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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL III

INDUSTRY

Legislation and standardization; telematics networks

Standardization

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M/240

MANDATE TO CEN FOR STANDARDISATION IN THE FIELD OF POSTAL SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT.

1. BACKGROUND

The postal sector is of great economic significance in Europe, with turnover representing around 1% of gross domestic product for the European Union as a whole. Furthermore, by their nature, postal services have a direct and substantial effect on the operation of the internal European market and on European cohesion in general. Variations in services, and other obstacles and trade barriers arising out of the existing national basis of postal services affect both senders and recipients of mail and consequently the operation of trade within the territory of the Union.

With the operation of the internal market, and the trend towards modernisation of postal services with the introduction of advanced technology, there is a growing market orientation in the sector through the collaboration of service operators.

In order to address the relevant issues of European policy, in areas such as the internal market, the social aspects of postal services, and the regulatory position, the Commission drew up in June 1992 a Green Paper¹ on the development of the single market in postal services. Since the Green Paper, and based upon the Council Resolution on the development of Community postal services of 7 February 1994², the European Union Commission adopted, in July 1995, legislative proposals for postal services consisting of a "Proposal for European Parliament and Council Directive establishing common rules for the development of Community postal services and the improvement of quality of service"³ and a "Draft Notice on the application of the competition rules to the postal sector"⁴. The Green Paper, the Council Resolution and the European Commission proposals recommend, among other things, the promotion of a policy for postal services within the European Union, and emphasise the importance of standards in providing an appropriate level of service to users, and in particular the importance of technical standardisation in ensuring the interoperability of postal services.

¹ COM(91)476 final of 11.06.1991

² OJ N° C 48 of 16.02.1994, p.3

³ COM(95)227 final

⁴ SEC(95)830 final

At the same time, postal operators have themselves recognised the value of standards in improving service and reducing costs, and have through the Universal Postal Union (UPU), co-operated in the development of a number of ISO standards in this area.

Following the issue of the Green Paper, and in support of the policy objectives mentioned above, the Commission, in consultation with the Senior Officials' Groups on Posts (SOGP) and on Information Technology Standardisation (SOGITS) issued a study and investigation mandate (M/022) in October 1993 to CEN/CENELEC/ETSI in the postal sector. This mandate requested a study of the adaptations and actions necessary to cover the postal sector; an evaluation of existing standards, the definition of an action plan for standards, and a complementary strategy for testing in this area. CEN replied in November 1995 with a final Report covering these items and proposing a programme of standardisation.

The Report was based on work under CEN Programming Committee 8, Post. CENELEC and ETSI were represented on CEN/PC8. The initial programme agreed by PC8 consists of 15 items, which have been given three levels of priority. The specific items are listed in Annex A. This report was approved by the CEN Technical Board (BT) on 14 March 1996. The BT also approved the recommendation of PC8 to create a new Technical Committee on postal services to carry out the technical work. The final Report of PC8 appears *in extenso* as Annex B.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE MANDATED WORK.

CEN is asked to draw up standards for equipment, services and systems associated with the postal sector. The programme of work shall initially be based on the standards listed in Annex A to this mandate, based on the Report presented by CEN/PC8 and submitted by CEN, with the co-operation of CENELEC and ETSI, in response to Mandate M/022 of October 1993. The work shall be carried out in co-operation with CENELEC and ETSI as appropriate.

Where it becomes evident to CEN that additional standards are needed in the sector, such standards are in principle covered by this mandate. CEN is asked to notify the Commission of any such standards that may be added to its programme; the Commission will in its turn inform SOGP, SOGITS and the Committee on Standards and Technical Regulations.

In preparing the standards, CEN shall take account of the technical specifications, standards and rules currently available or under preparation in this area at international or European level. In particular, account shall be taken of the technical work of ISO, ITU, the Universal Postal Union (UPU), and the Committee of European Post and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT).

3. BODIES TO BE ASSOCIATED.

The standards shall be drawn up in co-operation with CENELEC and ETSI; with adequate liaison with CEPT; and, where appropriate, with UPU. Other groups to be involved are bodies representing public and private postal and courier services (for example, PostEurop); postal regulatory bodies (CERP), representatives of industrial groups providing equipment or services to postal services, users' (for example FEDIM, AEVPC/EMOTA, FAEP, etc.), consumers' (ANEC), and workers' (TUTB) representatives in the standardization process.

4. EXECUTION OF THE MANDATE.

1. CEN shall inform the Commission of the arrangements to be adopted for the execution of the work within three months of acceptance of this mandate.
2. CEN shall present a list of target dates for the presentation and adoption of the standards listed in Annex A, to the Commission, within six months of acceptance of this mandate. CEN shall present the draft standards listed therein by the target dates specified. Where, in elaborating the work, it becomes necessary to amend the programme, CEN shall inform the Commission of the changes, with target dates in the case of additions to the programme; the programme as amended will in principle then be covered by this mandate. The Commission will in its turn inform the SOGP, the SOGITS and the Committee on Standards and Technical Regulations.
3. The European Standards (EN) shall be adopted by the target dates specified. At these dates, they shall be available in German, English and French.
4. The European standards adopted shall be transposed into national standards and differing national standards shall be withdrawn from the catalogues of the national standards organisations in the Member States within six months of their adoption.
6. Acceptance by CEN of this mandate starts the standstill period referred to in Article 7 of Council Directive 83/189/EEC⁵ as last amended by Directive 94/10/EC of the Council and Parliament⁶.

⁵ OJ N° L 109 of 26 04 1983

⁶ OJ N° L100 of 19 04 1994

ANNEX A

List of standards

No.	Title	Priority
1.	Measurement of national end-to-end quality of service	A
2.	Measurement of cross-border end-to-end quality of service	A
3.	Measurement of loss of mail	A
4.	Measurement of complaints and redress procedures	B
5.	Apertures of letter boxes	C
6.	Letter containers (trays)	C
7.	Common set of printing architectures and resources for hybrid mail	A
8.	Development of Document Type Definition	A
9.	Harmonisation of vocabulary on postal forms	B
10.	Recognition of international parcels from the private mailer within the European Union	B
11.	Marks on letters for the location and recognition of information blocks	A
12.	Coding and identification of letters and containers	A
13.	Mail item attributes and encoding: franking marks and proof of payment	A
14.	Address databases	A
15.	Optical characteristics for processing of letters	C
16.	Measurements and rules for performance testing of automatic sorting machines (letters, bulky items and parcels)	A

ANNEX B

Report of CEN/PC8 in response to Mandate M/022