

licensees on any given day may not exceed the amount the manufacturer has on deposit with the Postal Service. The MRC is not authorized to perform settings in excess of the licensee's balance in any other circumstance. The Postal Service shall not be liable for any payment made by the MRC on behalf of a licensee that is not reimbursed by the licensee because the MRC is solely responsible for the collection of advances.

(c) *Revenue protection.* The Postal Service shall conduct periodic assessments of the revenue protection safeguards of each MRC system and shall reserve the right to revoke an MRC's authorization if the CMRS system does not meet all requirements set forth by the Postal Service. In addition, the Postal Service shall reserve the right to suspend the operation of the MRC for any serious operational deficiency that is likely to result in the loss of funds to the Postal Service as provided in § 501.12.

(d) *Equipment.* The meters used in the computerized resetting system must conform to the specifications in § 501.6. They must be tested under § 501.7 and conform to the safeguards, distribution, and maintenance requirements of §§ 501.15 through 501.23 to protect the Postal Service against loss of revenue from fraud, manipulation, misoperation, or breakdown.

(e) *Financial operation.* (1) Before the Postal Service's selection of a lockbox provider, the MRC must establish a lockbox account in the name of the Postal Service at a bank or banks approved by the Postal Service to handle the deposits of licensees. The MRC must make arrangements with such banks under which the banks are to inform the manufacturer of the amounts of licensee funds received each banking day.

(2) The Postal Service lockbox bank processes the CMRS deposits daily, consolidates the data, and performs a direct file transmission to each MRC. The daily deposit processing cutoff times and the automated file transmission times are coordinated independently with each of the MRCs.

Manufacturers must ensure that their data center computers are programmed to reflect each licensee deposit and track all licensee activity.

(3) The MRC must require each licensee that requests meter resetting to provide the meter serial number, the licensee account number, and the meter's ascending and descending register readings. The manufacturer must verify that the information provided to the licensee is consistent with its records. The MRC must also verify that there are sufficient funds in the licensee's account to cover the postage setting requested before proceeding with the setting transaction (unless the manufacturer opts to provide the licensee a funds advance). Immediately following each such resetting, the MRC must charge the licensee's account for the amount of the postage reset. After the completion of each transaction, the manufacturer must promptly provide the licensee with a statement documenting the transaction and the balance remaining in the licensee's account. As an alternative, the manufacturer may provide a statement monthly that documents all transactions for the period and that shows the balance in the licensee's account after each transaction.

(4) Each banking day, the lockbox bank is to transfer, by 10 a.m. local time, amounts payable to the Postal Service from the transactions during the previous day to a designated Federal Reserve Bank. The MRC must maintain licensee service activity data to accept and respond to inquiries from licensees concerning the status of their payments. The lockbox bank must provide the MRCs with a nationwide, toll-free telephone number for licensee service. The Postal Service lockbox bank must assign a dedicated senior level licensee service representative to handle all inquiries and investigations.

(5) The Postal Service requires that the MRCs publicize to all CMRS licensees the following payment options (listed in order of preference):

(i) Automated clearinghouse (ACH) debits/credits.

(ii) Electronic funds transfers (wire transfers).

(iii) Checks.

(6) Licensee check deposits must be mailed to a predetermined post office box address specified by the lockbox bank and accompanied by a preencoded deposit ticket. The Postal Service provides CMRS customers with deposit tickets for inclusion with check payments. At the time a new account is opened, a licensee not possessing a preencoded deposit slip must present the initial payment to the MRC representative who in turn assigns the licensee a new account number and manually prepares a deposit ticket to be mailed to the lockbox bank for processing.

(7) If a licensee prefers to use a payment form other than a check, the licensee must contact the MRC representative for instructions, and the MRC must provide the licensee with the appropriate information regarding the use of ACH debits/credits and electronic funds transfers (wire transfers).

(8) Returned checks and ACH debits are the responsibility of the Postal Service. In the case of a returned check, the Postal Service lockbox bank, after an automatic second presentment, advises the MRC of the account in question so that the MRC data file can be locked. The MRC must lock the licensee account immediately so that the licensee is unable to reset the meter until the Postal Service receives payment in full for the check returned. The lockbox bank provides collection services for returned checks on behalf of the Postal Service. The Postal Service lockbox bank notifies the MRC once this item is paid. The MRC then releases the account for activity.

(f) *Refunds.* The Postal Service issues a refund to a licensee for any unused postage in a meter. Refunds of licensee balances maintained by the Postal Service in the Postal Service fund are intended to be made directly to the licensee by the lockbox bank within 48 hours after receipt of a licensee's request.

(g) *Reports.* The manufacturer must provide reports according to the following schedule: