



BSI Standards Publication

## Postal services — Quality of delivery: Reforwarding

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**National foreword**

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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 secretary.

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## Postal services - Quality of delivery: Reforwarding

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## European foreword

This document (CEN/TR 16894:2015) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 331 "Postal services", the secretariat of which is held by NEN.

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## Introduction

The European Commission emphasises the need to have common rules for the development of community postal services and the improvement of Quality of Service (QoS).

The purpose of re-forwarding of postal items standardization is to supply all POs with a useful set of rules how to measure the QoS in re-forwarding. A survey among operators showed that all contributing countries provide this type of service, although with varying offers on type of mail, duration of contract, and modes of processing. The technical recommendations on re-forwarding measurement take the varying service levels into account and should be flexible towards any PO's service offer.

It is essential to set the re-forwarding monitor up as an independent measurement, performed by an independent network of senders and receivers managed by an independent supplier.

Beyond this, this document describes a best practice approach of measuring re-forwarding with a basic design and sample. The design can be extended and refined to meet more advanced criteria of representative sampling, e.g. in mail characteristics, geographical spread, customer type, and differentiation of performance indicator. It is recommended to focus on the type of contract that covers the majority of contracts, e.g. on the domestic measurement (although re-forwarding contracts are offered as cross-border service as well), and / or on those of private households or permanent relocation.

The measurement should be based on a defined methodology which shall be objective and be auditable even if no audit is foreseen. The methodology and the sample design should be defined before the start of the measurement.

## 1 Scope

This Technical Report specifies methods for measuring the quality of a re-forwarding service of domestic addressed mail that is collected, processed and delivered by postal service operators. As a European Standard or technical specification it relates to the measurement of services given to household and business customers who receive mail at their homes, their post office boxes, or at their office premises and have contracted their national Postal Operator (PO) to re-forward their mail for a defined stretch of time to an address that deviates from the one presented on the postal items that are to be delivered to them.

It is not the purpose of this standard to measure the POs performance in a way that provides a direct comparison of postal service providers.

## 2 Symbols and abbreviations

PO	Postal Operator
QoS	Quality of Service

## 3 Service characteristics

The re-forwarding service is characterized by the fact that a person or company asks the PO to deliver their mail to a different address from the one that is written on the label of the postal item. This service is used when private households, businesses or other type of organizations leave their premises temporarily or permanently and the alternative address is not (yet) commonly known to their correspondents.

Holidays or travels / stays away from home for health, educational or job purposes are typical examples of temporary absence which has a predetermined end. Alternatively, re-forwarding contracts are set up if a person, family, or business relocates permanently, i.e. move to another place of living. This type of re-forwarding service typically runs for several months.

To measure this type of service, real re-forwarding contracts shall be used. The method to monitor the quality of the re-forwarding service is to send the test items to a person having a re-forwarding contract under this address. The test letters are being sent to the old/not valid address, and are considered correctly re-forwarded if they arrive at the new / now valid address.

Without the real registration of the re-forwarding request the usual process of re-forwarding cannot be carried out by the PO. PO employees shall be able to refer to their usual database or source of information to identify a test item as a letter that should not be delivered to the address written on it but to someplace else. Both addresses, the one that is written on the envelope and the one where the item is re-forwarded to, shall be real addresses, postally correct and verified, and available in the PO's information system as a re-forwarding case. Only then a sorting process or postal employees are able to correctly re-direct the item and the postman is able to deliver the item to its addressee.

## 4 Test items

The need for real re-forwarding contracts renders the finding of participants in the measurement rather demanding. A sample of test customers with the comparatively rare feature of a re-forwarding contract needs to be picked and their mail monitored for test purposes (test mail) for a certain period. The test period should begin with the contract start date and last until the end of the contract. A defined number of test letters is sent to this test customer and monitored during this period.

The start and end date of the contract should be considered carefully in the posting plan because a letter posted on the last day before a contract starts might slip through the sorting, before the contract