



Department of General Services  
**Postal Insider**  
An information paper by State Mail Services

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The *Postal Insider* is a quarterly information paper designed to keep State Mail Services customers informed. It contains information about SMS mail operations and other general information related to postal operations that may have an internal or external effect on mail activities within agencies and SMS.

### **Minute by Minute**

“Did they receive the package?” How many times have we heard this from someone in our office? Most state agencies depend on a carrier service or internal staff for delivery and pick-up of incoming and outgoing mail. If you are the person responsible for tracking “Special Need” packages (registered, certified, delivery or signature confirmation, restricted delivery, and express mail) for your agency you can spend hours trying to retrieve information.

State Mail Services (SMS) recently purchased the Arrival XE Internal Tracking and Delivery Management Software and System, also known as the Arrival XE System. The Arrival software and tracking system will provide a method of accountability from the time you hand the “Special-Need” package to the SMS carrier to the final delivery of the package. The burden of tracking delivery and pick-up of “Special Need” packages will now be



turned over to SMS by the SMS customer through the Arrival XE System. It will help you minimize time spent tracking packages.

The Arrival XE System will also benefit the SMS operation by improving the mail room productivity. SMS will use the Arrival XE System to capture data which allows for improvements with the management of delivery and route schedules. This system’s functionality also provides customers a choice to customize and/or establish different tracking requirements.

In March, SMS carriers placed barcode labels on some of the desks or in the mail area of its customers. Each label is encoded with your agency’s assigned mail stop number (s). SMS carriers will scan the labels daily during delivery and pick-up times. And will also scan your incoming and outgoing “Special Need” packages.

For more information on the Arrival XE System please contact SMS at 804-236-3592 or by email at [StateMail@dgs.virginia.gov](mailto:StateMail@dgs.virginia.gov).

### **Eliminate Unwanted Mail**

Junk mail often follows you after you attended a conference, workshop or seminar. Some of us are still receiving junk mail from individuals who no longer work for our agency. What can we do to get rid of this unwanted mail? Can you we just throw it out? If the mail is addressed to you, throwing it out is always an option. By law you should never open or throw out mail that is addressed to others. As the mail custodian it is your responsibility to forward the mail to the addressee or return it the United States Postal Service. Both options will never solve the problem. You will continue to receive the mail addressed to that individual.

SMS has partnered with the Ecological Mail Coalition to provide state agencies with a free service to help minimize the influx of undeliverable catalogs, magazines, and other bulk mail sent monthly. To find out more information go to <http://sms.dgs.virginia.gov/default.aspx> and click on “Ways to reduce unwanted mail” located under the *Quick Links*.

## Pay Only If Returned

State Mail Services (SMS) recently purchased a permit to process Business Reply Mail (BRM) through the United States Postal Services (USPS). The SMS permit is available to all SMS customers. If your agency currently has its own permit please continue to use the permit until it expires.

Business Reply Mail is a service provided by the USPS that will allow an agency's customer to respond at no cost to the customer. The agency incurs the cost for the postage. Most agencies will send envelopes and postcards pre-addressed and pre-stamped making it easier for the recipient (customer) to respond.

There are two types of Business Reply Mail offered:

- Basic Business Reply Mail (BRM) - Suitable if fewer than 950 returned pieces are expected in one year.
- High Volume Business Reply Mail (BRM) - Suggested if more than 950 responses a year are expected.

Both types of Business Reply Mail require the purchase of permits.

Benefits of using the Business Reply Mail service through SMS:

- No need to purchase an individual permit
- Your agency can lower postage fees
- No more waiting in lines to purchase stamps or having to affix stamps
- You only pay for postage if the item is returned

If you would like to hear more about this service, please contact SMS at 804-236-3592 or by email at [StateMail@DGS.Virginia.gov](mailto:StateMail@DGS.Virginia.gov).

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## New e-Return Software Saves You Time and Money

Many of us work in a fast-paced environment with deadlines imposed by all levels of management. In a perfect world we would all love for our days to run smoothly. Spending time preparing and processing certified or registered can turn a perfect day into troublesome day. Let's start by defining both certified and registered. Certified mail provides the sender with proof of delivery and registered mail provides a secure method of mailing.

State Mail Services is now offering a service to its customers that will allow them to process all outgoing certified and registered mail electronically. SMS recently purchased the E-Return Receipt Solution software called "**Ship Request**".

All of our customers process registered and certified mail manually. This two-step process begins with manually completing the United States Postal Service (USPS) cards or labels both front and back and then affixing the labels and/or green card to the outgoing envelopes. The sender must also take the time to calculate and account for postage, allot time during their daily work schedule to make that unpredictable trip to the post office; a trip that can last anywhere from 15 minutes to 50 minutes. Even after the item is sent, you the sender must still account for proof of receipt.

What are the benefits of the Ship Request software? The Ship Request software is much more efficient. It gives the SMS customer the option of electronically selecting registered and/or certified mail. With just a few strikes of the keyboard you can electronically key information, print and affix to envelope, and then place in a tray for the SMS carrier. SMS will handle the rest. Not only will you save time. But you will save at least \$.50 on each piece you send. You will have accurate postage with just one click of the button.

You will also be able to track items online and download your information electronically. For more information on Ship Request contact SMS at 804-236-3592 or by email at [StateMail@dgs.virginia.gov](mailto:StateMail@dgs.virginia.gov).



*Please send all comments, suggestions, and request to [StateMail@DGS.Virginia.Gov](mailto:StateMail@DGS.Virginia.Gov) or you can call Maurice Pegram, State Mail Services Customer Service Supervisor at 804-236-3592.*