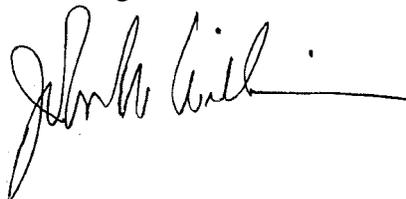


**For:** State Offices and KCAO

**Processing County Office Mass Mailings (COMM)  
Using the Electronic Distribution System (EDS)**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Management



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

The COMM project has been designed to allow State Offices to query the Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) database and merge producer addresses with County Office newsletters. State Office EDS operators will have the ability to print and direct mail County Office newsletters.

The COMM process:

- transfers the tasks of printing, folding, tabbing, applying postage, and delivering the newsletter to the Post Office from County Offices
- automates addressing newsletters eliminating the need for printing and applying labels onto each newsletter.

Printing and preparing newsletters for mailing in the County Office is extremely labor-intensive. Moving the printing and mailing preparation of County Office newsletters will provide County Offices with more time for program responsibilities. The COMM automated process will save over \$3 million in postage costs per year and County Office man-hours.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
October 1, 2004	State Offices and KCAO

## Notice AS-2081

### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### B Announcement

COMM rollout sessions have been planned to introduce a new method of processing County Office newsletters and other mass mailings using EDS sites. The sessions for the EDS operator and 1 additional person have been scheduled in Tampa, Florida, September 20 through September 23, 2004.

**Note:** A computer-related task demonstrated at the sessions will be loading a CD with software on the EDS PC. If the State Office determines the EDS operator can perform this task, or the EDS operator can provide the CD and manual to the IT specialist to perform the task upon their return, then the second attendee is at the State Office discretion. If not, it is suggested an IT specialist be the second attendee.

#### C COMM Direction

COMM is a good tool to help relieve the burden on County Offices and save millions of dollars in postage costs. Each State Office should make themselves aware of the benefits that will result from implementing COMM.

- FSA can reap a large portion of man-hour and dollar savings if EDS locations at least print the newsletters with the new automated addressing and postal process.

**Note:** Folding, tabbing, and mailing can be performed in-house or be contracted items when considering staff, workload, office space, and other factors.

- Implementation planning for COMM is at the discretion of each State Office; however, State Offices need to at least try using COMM or the instructional efforts will be lost.

Ken Rachfal, Publishing Branch Chief, MSD, is available at [ken.rachfal@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:ken.rachfal@wdc.usda.gov) or by telephone at 202-720-9768 for consultation on COMM implementation planning.

#### D Purpose

This notice provides:

- hotel and travel information
- session attendees and dates.

## Notice AS-2081

### 2 Session Information

#### A Location

There will be 2 sessions held at the Danka headquarters in St. Petersburg, Florida. Attendees shall make reservations by August 30, 2004, at:

Trade Winds Sirata Hotel  
5300 Gulf Boulevard  
St. Petersburg Beach, FL 33706  
Phone: 727-363-2215  
FAX: 727-363-2221.

#### B Session 1 Dates and Attendees

Session 1, for 9110 and Xerox equipment sites, will be held September 20 and September 21. The EDS operator and 1 additional person may attend from each of the following States and KCAO:

AR, IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MO, MT, NC, NE, NY, OH, OK, SD, TX, and WI.

Attendees will have an informal orientation meeting on September 19 from 6 to 9 p.m. Check the lobby information center for location.

Attendees shall meet in the lobby at 8:15 a.m. for transportation to Danka headquarters.

**Note:** Only the EDS operator is authorized to attend this session for the States of Michigan, Missouri, and North Carolina.

#### C Session 2 Dates and Attendees

Session 2, for Canon equipment sites, will be held September 22 and September 23. The EDS operator and 1 additional person may attend from each of the following States:

AL, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, KY, LA, MN, MS, ND, OR, PA, SC, TN, VA, and WA.

Attendees will have an informal orientation meeting on September 22 from 6 to 9 p.m. Check the lobby information center for location.

Attendees shall meet in the lobby at 8:15 a.m. for transportation to Danka headquarters.

**Note:** Only the EDS operator is authorized to attend this session for the States of Minnesota, Tennessee, and Washington.

## Notice AS-2081

### 2 Session Information (Continued)

#### D Travel Authorization

Travel for State Office participants shall be charged to Washington-controlled travel.

Travel is authorized:

- for expenses not to exceed \$138 (\$95 for lodging and \$43 for M&IE) per day
- from Sunday, September 19 through Wednesday, September 22, 2004, for:  
AR, IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MO, MT, NC, NE, NY, OH, OK, SD, TX, WI, and KCAO
- from Tuesday, September 21 through Friday, September 24, 2004, for:  
AL, CA, CO, FL, GA, ID, KY, LA, MN, MS, ND, OR, PA, SC, TN, VA, and WA.

Participants shall make airline reservations to fly into Tampa International Airport (airport code TPA), Tampa, Florida to arrive before their session begins. Participants shall make reservations to depart after their session ends.

**Note:** Sessions will be held from 8:15 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Rental cars are **not** authorized. One person from Georgia, Iowa, Missouri, and Wisconsin and 2 people from South Carolina and KCAO are authorized to rent a 7-passenger van.

#### E Ground Transportation

Ground transportation from the airport to the Trade Winds Sirata Hotel is available by using either of the following:

- taxi; fare is approximately \$39 one-way
- Super Shuttle; fare is \$19 one-way.

The hotel:

- does not provide shuttle service
- provides self-parking for \$12 per day.

#### F SF-182's

No SF-182 will be required for these sessions.

## Notice AS-2081

### 3 Action

#### A State Office Action

Each State Office shall take the following actions.

Step	Action
1	Provide Vicki McCalip, Assistant EDS Program Manager, the name and title of the <b>2 participants</b> from the State Office (EDS operator and 1 additional person) authorized to attend these sessions no later than August 30, 2004. If the participants change, the State Office shall notify Vicki McCalip immediately at <b>vicki.mccalip@wdc.usda.gov</b> or 202-690-0821.
2	Make hotel reservations by calling the <b>Trade Winds Sirata Hotel reservations</b> direct line at <b>800-808-9833</b> . Participants shall identify themselves with the <b>USDA/FSA Group</b> to ensure that they receive the \$95 room rate. Check in is at noon, check out is at 4 p.m. Federal employees must provide valid government ID.  <b>Deadline for making hotel reservations is August 30, 2004.</b>  Participants shall use a credit card to guarantee a room at the time the reservation is made. All hotel reservations will be held until 6 p.m. on arrival night, unless guaranteed by credit card.

#### B Reasonable Accommodations

Each participant should notify the airlines and hotel of any accommodations that are necessary.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this session should contact Vicki McCalip by telephone at 202-690-0821, or e-mail to **vicki.mcalip@wdc.usda.gov** by August 30, 2004.

#### C National Office Contacts

Offices shall contact:

- Mary Tjeerdsma, Resource Coordination Staff, MSD, at 202-690-2524 for questions or issues concerning the hotel and lodging reservations
- Vicki McCalip, Publishing Branch, MSD, at 202-690-0821 for any other questions or issues concerning the session.

#### D Tax Exempt Certificate

Participants shall provide the hotel a copy of the Tax Exempt Certificate when you check in. See Exhibit 1.

Tax Exempt Certificate

Provide a completed copy of this certificate to be exempt from tax on the hotel bill.

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Farm Service Agency

REPRESENTING THE EXEMPT ENTITY IDENTIFIED ABOVE.  
FEDERAL EMPLOYEE'S CERTIFICATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Tradewinds Resort  
SELLING DEALER'S NAME

5500 Gulf Blvd  
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706  
SELLING DEALER'S ADDRESS

The undersigned hereby swears or affirms that he or she is an employee of the Federal agency identified below and that the purchase or lease of tangible personal property or services or the rental of living accommodations on \_\_\_\_\_ (DATE [S]) from the business identified above is in pursuit of his or her employer's affairs. The undersigned further swears or affirms that the Government of the United States either will pay the seller directly, or will provide reimbursement to the employee for the actual cost of the purchase or lease of tangible personal property, services, or sleeping accommodations made on this date(s).

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE

USDA-FSA  
NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY

Washington, DC 20250  
ADDRESS OF FEDERAL AGENCY

THIS CERTIFICATE MAY NOT BE USED TO MAKE EXEMPT PURCHASES OR LEASES OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY OR SERVICES OR RENTAL OF LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR THE PERSONAL USE OF ANY INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYED BY A UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENCY. PROPER IDENTIFICATION IS REQUIRED BEFORE THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ACCEPTED BY THE SELLER.