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To: Designated operators of UPU member countries

For information to:

- Restricted unions
- Regional project coordinators

Berne, 9 December 2019

Reference: 0620(DOP.QS.QIP)1157

Subject: Invitation to participate in the quality management certification of designated operators

Dear Sir/Madam,

The UPU quality management certification system was developed in line with Beijing Congress resolution C 20/1999. It was launched worldwide in 2003, on the basis of a methodology and two questionnaires. The original goal was to raise designated operators' awareness of quality management issues in order to improve postal services. The methodology was revised in 2005, 2007, 2010 and 2014.

With traditional postal mail declining, e-commerce volumes on the rise, and heavy competition in the postal market, designated operators face new demands and need to achieve ever better performance. It therefore became essential to revise the UPU quality of service certification methodology, taking it from an initial phase aimed primarily at raising awareness to a more rigorous certification phase, based on industry and market needs.

Consequently, at its 2018.1 and 2018.2 sessions (S3 and S4), the Postal Operations Council adopted a new methodology for certifying the quality of service of postal operators based on the level of application of quality management procedures in the structures of postal businesses, the organization put in place, the execution of postal operations and the results of quality testing.

This new certification system, focusing on the management of international service quality, aims to provide a level playing field for evaluating designated operators, irrespective of the level of development of the country concerned. The system is based on the following elements:

- Two audit questionnaires, one on the system of organization used by the designated operator to manage quality of service (POC C 2 2018.1–Doc 3c. Annex 2), the other on operational procedures and relations with customers and partners (customs authorities, air transport companies and security) (POC C 2 2018.1–Doc 3c. Annex 3);
- A special document summarizing the designated operator's performance in the quality of service field, based on data gathered by the tracking and measurement tools put in place by the International Bureau, other recognized international postal organizations or restricted unions (POC C 2 2018.2–Doc 3a. Rev 1. Annex 5);
- A consultant's mission in the field.

The financial conditions remain unchanged to allow all countries to participate in the certification. The contribution rates are 3,000 CHF for the designated operators of the least developed countries (LDCs), and 7,000 CHF for those of all other countries. It should, however, be noted that this financial contribution will only be billed if the designated operator applying for certification meets the new methodology's prerequisites and reaches the third level of the process, which includes a field audit mission by a consultant to determine whether the requirements of the quality management system have been satisfied. The audit findings are designed to assess the effectiveness of the quality management system and identify opportunities for improvement.

The new certification system has three levels: gold (level A), silver (level B) and bronze (level C), with a three-year period of validity to be confirmed each year on the basis of performance achieved during quality of service testing.

Certification is therefore a way of continually improving quality of service, and can be communicated through the media to customers and the public, so as to raise awareness of designated operators' efforts. When a designated operator receives certification, this shows that it has a good system for quality of service management, and is capable of taking steps to improve quality of service in both the short and long term.

I therefore have pleasure in enclosing a copy of the new certification methodology, approved at S3 and revised at S4 (POC C 2 2018.2–Doc 3a.Rev 1. Annex 4), and the two questionnaires (POC C 2 2018.1–Doc 3c. Annexes 2 and 3). The document summarizing designated operators' performance in the quality of service field, which the International Bureau uses for data collection (also revised at S4), is likewise attached to this letter for your information (POC C 2 2018.2–Doc 3a.Rev 1. Annex 5). These documents are additionally available on the UPU website (www.upu.int/en/activities/quality-of-service/certification.html).

Designated operators wishing to apply for certification in 2020 are requested to complete and return questionnaires 1 and 2 to the International Bureau (information.QS@upu.int) as soon as possible, **but by 31 March 2019 at the latest**. Once certification requests have been received, the International Bureau will contact interested designated operators to launch the procedure.

For further information, please contact Mr Chokri Ellili, Quality Improvement Programme Manager (tel: +41 31 350 35 87, e-mail: chokri.ellili@upu.int) and Mr Mirko Ponti, Quality Improvement Programme Assistant (tel: +41 31 350 35 33, e-mail: mirko.ponti@upu.int).

Yours faithfully,

(signed)

Pascal Clivaz
Deputy Director General