



BSI Standards Publication

**Postal services — Quality of service —
Measurement of the transit time of end-
to-end services for bulk mail**

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN 14534:2023. It supersedes BS EN 14534:2016, which is withdrawn.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SVS/4, Postal services.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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Postal services - Quality of service - Measurement of the transit time of end-to-end services for bulk mail

Services postaux - Qualité de service - Mesure du délai d'acheminement des services de bout en bout pour le courrier en nombre

Postalische Dienstleistungen - Dienstqualität - Messung der Durchlaufzeit von Massensendungen von Ende zu Ende

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European foreword

This document (EN 14534:2023) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 331 “Postal services”, the secretariat of which is held by AFNOR.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by May 2024, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by May 2024.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

This document supersedes EN 14534:2016.

Annexes A to Annex G are normative.

Annexes A to Annex C and Annex F are covering the measurement of a single bulk mail induction.

Annex D, Annex E and Annex G are covering additional requirements for the measurement of aggregated or continuous fields of study.

Annexes H to Annex L are informative.

Any feedback and questions on this document should be directed to the users’ national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found on the CEN website.

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Introduction

The European Commission emphasizes the need to have common rules for the development of community postal services and the improvement of Quality-of-Service (QoS). The Commission has identified requirements for postal QoS-Measurement systems that include:

- independent end-to-end measurement capabilities;
- a focus on national and cross-border distribution service performance;
- a single, uniform and reliable system for monitoring distribution service performance within the Union.

The Commission has acknowledged that the different postal traditions and cultures in Europe would not allow for the establishment of one common unified European measurement system and that national systems should have sufficient freedom to reflect needs and peculiarities of national markets. On the other hand, they should fulfil a defined set of minimum requirements to satisfy the information interests if applicable of the Commission, the regulatory authorities, postal customers and postal operators themselves.

The objective of this standard is to define a modular QoS measurement system in a competitive commercial context. The measurement is designed to estimate the end-to-end transit time quality of service given to the postal customer. The measurement can be set up domestically in each European country and cross-border between the European countries.

This document refers to a number of principles and minimum requirements to be applied for the measurement of the end-to-end transit time service-level of bulk mail services. It is widely applicable for single-induction as well as continuous measurement applications. It provides recommendations on the comparability of different bulk mail transit time QoS measurement results and their use as key performance indicators.

This bulk mail standard has been developed from the requirements of EN 13850, *Postal services – Quality of service - Measurement of the transit time of end-to-end services for single piece priority mail and first-class mail*. Both European Standards consider methods using a representative end-to-end sample of all types of addressed mail appropriate for their coverage. For the measurement of bulk mail services, a separate standard is required for the following reasons:

- **Senders:** Members of the public posting single items are replaced by businesses, small in number – posting large volumes of mail. Third party agents (consolidators, mailing houses, letter shops) may also act on behalf of posting customers.
- **Contracted Services:** Mail posted in bulk will often be mailed under a contract between the customer and the postal operator. Typically, bulk services require customers to standardize format and weight of their mailing, undertake a level of pre-sortation or to present mail in different ways according to the contract conditions.
- **Volumes of mailings:** Bulk mailings are large. They may contain thousands or millions of items.
- **Performance Measures:** On-time performance measures are expanded to provide different types of (i) *on*, (ii) *by* or (iii) *between* specific-dates performance depending on what is agreed with the postal customers or is specified for this service.
- **Discriminant Characteristics:** Test items shall match the characteristics of customer mailings. The range of characteristics relevant for the performance varies by type of mail service, and a wider set of potential characteristics should be considered. Greater flexibility is required to define for what part of the real mail logistics the results are representative for.

- **Production of Test Mail:** For the inclusion of test mail in the customers bulk mailings a variety of methods may be appropriate. They include database-seeding methods used in different stages of the customer's mail production process as well as methods to include pre-produced test items in the customer's bulk mailing between production and induction of the customers' real mail.
- **Dates of induction:** The rules and requirements for bulk mail induction are more complex and may be specific to the contract between customer and postal operator.

1 Scope

This document specifies methods for measuring the end-to-end transit time of *domestic* and *cross-border* bulk mail, collected, processed and delivered by postal service operators. It considers methods using representative end-to-end samples for all types of bulk mail services with defined transit time service-levels as offered to the postal customer. It specifies a set of minimum requirements for the design of a quality-of-service measurement system for bulk mail, involving the selection and distribution of test mail sent by business senders and received by selected panellists.

This document is applicable to the measurement of end-to-end *priority* and *non-priority* bulk mail services. For the purpose of this standard, bulk mail services can include all types of addressed bulk mail including, but not limited to letter mail, direct mail, magazines and newspapers and encombrant-format mailings.

This document relates to the measurement of bulk mail services offered to businesses that have pick-ups at their offices or give their mail to postal service operators. If a third-party agent acts for the postal operator, then the time the mail is handed over to the agent will form part of the measurement. Where a third-party agent acts for the sending customer, the measurement will be from the point when mail is handed over to the postal operator.

This document is of *modular structure*. It is designed to assess the service performance of postal operators for bulk mail services on the level of a single *bulk mailing* as defined by the postal customer or any aggregations thereof, including the performance of an individual customer / operator or the performance of a group of customers/operators or the performance at national level.

The standardized QoS measurement-method provides a uniform way for measuring the end-to-end transit time of postal items. Using a standardized measurement-method will ensure that the measurement will be done in an objective and equal way for all operators in accordance with the requirements of the current Postal Directive.

The end-to-end service measured may be provided by one operator or by a group of operators working either together in the same distribution chain or parallel in different distribution chains. The method for end-to-end measurement specified in this document is not designed to provide results for the measurement of parts of the distribution chain.

This document does not include other service performance indicators than those related to end-to-end transit time. In particular, this standard does not measure whether the timings of collections meet customers' requirements.

The transit time quality-of-service result will be expressed as percentage of mail delivered *by, on or between* expected dates. These dates can be defined absolute as calendar-days or relative to the date of induction. The transit time calculation rule will be in whole days.

This quality of service indicator does not measure the postal operator's overall performance in a way, which provides direct comparison of postal service operators. This document nevertheless provides minimum requirements for the comparability of end-to-end transit time measurement results of specific bulk mailings.

This document is not applicable for the measurement of end-to-end transit times of single-piece mail services and hybrid mail, which require different measurement systems and methodologies (see, for example, EN 13850, *Postal Services — Quality of Services — Measurement of the transit time of end-to-end services for single piece priority mail and first-class mail*).

In certain circumstances, this standard allows a choice between alternatives to be made subject to the approval of the regulator. This approval is only necessary if the service is within the universal service obligation.

This document includes specifications for the quality control and auditing of the measurement system.