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[britt.janssens@ipc.be](mailto:britt.janssens@ipc.be)

## EC Gives Go-Ahead for Postal Merger



The European Commission announced on April 22 it has approved the planned merger between Posten AB of Sweden and Post Danmark.

The two companies signed a letter of intent to merge on April 1, 2008, and a final agreement with the Danish and Swedish ministries responsible for postal services on February 2, 2009.

As a precondition, the Commission is requiring the two partners to reduce their share of the Danish business-to-business parcels market. The chief executive officers of Posten AB, Lars Nordström, and Post Danmark, Helge Israelsen, pledged to begin work to meet the Commission's requirements, saying that customers in Denmark would enjoy the same conditions and services as they have today.

The companies both published their first quarter results at the end of April.

Posten's operating earnings dropped year-on-year by SEK 300 million to SEK 394 million while net sales fell by two percent to SEK 7.6 billion. The company said the slow-down resulted from reduced demand for logistics and messaging (mail) services and a drop in suborders under existing contracts held by Strålfors, its business-to-business information transfer subsidiary.

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*(EC Gives Go-Ahead for Postal Merger continued)*

An action programme aims to have a positive impact on earnings of SEK 1 billion this year. The company anticipates the programme will achieve SEK 230 million during the first quarter.

Post Danmark saw its income decrease by DKK 224 million in the first quarter compared with the same period last year. An unprecedented rate of decline in letter volume caused operating profit to drop by DKK 234 million in the three months. Profit after tax was DKK 177 million compared with DKK 371 million the previous year.

In addition to cost-saving action, Post Danmark has announced a price increase for letters weighing more than 50 grams from August 1 this year. "Despite our initiatives, there will still be considerable uncertainty about the company's financial development in the time ahead," said a statement.

Full year pre-tax profit in 2009 for Post Danmark will be influenced by the planned sale of its stake in De Post/La Poste of Belgium to CVC Capital Partners. If the deal goes through as anticipated, Post Danmark will make a gain of DKK 1.6 billion.



**Europe**

**Switzerland Moves Closer to Liberalisation**



The Swiss Government plans to introduce a regulation on July 1 reducing Swiss Post's monopoly from the current 100 gram weight limit to letters up to 50 grams.

Before the summer break, the government will propose a new law to bring about the complete liberalisation of the postal market by 2012 and to strengthen the powers of the postal regulator, PostReg. This measure will revise postal legislation, according to the department for the environment, transport, energy and communication.

Trade unions oppose liberalisation plans and have demanded a new regulation on employment conditions, backed by a collective labour agreement for the whole courier-parcels-express and mail sector.

However, the association of Swiss private postal operators, KEP&Mail, welcomed the new regulation and the revision of postal law to provide complete liberalisation. Its president, Peter Sutterlütli, said private companies would be able to access the whole postal infrastructure including lockboxes, home delivery, sorting centres and address databases.

## Workers Reject TNT Pay Contract

Dutch postal workers have thrown out an agreement in principle between their unions and TNT Post for a three-year contract that would reduce in pay and employment conditions in return for job protection for operations staff and mail deliverers.

TNT is seeking savings of EUR 395 million a year until 2015 to compensate for volume loss.

The company said it would continue preparing restructuring plans to achieve necessary savings, including reducing the number of days on which business mail is delivered.



Without the savings expected from the agreement in principle on pay and conditions, restructuring plans would involve the loss of 11,000 jobs over three years and would include compulsory redundancies, TNT said.

## Deutsche Post DHL Sees an End to Decline

Volume continued to decline year-on-year across all Deutsche Post DHL divisions in the first quarter of 2009, but the rate of decline stabilised to suggest a bottoming out of the recession, according to company.

In a preview to the announcement of quarterly figures on May 6, the company said overall profitability towards the end of the period showed benefits from the restructured DHL express business in the United States; all regions outside the US reported profitable express business.

The mail division experienced underlying earnings before interest and tax (EBIT) of about EUR 150 million below the first quarter of 2008. An extra day's trading could not offset fully the economic slowdown and increase in wage expenses.

Addressing shareholders at the annual general meeting (AGM), Chief Executive Officer Frank Appel reported good progress in restructuring the US business and announced the termination of talks on a possible airlift agreement with UPS.

He promised that savings of at least EUR 1 billion by 2010 and said the Roadmap to Value programme to maintain the company's strong cash position would allow Deutsche Post DHL to emerge stronger from the economic crisis.

Deutsche Post DHL's Strategy 2015, announced in March, is based on two pillars: a strong mail business committed to the universal service and integrated international logistics focused on quality and customers.

Shareholders resolved at the AGM to pay a dividend of EUR 0.60 per share that is tax free to those living in Germany. They authorised the Board of Management again to buy back shares totalling up to 10 percent of the existing share capital. In addition, they authorised the company to increase its share capital by up to EUR 240 million by issuing 240 million shares.

Prior to the AGM, Frank Appel told journalists he hoped for a sharp recovery from the current recession. "Should there be initial signs for a recovery in the real economy, then many companies are likely to quickly gear up their production," he said. Fears of future price rises for raw materials and energy would support that recovery in manufacturing.



## First UK Sustainable Mailshots Due in May

Two large-scale direct mailers in the United Kingdom have devised mailshots that comply with Royal Mail's Sustainable Mail product, and thus will benefit from a lower price in return for meeting environmental standards.

Banking group company Black Horse Personal Finance and insurance company Standard Life Healthcare are due to send out Sustainable Mail mailings during May. Royal Mail says more than a dozen other companies are finalising plans to mail through Sustainable Mail which offers a discount of up to 4.7 percent on standard bulk mail Mailsort prices.

Sustainable Mail rates are available to companies which meet specified criteria for improved sustainability, minimised waste and increased recyclability.

## Singapore Post Quits Spring Global Mail



Singapore Post is exiting Spring Global Mail leaving the joint venture with just two partners, TNT and Royal Mail.

Under an agreement, Singapore Post is acquiring Spring Global Mail's Asia-Pacific business. TNT and Royal Mail say they remain committed to the growth of Spring Global Mail and will develop new business opportunities in Asia-Pacific independently.

Following the restructuring, TNT's share in the joint venture will increase from 51 percent to 67.55 percent.

## Deutsche Post: Prices Not So Dear

Deutsche Post says that the real price of a standard letter in Germany fell by 16 percent between 1998 and 2008 when adjusted for inflation.

The post's 2009 European letter price survey placed the EUR 0.55 standard rate in Germany in the middle of the league table. However, the inclusion of economic conditions, such as labour costs and purchasing power, moved German postage rates to the bottom third of the league, according to Deutsche Post.

The price of a standard letter last increased in 1997 and was reduced in 2003, after which time prices have remained stable.



## Post Danmark Provides Electronic Post Office

Post Danmark has launched eComOne, a service that transfers electronic documents between businesses regardless of the IT systems and data formats they use.

Data sent by businesses in their own format will be reformatted by eComOne to be compatible with the intended receivers. By using the service, companies need make only one exchange agreement with Post Danmark instead of individual agreements with each business partner.

eComOne is a development of Post Danmark's eCommunication solution, which includes eBoks, a service through which individuals and businesses can receive communications from public authorities and businesses electronically.

## Post Offices Hold DX Parcels

The United Kingdom's Post Office Ltd has signed a contract to hold for collection items that private mail company DX Group is unable to deliver to recipients.

The agreement reinforces Post Office's commitment to find opportunities that will ensure the sustainability of the post office network. DX will pay a fixed contract charge plus a fee for each item it delivers to a post office for subsequent collection.

The new arrangements are being launched in 92 post offices in Greater London during May prior to national rollout later this summer.

Meanwhile, DX Group is equipping its couriers with new hand-held devices containing mobile workforce management software designed to plan routes and optimise the number of deliveries that a driver can make.

## BPI Targets International Mail

Belgian Post International (BPI) has officially opened its European Mail Centre at Brussels Airport to support its plans for growth in mail and parcels through expansion into new markets.

Last year, BPI earned revenues of EUR 90 million from its sales activities in ten European countries and North America. Its international product offer covers business mail, direct mail and parcels.

Key customers include Shell Cards, Nespresso and the European Union's Office of Official Publications. Shell Cards said it had moved its international business, mostly invoices, to BPI after poor service from another supplier.

"BPI have offered us an alternative in the shape of a true commercial agreement with guaranteed standards, proactive tracking backed up by penalties and incentives for under- and over-performance against measures that really influence our customer satisfaction," said Rob French, Shell Cards global operations manager.

## Demand for PostBus Rises

Swiss Post's PostBus carried 114.7 million passengers in 2008, an increase of 3.2 percent, and generated a record operating income up CHF 19 million to CHF 604 million.

The operating result declined to CHF 27 million from CHF 32 million the previous year owing to cost increases including the sharp rise in fuel prices in 2008. This includes international PostBus companies in France and the Principality of Liechtenstein.



## UK Post Office to Promote Services

The United Kingdom Post Office is promoting its broadband and mobile top-up services by using quirky survey finding.

One of the surveys investigated internet take-up by stay-at-home mothers and suggests the post office as a convenient place to purchase a broadband service. According to Post Office, 3.8 million British mothers visit a post office each week.

The other survey found that 87 percent of UK residents will not leave home without their mobile phone. It has enlisted a memory expert to give tips on how to avoid forgetting the phone and suffering from "nomophobia".

## TNT Expands its Service for Fiat

TNT Innight has expanded its cooperation with Fiat Group Automobiles to handle regional after-sales logistics in southern Germany.

Spare parts storage for southern Germany has moved from Vatry, France to Heidelberg, Germany. TNT Innight picks up shipments in Heidelberg and distributes them in southern Germany before 06.00, 07.00 or 08.00 hours.



## City Link Invests in its Recovery

United Kingdom express parcels company City Link is to invest GBP 31 million this year in additional capacity to consolidate its turnaround programme.

The company has been progressing with a recovery plan following severe difficulties arising from the failed integration of Target Express in 2007. It ended 2008 with a reported operating loss of GBP 59.9 million and an adjusted operating loss of GBP 43.5 million.

Investment this year will expand the existing network of 85 depots by 20 percent, increasing warehousing space by 279,000sq metres. City Link will enhance its fleet by replacing 300 box trailers with 280 curtain-sided double-deck trailers. The company has also ordered 300 Mercedes Sprinter vans to replace older vehicles.

## PNL Begins Operating at Swedish Terminal

Norway Post-owned Nordic parcels operator PNL has begun operating at a new terminal in Jönköping in southern Sweden to improve efficiency and working processes.

In April, the rebranded Norway Post units Bring Logistics and Bring Express moved into the new terminal.

PNL cooperates with postal companies in Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the Faeroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Sweden.

## GLS Expands Depot Capacity

Royal Mail Group parcels subsidiary GLS has started construction of a new depot in Bornheim, Germany, and is expanding its depot in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

The 33,000sq metre German hub costs EUR 13 million and will have capacity to process up to 55,000 parcels a day.

In Rotterdam, the company has invested EUR 6 million in tripling handling capacity to 16,000 parcels a day.

## Biggest Hermes Hub Opens

Hermes Logistik has opened its biggest regional hub in Friedewald, central Germany, through which it will tranship most of its domestic parcels, bulky consignments and returns from mail order companies.

The 103,000sq metre facility can handle up to seventy million shipments a year. It has a woodchip heating system that meets its total demand for heat and, the company claims, saves 83 percent of the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted from a conventional oil heating system.

### Financial Services Strong at Poste Italiane

Poste Italiane's financial services business is growing strongly as consumers view the post as a safe place to deposit money, according to its chief executive officer Massimo Sarmi, who addressed the Universal Postal Union high level conference in Berne.

Mr Sarmi warned that large customers are moving to electronic communications. "The traditional business model of the postal operator cannot survive in the medium term," he said.

Groupe La Poste chairman Jean-Paul Bailly said that while mail volumes had dropped about 5 percent in the first three months of 2009, parcels business was holding up owing to the trend away from premium express services towards deferred products. He said he believed a diversified portfolio was preferable to specialisation.

Mr Bailly's view on the parcels and express sector was supported by Peter Bakker, chief executive officer of TNT, who said that express had seen volume decline for the first time in 20 years. In response, TNT was redesigning its network and seeking EUR 300 million in savings.



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**DPD Expands in Ukraine and Russia**

Parcels operator DPD has been expanding in the Ukraine and Russia. It began operating in the Ukraine in September 2007 and experienced five-fold year-on-year growth in the last quarter of 2008.

DPD Russia increased turnover by 31 percent in 2008, delivering 4.5 million parcels. The company is opening a new service centre in Togliatti, western Russia.

**Middle East: The Jewel for Growth**

FedEx Express is still expecting growth from its Middle East operations this year and will not be cutting staff and operations in the region.

The company is optimistic that growth will be sustained in the second half of the year when inventories are restocked.

The Middle East has been the best-performing region in recent months; however, the growth projection this year is five percent compared with twelve percent previously. As in other markets, customers have switched from air to road-based services.



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**Austrian Post Withdraws Treasury Shares**

Austrian Post's treasury stock totalling 2,447,362 shares has been withdrawn and the company's share capital has been reduced by EUR 12.24 million to EUR 337.76 million divided into a total of 67,552,638 no-par value shares (previously 70 million).

**Itella Information Plans a Move into Hungary**

Itella Information plans to begin operating in Hungary this year. It will attend the 9th Annual European Shared Services & Outsourcing Week in Budapest in May where two of its senior management will facilitate workshop sessions.

**Swiss Post Names New PostLogistics Chief**

Dieter Bambauer is to be the new head of Swiss Post's PostLogistics Group. He will take up his new position on October when he will move to PostLogistics from his current position as chief executive officer of Schenker Schweiz and Hangartner, both subsidiaries of Deutsche Bahn.

**Intereuropa Joins Net Express Europe**

Net Express Europe (NEE), an alliance of independent parcels carriers, has added a new partner, the Slovenian logistics company Intereuropa, to cover Slovenia and Croatia. NEE links the national infrastructures of express carriers to provide a European road network. The Intereuropa Group has 19 subsidiaries offering services in 13 countries.

**Correos Insider Heads Chronoexpress**

Antonio Cárdenas joined the Correos parcels subsidiary, Chronoexpress, in March as its general manager. A Correos insider who has been a member of the Chronoexpress board, Mr Cárdenas will implement synergies between the subsidiary and Correos. His predecessor, Eduardo Herrera Garcia, is now chief operations officer at Correos.

**CitySprint Expands**

United Kingdom privately owned same day courier CitySprint has expanded its service range. It has acquired 1st Dispatch of Cambridgeshire and has introduced an electronic invoicing facility.

**BanCorreos Launches Guaranteed Investment**

BanCorreos of Spain is marketing its 24-month investment deposit which guarantees savers 100 percent of the capital invested. Individuals wishing to invest at least EUR 1,500 can do so at 2,220 multiservice post offices until May 29, locking their money from June 1, 2009 until June 6, 2011.

**Aramex Supports Wataniya Mobile in Palestine**

Dubai-based Aramex has signed a contract with mobile telecommunications operator Wataniya Mobile to manage logistics and distribution requirements in the territory of Palestine.

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## Americas

### USPS Recognised for Bid Innovation

The United States Postal Service has won the R. Gene Richter Award for "Leadership and Innovation" for optimising the use of bidding software that resulted in savings of more than USD 57 million between 2005 and 2008.

The technology allows suppliers to submit multiple bids on a proposed contract based on different bundling options that best meet their capabilities. The Postal Service can examine and evaluate bids to get the best deal in cost and service.

"When we realised the need for a resource that could perform more robust analyses of complex requirements and allow more collaboration with suppliers, we decided to fully leverage the optimisation tool," said Susan Brownell, vice president supply management. "It gives suppliers flexibility in submitting their bids and provides them an opportunity to give proposals that really hit their sweet spot."

The Postal Service has expanded the tool from transportation contracts to other areas, giving suppliers greater flexibility and saving USD 5.2 million per sourcing event each year.

### DHL to Move Back to Cincinnati

DHL has terminated its long-running talks with UPS on airlift capacity and has decided to move its US air gateway from Wilmington, Ohio, to its former base in Cincinnati.

The company will continue using ABX Air and Astar Air Cargo in the short term. It will reactivate its facilities at Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky Airport (CVG) about fifty miles from Wilmington and relocate this summer. DHL used the gateway until it moved to Wilmington in 2003 when it purchased Airborne Express.

Negotiations with UPS began in May 2008 when a USD 1 billion, ten-year deal was on the table as part of downsizing plans for domestic operations. In November, DHL announced it would withdraw completely from domestic operations in the US at the beginning of 2009.

The scale of the talks reduced considerably making it feasible to fly the lower volumes with ABX Air and Astar if necessary.



### UPS Continues to Weather Downturn

UPS revenue was 13.7 percent lower in the first quarter compared with last year at USD 10.9 billion.

Operating profit was USD 718 million compared with USD 1.49 billion but included the cost of an impairment charge on its entire fleet of DC-8 aircraft. On an adjusted basis, operating profit was USD 899 million.

Average daily volume in the first quarter was 14.54 million compared with 15.13 million in the same period last year.

The company said it managed its business effectively despite the economic downturn, expanding market share and generating strong cash flow.

It is continuing with strategic investments in expanding its Worldport facility, building a hub in Shenzhen, China, and opening healthcare distribution facilities in Europe and Puerto Rico. Capital spending however, is being scaled back by an additional USD 200 million, bringing the total to just below USD 2 billion.

At the end of April, the company announced it is laying off 300 pilots to save operating costs. It will avoid redundancy by proposing voluntary measures, including leaves of absence, early retirement, job sharing and reduced work time to achieve savings targets.

## FedEx Wins Appeal

An appeal court in the United States has ruled against the National Labour Relations Board (NLRB) in favour of FedEx Ground, finding that independent contractors at FedEx are business owners, not employees.

The NLRB had ruled in 2007 that the Brotherhood of Teamsters could conduct a membership election among contractors in FedEx Ground's Home Delivery terminals in Boston and Wilmington.

"The Court determined that FedEx Ground had provided clear evidence that contractors are properly classified as independent contractors," said FedEx spokesman Maury Lane.

## TNT Buys Brazilian Partner

TNT is to acquire its Brazilian partner Expresso Araçatuba Transportes e Logística on a cash and debt-free basis for EUR 54 million.

The acquisition provides a foundation for further development of transport flows between Brazil, Chile and Argentina. Family-run business Expresso Araçatuba offers express transport, mainly by road, from south and south east Brazil to the north and central regions.



## >>In Brief - Americas

### FedEx Gives Insights at World Economic Forum

FedEx Express participated in the World Economic Forum in Rio de Janeiro on April 14 to 16, offering insights into the implications of the global economic crisis for Latin America, and how education and innovation are vital to the region's future.

### FedEx Greatest Place to Work in Mexico

FedEx Express has been named the best place to work in Mexico by the Great Place to Work Institute and *Gestión de Negocios* magazine.

## Asia-Pacific

### China Strengthens its Postal Monopoly

Express operators and trade organisations have criticised a new Chinese postal law excluding private foreign companies from delivering domestic letters within the country.

Although the law does not change the existing legal situation, private express operators and trade organisations had lobbied the Chinese Government to liberalise the domestic mail market and enable competition.

The new law, passed on April 24, will enter force on October 1. It permits only China Post to deliver domestic letters and documents. Foreign companies will only be allowed to deliver international mail and packages within China.

The law contains a broad definition of "letters and documents" to include almost all printed material and data on CDs and DVDs. "Letters" include commercial documents such as proposals and bids, contracts, formulae and engineering plans.

"By placing transport of such documents off limits to foreign-owned express delivery companies, the new postal law denies them an important source of revenue and threatens their viability in the wider express delivery services market. It also curtails incentives to maintain or improve customer-focused services in the limited area left open to competition," the Global Express Association said.

The European Chamber of Commerce in China stated that the "protectionism" within the law would limit the development of the country's logistics industry.

The new law creates a licensing system for express delivery services, described by the Chamber as a step backwards from the efficient deregulation established in China's 2004 Administrative Licensing Law. "Collectively, these measures will erode the competitiveness of foreign invested firms against their domestic counterparts in the wider express market. This combination will reduce market incentives to maintain or improve customer-focused service," the Chamber warned.

### DHL Expands with New Gateways

DHL Express is investing in the Asia-Pacific region, opening two gateways in Taipei at Taoyuan International Airport and at Incheon International Airport, South Korea.

The 13,500sq metre Taipei facility represents an investment of USD 6.2 million and is about four times the size of the previous unit. Handling capacity is tripled to 11,000 items an hour. The gateway provides 24-hour parcel acceptance allowing despatch deadlines to extend by two hours.

The Incheon gateway is 20,000sq metres and cost USD 50 million. It features automatic sorting and weighing of 13,500 items an hour.

Meanwhile in Hong Kong, DHL Express has doubled capacity on its Singapore to Hong Kong route with the introduction of a Boeing 747-400 freighter operated by Air Hong Kong, its joint venture with Cathay Pacific.

The company has won awards in five categories in the Asian Freight & Supply Chain Awards 2009.



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### Economy Overland Services Win Favour

TNT and DHL have both reported increased volume on their economy overland services.

TNT announced that its economy freight service in Asia recorded double-digit growth in the past six months while DHL said its economy select service recorded a 79 percent increase in volume in March and average month-on-month growth of 20 percent.

TNT's economy freight service is available across its south east Asia network; between south east Asia and China and between south east Asia and Europe. It is one of three services launched in the region in June 2008.

### Innovation in Sri Lanka from DHL

DHL Global Forwarding is launching GPS tracking in Sri Lanka for its less-than-container load ocean freight shipments out of Colombo.

It says the real-time facility will help customers to improve supply chain processes, better evaluate delivery times, monitor container routes and reduce costs of risk management.

The company has also introduced hanging boxes for apparel transportation. The boxes can be loaded on trucks, airline containers and sea containers. They improve productivity by allowing garments to be moved from factory direct to retailers.

In March this year DHL announced it would invest USD 8 million in Sri Lanka over three years in addition to the development of a warehouse and distribution centre by 2010.



### >> *In Brief - Asia-Pacific*

#### **New Zealand Post Raises NZD 200Mn**

New Zealand Post Group Finance has raised NZD 200 million through its unsecured subordinated note offer.

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**IPC  
Head of Communication  
Avenue du Bourget, 44  
1130, Brussels  
Belgium**

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