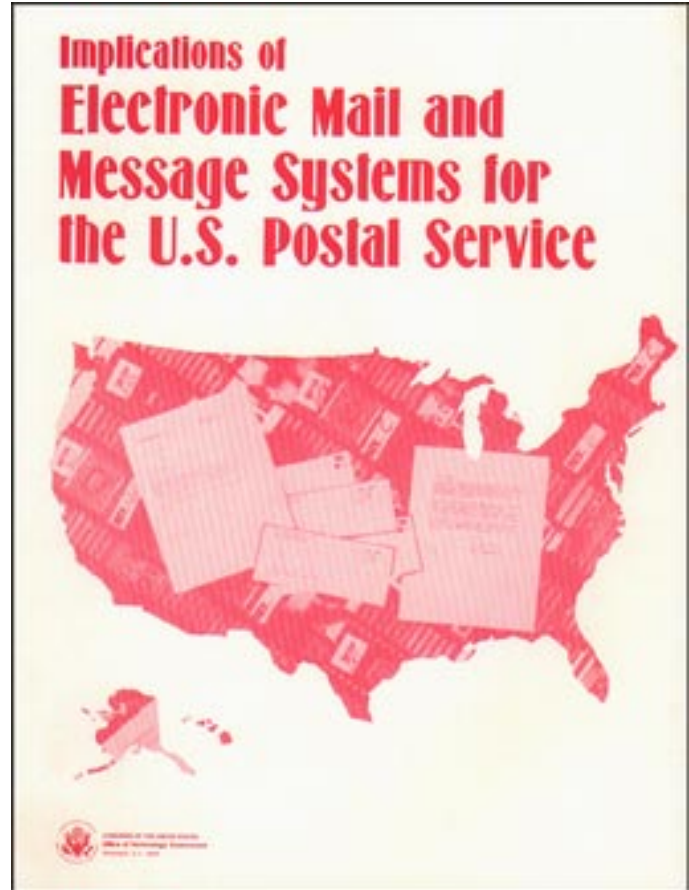


*Implications of Electronic Mail and  
Message Systems for the U.S. Postal Service*

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## Foreword

This study of the implications of electronic mail and message systems (EMS) for the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is one of four components of the OTA assessment of Societal Impacts of National Information Systems. It should be read along with the September 1981 OTA report on *Computer-Based National Information Systems: Technology and Public Policy Issues*, which provides the larger context for understanding EMS-related public policy questions. Also relevant is the March 1982 OTA background paper on *Selected Electronic Funds Transfer Issues: Privacy, Security, and Equity*.

The House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, one of the original requesting committees, indicated an interest in the possible impact of EMS and electronic funds transfer (EFT) on the USPS mailstream and labor force, and implications for the future role of USPS in electronic mail and message systems. The Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, Subcommittee on Civil Service, Post Office, and General Services, expressed a similar interest. In response, OTA initiated a review of relevant EMS and EFT developments since the completion of the work of the Commission on Postal Service in 1977. Several working papers and computer-based models were developed by OTA staff and contractors. These were reviewed by an OTA advisory panel representing postal, labor, telecommunication carrier, computer service, business, academic, and consumer interests. On the basis of that review, a revised and integrated report was prepared.

OTA appreciates the participation of the advisory panelists, external reviewers, and others who helped bring this study to fruition. It is, however, solely the responsibility of OTA, not of those who so ably advised and assisted in its preparation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John H. Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J".

JOHN H. GIBBONS  
*Director*

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\*March 1981 through February 1982; Stephen E. Doyle served as Program Manager through February 1981; Fred W. Weingarten was appointed Program Manager effective March 1982.  
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