

Military Postal Service History

During World War II, the Department of Defense (DoD) and the “then” Post Office Department agreed to provide mail service to our armed forces serving abroad. In 1959, this agreement was updated and called for the Post Office Department to physically handle and dispatch the mail – resulting in the Military Postal System (MPS) to serve as an extension of the United States Postal Service (USPS).

In 1980, the DoD designated the U.S. Army as the single source manager for MPS and established the Military Postal Service Agency (MPSA). This agency is staffed with a Brigadier General (USA) that serves as the Executive Director with a joint service staff. Additionally, the former Military Mail Terminals of the Army and Fleet Post Offices of the Navy at New York and San Francisco were restructured as Joint Military Postal Activities (JMPA) Atlantic and Pacific.

The Inter-Service Postal Training Activity (IPTA) was established in 1982 at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana under the U.S. Army Soldier Support Institute, Adjutant General School. The IPTA serves as the training center for participating service branches and DoD civilians in basic and supervisory postal skills involved in Military Postal Facility operations. The IPTA is an Inter-Service Training Review Organization (ITRO) course that is staffed with a Chief Warrant Officer (USMC) that serves as the Director with a joint service staff. In 1995, the IPTA was relocated to Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

In 2013, JMPA Atlantic and Pacific mail operations were consolidated at the Chicago International Service Center (ISC), and established JMPA Chicago to act as the single point of contact with USPS on behalf of MPSA. JMPA Chicago operates with East and West Region detachments. The East Region Detachments include USPS Jersey City, NJ International and Bulk Mail Center, USPS John F. Kennedy (JFK) International Airport ISC and Air Mail Facilities in Miami, FL and Chicago, IL. The West Region Detachments include San Francisco International Airport (SFO) Air Mail Terminal ISC and USPS Air Mail Facility Honolulu, HI.

The individual services operate their own internal postal facilities with policy and guidance from MPSA and their respective service components.

For additional MPS history – please click on the hyperlinks below.

[Smithsonian National Postal Museum – Mail Call](#)

[USPS History V-Mail](#)

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