

upon which mail service has previously been performed, the Postmaster General may contract with the owner or master of any steamship, steambot or other vessel plying upon the waters or between ports of the United States, for carrying the mail upon said route for any length of time not exceeding four years and without advertising for proposals therefor whenever the public interest and convenience will thereby be promoted; but the price paid for such service shall in no case be greater than the average price paid under the last preceding or then existing regular contract upon the same route. And the Postmaster General may contract with the owners or masters of steamships, steamboats or other vessels plying upon the waters or between ports of the United States for carrying the mails upon such routes where no mail service has previously been performed, without advertising for proposals therefor; but no contract for such new service shall be for a longer time than one year. No contract for carrying the mails between the United States and any foreign port shall be for a longer time than two years, unless otherwise directed by Congress. (R. S. § 3043; May 17, 1878, c. 107, § 5, 20 Stat. 62.)

450. **Water routes; carriage of mails as freight or express.**—When there is no competition for inland transportation by steambot or other power-bot routes or by aeroplanes and the rate of compensation asked is excessive, or no proposal is received, the Postmaster General may require that the mails be carried as freight or express, and it shall be unlawful for any common carrier by water to refuse to carry the mails when so required, and the penalty for such offense shall be a fine of \$500. Each day of refusal shall constitute a separate offense. (July 2, 1918, c. 117, § 1, 40 Stat. 747.)

451. **Star routes served entirely by Rural Delivery Service.**—No part of the appropriation for inland transportation by star routes shall be expended for continuance of any star-route service the patronage of which shall be served entirely by the extension of Rural Delivery Service, nor shall any of said sum be expended for star-route service for a patronage a major portion of which has been served by Rural Delivery Service, unless the services of a qualified rural carrier can not be secured. (July 2, 1918, c. 117, § 1, 40 Stat. 751.)

Chapter 13.—AIR MAIL.

Sec.

- 461. Short title.
- 462. Air mail defined.
- 463. Same; postage rates.
- 464. Same; contracts for transportation of air mail.
- 465. Same; rules and regulations.
- 466. Aeroplanes for aeroplane mail service.
- 467. Purchase of equipment and supplies for aeroplane mail service.
- 468. Sale of unsuitable aviation material.

Section 461. Short title.—Sections 461 to 465 of this chapter may be cited as the "Air Mail Act." (Feb. 2, 1925, c. 128, § 1, 43 Stat. 805.)

462. **Air mail defined.**—When used in sections 463 to 465 of this title the term "air mail" means first-class mail prepaid at the rates of postage herein prescribed. (Feb. 2, 1925, c. 128, § 2, 43 Stat. 805.)

463. **Same; postage rates.**—The rates of postage on air mail shall be not less than 10 cents for each ounce or fraction thereof. (Feb. 2, 1925, c. 128, § 3, 43 Stat. 805.)

464. **Same; contracts for transportation of air mail.**—The Postmaster General may contract with any individual, firm, or corporation for the transportation of air mail by aircraft between such points as he may designate at a rate not to exceed four-fifths of the revenues derived from such air mail, and further contract for the transportation by aircraft of first-class mail other than air mail at a rate not to exceed four-fifths of the revenues derived from such first-class mail. The cost of such transportation to be paid for out of the appropriation for inland transportation by railroad routes. (Mar. 1,

1921, c. 88, § 1, 41 Stat. 1152; Feb. 2, 1925, c. 128, § 4, 43 Stat. 805.)

465. **Same; rules and regulations.**—The Postmaster General may make such rules, regulations, and orders as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of sections 462 to 465 of this title. Nothing in such sections shall be construed to interfere with the postage charged or to be charged on Government-operated air mail routes. (Feb. 2, 1925, c. 128, § 5, 43 Stat. 806.)

466. **Aeroplanes for aeroplane mail service.**—The Postmaster General may expend any sum appropriated for that purpose for the purchase of aeroplanes and the operation and maintenance of aeroplane mail service between such points, including service to and between points in Alaska, as he may determine. (Mar. 3, 1917, c. 162, § 1, 39 Stat. 1064; Feb. 28, 1919, c. 69, § 1, 40 Stat. 1194.)

467. **Purchase of equipment and supplies for aeroplane mail service.**—The Postmaster General shall purchase, as far as practicable, such available and suitable equipment and supplies for the aeroplane mail service as may be owned by or under construction for the War Department or the Navy Department when no longer required because of the cessation of war activities, and it shall be his duty to first ascertain if such articles of the character described may be secured from the War Department or the Navy Department before purchasing such equipment or supplies elsewhere. If such equipment or supplies, other than emergency supplies, are purchased elsewhere than from the War Department or the Navy Department, the Postmaster General shall report such action to Congress, together with the reasons for such purchases. All articles purchased from either of said departments shall be paid for at a reasonable price considering wear and tear and general condition. Said departments are authorized to sell such equipment and supplies to the Post Office Department under the conditions specified, and the proceeds of such sales shall be covered into the Treasury as miscellaneous receipts. The Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy are authorized and directed to deliver immediately to the Postmaster General, as he may request, and as hereinbefore provided, such aeroplane machines, supplies, equipment, and parts as may be serviceable and available for the aeroplane mail service, the same to be out of any equipment that the War Department or the Navy Department has on hand or under construction, the War Department and the Navy Department appropriations to be credited with the equipment turned over to the Post Office Department. Separate accounts shall be kept of the amount expended for aeroplane mail service. (Feb. 28, 1919, c. 69, § 1, 40 Stat. 1194.)

468. **Sale of unsuitable aviation material.**—The Postmaster General may sell under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe any airplanes, parts thereof, field equipment, tools and other aviation material which have become unsuitable in the Postal Service or which will deteriorate and become unsuitable before it can be used. The proceeds of such sales shall be covered into the Treasury as "Miscellaneous receipts." (June 5, 1920, c. 253, § 1, 41 Stat. 1031.)

Chapter 14.—CARRYING THE MAIL.

Sec.

- 481. What are post roads.
- 482. Post routes.
- 483. Provisions for carrying the mail.
- 484. Mail to every courthouse.
- 485. Carrying the mail on canals.
- 486. Carrying the mail on plank roads.
- 487. Carrying the mail on waters of the United States.
- 488. Emergency mail service in Alaska.
- 489. Extending line of posts; compensation.
- 490. Selecting post roads.
- 491. Change of post-road terminus.
- 492. Discontinuing service on post road.
- 493. Contract for service over routes not established by law.