 10%.

Since August 2008, La Poste has been using electricity that comes exclusively from renewable energy sources (AlpEnergy, electricity produced by hydroelectric stations). Solar panels are to be fitted on the roof of the sorting office of Ghent during the summer. The panels are expected to produce some 400.000 kWh per annum, around 10% of the energy requirements at the site. A number of vans and trucks of the type Euro4 (3460) and trucks of the type Euro5 (33) were acquired in order to contribute to a durable management of energy and environment.

In order to decrease the consumption of energy of its buildings, La Poste carried out energy audits of sites in order to detect abnormal consumption to undertake remedial action. At Ghent, it allowed La Poste to save more than 20% of the total energy costs.

La Poste also launched an “éco-control” initiative for drivers, alerting them to fuel consumption. More than 850 vehicles already have them fitted with a further 2.500 to be installed this year. La Poste estimates it can save 5% on fuel doing this alone, a total saving in approximately 475.000 liters of diesel per annum.

Johnny Thijs, CEO of the Belgian Post office said:

“La Poste is extremely concerned about the environment. Customers can be certain that by entrusting their letters or packages to us, environmental impact will be minimised. La Poste is committed to the broad objectives of Kyoto agreement.”

Johnny Thijs stressed that the “letter” was an ecologically sound means of communication:

“The International postal industry has seriously begun to reduce its consumption of energy and its CO2 emissions as well as greater use of recycled paper. La Poste wants to set an example and in the future, it will only be using recycled paper or paper from sustainable sources for its internal and external needs.”

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March 23, 2009

4. Focus on Business and Let Your Desktop Deliver

Save Time and Money with the Postal Service’s Online Shipping

WASHINGTON — Almost anything customers can do at the Post Office, they can do online at usps.com — from the convenience of their home or office. The U.S. Postal Service’s website, usps.com, lets customers skip the trip to the Post Office and conduct Postal Service business with the click of a mouse.

More than 1.2 million people visit the website every day, making it one of the most-visited government websites. Starting today, Post Offices across the country are

hosting free demonstrations for consumers and businesses through March 27 as part of “usps.com Week.”

“The Postal Service wants customers to know that they don’t have to go to the Post Office to ship a package,” said Susan Plonkey, vice president, sales. “Our website, usps.com, makes it easy to request free package pickup or print a shipping label, at a time and place that is convenient for them.”

The Postal Service also offers discounts between 3 percent and 11 percent when customers ship online.

“And the Postal Service doesn’t add any fuel surcharges or other hidden fees such as for residential or Saturday delivery — a real value for your money,” said Plonkey. usps.com offers nearly three dozen services and products for both consumers and businesses. Customers can:

- Pay postage and print shipping labels
- Request free package pickup
- Send shipments around the globe
- Order free, eco-friendly packaging supplies
- Track packages and confirm mail delivery
- Create direct mail
- Locate a PO Box

All customers need is an Internet connection, a home or office computer and a laser or inkjet printer. Labels can be printed on 8.5" by 11" paper and glued or taped securely to the package. For added convenience, customers can request a free package pickup for both domestic and international packages, up to 70 pounds, and the packages will be picked up during regular mail delivery the next day.

For one low price of \$14.75, the Postal Service also offers Pickup On Demand service for same-day or time-specific requests, regardless of the number of packages.

“We know that business isn’t just 9 to 5, Monday through Friday,” said Plonkey.

“Visit usps.com and step into a 24-hour Post Office.”

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5. FedEx and UPS gear up for more tough times

By SAMANTHA BOMKAMP

NEW YORK (AP) — Despite gaining new customers from the shrinking U.S. presence of DHL and lower fuel prices, the world's two largest package delivery companies are battening down the hatches as they prepare for weak global economic conditions to get even worse.

FedEx Corp. said Thursday it will cut more jobs and trim wages again, after reporting its fiscal third-quarter profit tumbled 75 percent on sliding revenue.

"Our financial performance was sharply lower during the quarter due to the global recession," Chairman, President and Chief Executive Frederick W. Smith said. "While we are gaining market share in all of our transportation segments, the downturn in our industry and the severity and expected duration of the recession require that we take additional actions."

UPS Inc. Chairman and CEO Scott Davis had similar comments last month after his company reported lower fourth-quarter revenue. "The severe decline in economic activity around the world resulted in sharply lower package and freight volumes for UPS," he said.

Economists and analysts consider FedEx and larger rival UPS to be bellwethers of the global economy, since they deal with such basic indicators of company health as orders and product shipments. Both companies have been courting former customers of DHL, which pulled out of ground deliveries in the U.S. earlier this year.

Memphis, Tenn.-based FedEx earned \$97 million, or 31 cents per share, compared with \$393 million, or \$1.26 a year earlier in the December-to-February period. Revenue fell 14 percent from a year ago, to \$8.14 billion, and 14.7 percent from the previous quarter.

Atlanta-based UPS, the world biggest package shipper, said in February that it made a profit in the fourth quarter, compared to a year-ago loss, when it was weighed down by a big one-time charge. But quarterly sales fell 5.2 percent. The company suspended its 401(k) match, announced plans to cut an unspecified number of jobs and froze management salaries.

Three months ago, FedEx announced broad-based cost cuts including a 20 percent pay cut for CEO Smith, a 7.5 to 10 percent cut for other executives and a 5 percent cut for thousands of others. The company also froze retirement plan contributions for a year, among other cost-saving measures. FedEx employs about 290,000 people worldwide. Now FedEx plans to cut more jobs — although it didn't say how many. It also plans to reduce some workers' hours and wages. The company will also trim air and truck capacity. FedEx hopes to save about \$1 billion with the cuts in fiscal 2010, which starts in June.

"I think that what we are showing by the cost reductions we had already taken and the ones that we are about to take, we have a lot more flexibility and variability in our cost structure than most people give us credit for," Chief Financial Officer Alan Graf said in a conference call with analysts.

The biggest part of the cost cuts will come in FedEx Express, according to Dave Bronczek, the unit's chief executive. "(Express) is all around the world...Asia, Europe, here in the United States. So we have a lot of levers to pull — we have a lot of initiatives under way, and we are moving forward on all of those initiatives, he said." Standard & Poor's analyst Jim Corridore still thinks FedEx is in a good position to take advantage of an economic recovery, despite worse-than-expected demand and pricing in the third-quarter. He reiterated his "Buy" rating on FedEx, noting the stock has already been battered by negative economic news. Shares lost about 39 percent in the fiscal third quarter.

FedEx shares rose \$2.05, or 4.8 percent, to close at \$45.10 Thursday.

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