

difficulty of data collection, and duration. A final determination regarding the appropriateness of accepting the filing as an experimental case and application of Commission rules 67–67d will not be made until participants have had an adequate opportunity to comment. Participants are invited to file comments on this matter by June 24, 2004.

Authorization of settlement negotiations. The Commission grants the Service's Request for Establishment of Settlement Procedures and appoints Postal Service counsel as settlement coordinator. In this capacity, counsel for the Service shall file periodic reports on the status of settlement discussions, with the first report to be submitted on or before July 2, 2004. The Commission further authorizes the settlement coordinator to hold a technical conference, at the convenience of participants, anytime between June 21 and 23, 2004; authorizes a settlement conference to be held the next week, with notice to the Commission of the date and time selected; and sets a public post-settlement conference hearing for July 8, 2004, at 10 a.m. in the Commission's hearing room. If progress in the settlement conference overtakes the need for the July 8 conference, the settlement coordinator is to notify the Commission and participants as promptly as possible.

The Commission notes that authorization of settlement discussions does not constitute a finding on the proposal's experimental status or on the need for a hearing in this case.

Representation of the general public. In conformance with section 3624(a) of title 39, the Commission designates Shelley S. Dreifuss, director of the Commission's Office of the Consumer Advocate (OCA), to represent the interests of the general public in this proceeding. Pursuant to this designation, Ms. Dreifuss will direct the activities of Commission personnel assigned to assist her and, upon request, will supply their names for the record. Neither Ms. Dreifuss nor any of the assigned personnel will participate in or provide advice on any Commission decision in this proceeding.

Intervention; positions on need for hearing. Those wishing to be heard in this matter are directed to file a notice of intervention with Steven W. Williams, Secretary of the Commission, 1333 H Street, NW., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20268–0001, on or before June 24, 2004. Notices shall indicate whether participation will be on a full or limited basis. See 39 CFR 3001–20 and 3001–20a. Although the Commission is authorizing participants

to engage in settlement discussions, no decision has been made at this time on whether a hearing will be held in this case. To assist the Commission in making this decision, participants are directed to indicate, in their notices of intervention, whether they seek a hearing and, if so, to identify with particularity any genuine issues of material facts believed to warrant such a hearing.

It is ordered:

1. The Commission establishes Docket No. MC2004–2, Experimental Priority Mail Flat-Rate Box, to consider the Postal Service Request referred to in the body of this order.

2. The Commission will sit *en banc* in this proceeding.

3. The deadline for filing notices of intervention is June 24, 2004.

4. Notices of intervention shall indicate whether the participant seeks a hearing and identify with particularity any genuine issues of material fact that warrant a hearing.

5. The deadline for answers to the Statement of the United States Postal Service Concerning Compliance with Filing Requirements and Conditional Motion for Waiver, June 3, 2004, is June 24, 2004.

6. The Commission grants the United States Postal Service Request for Establishment of Settlement Procedures, June 3, 2004, to the extent described in the body of this ruling.

7. The Commission appoints Postal Service counsel to serve as settlement coordinator in this proceeding.

8. The deadline for comments on the Postal Service's request for treatment under Commission rules 67–67d is June 24, 2004.

9. The Commission will make its hearing room available for technical conferences during the period of June 21–23, 2004, and the following week for a settlement conference at such times deemed necessary by the settlement coordinator.

10. A public post-settlement conference hearing will be held July 8, 2004, at 10 a.m. in the Commission's hearing room.

11. Shelley S. Dreifuss, director of the Commission's Office of the Consumer Advocate, is designated to represent the interests of the general public.

12. The Secretary shall arrange for publication of this notice and order in the **Federal Register**.

By the Commission.

Dated: June 9, 2004.

Garry J. Sikora,
Acting Secretary.

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SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

[Declaration of Disaster #3588]

State of Louisiana

As a result of the President's major disaster declaration on June 8, 2004, I find that Acadia, Iberville, Lafayette, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. Landry, St. Martin, and West Baton Rouge Parishes in the State of Louisiana constitute a disaster area due to damages caused by severe storms and flooding occurring on May 12 through May 19, 2004. Applications for loans for physical damage as a result of this disaster may be filed until the close of business on August 9, 2004, and for loans for economic injury until the close of business on March 8, 2005 at the address listed below or other locally announced locations: U.S. Small Business Administration, Disaster Area 3 Office, 14925 Kingsport Rd., Fort Worth, TX 76155–2243.

In addition, applications for economic injury loans from small businesses located in the following contiguous Parishes may be filed until the specified date at the above location: Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, St. Helena, St. John The Baptist, St. Mary, Tangipahoa, Vermilion, and West Feliciana Parishes in Louisiana.

The interest rates are:

	Percent
For Physical Damage:	
Homeowners With Credit Available Elsewhere	5.750
Homeowners Without Credit Available Elsewhere	2.875
Businesses With Credit Available Elsewhere	5.500
Businesses and Non-Profit Organizations Without Credit Available Elsewhere	2.750
Others (Including Non-Profit Organizations) With Credit Available Elsewhere	4.875
For Economic Injury:	
Businesses and Small Agricultural Cooperatives Without Credit Available Elsewhere ...	2.750

The number assigned to this disaster for physical damage is 358806 and for economic injury the number assigned is 9ZH900.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 59002 and 59008)

Dated: June 9, 2004.

Herbert L. Mitchell,
Associate Administrator for Disaster Assistance.

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