

# Introduction to the PHSC website Database on Post Offices

For the past number of years we have attempted to compile a database of Canadian post offices, showing all post offices from their earliest beginnings to current times in an era of franchises.

Our earliest efforts were focused on Newfoundland post offices *after* they were integrated into the Canadian postal system on April 1, 1949. This was followed with a foray into the Province of Prince Edward Island, the Yukon Territory and the Province of Ontario. It is an ongoing effort that requires many participants supplying raw data as well as participants willing to build the database.

Simply speaking, the database will list a post office by its official name (not necessarily the name found on date-stamps), geographic location, the various organizational numbers assigned, and the known opening and closing dates. When possible, links will be provided showing a post office's earlier and later names. Lastly we have a "Notes" column that is plumb full of data. This column will show the post office classification as outlined below, clarify its accounting status when needed and provide a physical postal address. This latter point is especially useful for sub-offices and the modern day franchised dealerships.

The project is ongoing and we constantly add new information to this database filling in missing information that was not available at the earlier stages of the project.

When searching for a post office you may use the search engine looking for post office by name, office number, or postal code (or part thereof). If you narrow your search to province or county your resulting lists will be shorter and more manageable.

Our sources are many:

- *Reports of the Postmaster General,*
- many *Canada Official Postal Guides,*
- numerous official *Lists of Post Offices,*
- Library and Archives Canada,
- *The Bull.MOOSE (newsletter of the Money Order Office Study Establishment),*
- local histories,
- submitted reports from members (photos as well as data),
- and lastly Google searches of the news media concerning Canada Post

We are constantly on the lookout for new sources to narrow the margin of error. For example, in dates we sometimes have to resort to simply stating that a change occurred before (<) or after (>) a certain date.

*We welcome members to tackle some of the other provinces. Many hands make light work!*

# POST OFFICE CLASSIFICATION

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## *A General Commentary*

**Non-Accounting office** – These offices are those at which money order business is not transacted. They are not required to render any cash accounts to the Post Office Department.

**Accounting office** – The accounting offices are authorized to carry on money order business (and savings bank business, if necessary) and are required to report on postal revenue transactions on the cash account form which is rendered either daily or four times per month as may be directed by the Post Office Department. Cash account forms are becoming obsolete as more post offices are connected directly by digital systems to Canada Post in Ottawa.

## *Post Office Numbers*

**M.O.O.N. (Money Order Office Number)** – assigned about April 1923 to all Accounting Post Offices (four-digit numbers) and subsequently in 1935 to Non-Accounting Post Offices (five-digit numbers). Accounting office numbers were first indicated in the 1930 *Canada Official Postal Guide* and non-accounting numbers in the 1935-1936 *Canada Official Postal Guide*. MOON date-stamps began carrying this number in early 1950. This system was replaced on April 1, 1973 with a new numbering system (*see P.O.C.O.N. below*).

**P.O.C.O.N. (Post Office Computer Organization Number)** – The new numbers were assigned April 1, 1973 and were allotted in blocks to the regional postal districts. This number consists of a six-digit number wherein the last digit is a computer check digit and the first five digits comprise the number sequence.

The system was altered in the late 1980s when number assignment was removed from regional control to Ottawa. They were still issued chronologically but all gaps skipped between blocks used in the original approach were used. In late 2001 available numbers were becoming scarce and Canada Post made a more significant change to the system. In the new configuration all assigned numbers became a true six-digit number. Numbers were assigned chronologically as the need arose and existing numbers were absorbed into the system unchanged. New office numbers basically filled in the non-assigned areas of the earlier systems. No name or acronym has been adopted for this significant change to the number system. Different terminology appeared over these years from the Corporation for what we have generally known simply as ‘post offices’. Responsibility Centres and Cost Centres are among them and what we call office numbers are found as Responsibility Centre numbers or, more recently, Cost Centre numbers. Another change in the application of office numbers happened in the early 1990s. They were applied to various operational sections in addition to retail sales. Thus some types of offices including postal plants, staff and semi-staff offices may

have two or more office numbers which can be found on ordinary mail. Watch for them on registration, courier, postage paid, directory assistance and even the occasional postmaster or lead hand date-stamps.

### ***Post Office Classification***

**Type 7 / Mail Processing Plant (MPP)** – huge regional mechanized sorting plants spread throughout the country. They act as distribution hubs for the purpose of speeding mail on its way.

**Type 9 / Postal Station (PS) or Postal Unit (PU)** – large, city postal station. There may be several in a city, all of which provide street delivery.

**Type 11 / Revenue office** – small, mainly rural, post offices. The facilities are generally supplied by the postmaster and may be found in a residence or store.

**Type 12 / Sub-office (RPO)** – found mainly in stores, this type of operation has been around for over 100 years until the replacement by the current system of franchises. After the late 1980s sub-offices (type 12) were classified as RPOs (retail postal outlets). Since Railway Post Offices (R.P.O.s) were eliminated with the final R.P.O. run on April 24, 1971, it should not be a problem differentiating the two types of postal services.

**Type 14 / Semi-Staff office** – corporate offices found in smaller towns and villages. Although mainly in corporate buildings (owned or leased), they may be in stores. Annual revenue would exceed that of a type 11 office. They are staffed by members of the CPAA (Canadian Postmasters and Assistants Association), each post office has a “postmaster”.

**Type 15 / Staff office** – larger town or city offices. In this type of jurisdiction you may find street delivery by mail carriers, as well as sub-offices responsible to and supervised by the staff office. They are staffed by members of CUPW (Canadian Union of Postal Workers), each post office has a “lead hand” – no postmaster.

**Type 24 / Gross Margin Outlet (GMO)** – A postal outlet that functions very much like a sub-office under the control of a Type 15 or Type 9 post office.

**Type 25 / Commercial Service Centre (CSC)** – added to post offices in larger towns where an attempt was made to have the post office serve only commercial clients, and franchises were to serve all other retail clients. It appears that to a large extent this type failed and most of the CSC stations have reverted to being a full-service post office with a retail counter to serve the private citizen.

**Retail Outlet (RO)** – A general term for a franchised dealership selling Canada Post services and products. Postal boxes may be located on the premises. *In some regions the abbreviation ‘RPO’ is used to refer to retail outlets.* ROs are divided into three categories. (see below)

**Type 43 / Urban franchised dealer (RO-A)** – As the name indicates, this is a franchised situation where the host business is responsible for providing the facilities, furniture, date-stamps, etc., according to strict guidelines laid out by Canada Post. In some postal regions of the country Canada Post goes so far as to distinguish light (l), medium (m), and heavy (h) traffic areas for the Type 43 franchises. Where known to us, we will indicate this in the “Notes” column.

**Type 44 / Rural franchised dealer (RO-B)** – As is the case with Type 43 discussed above, the same applies here. Canada Post chose to distinguish between those retail outlets (ROs) serving an urban *vs* rural market.

**Type 45 / Commercial franchised dealer (RO-C)** – A retail facility provided and operated by a private business or individual providing *bulk sale of postal products and services* and acceptance of larger volumes of mail. This type of franchise is certainly in the minority.

**Type 52 / Call-For Centre • Stamp Shop (CF • SS)** – This primarily a place for postal patrons to pick up parcels. A Stamp Shop is an agent selling stamps, nothing else. The two types, CF and SS, may or may not be combined. This type of office may or may not be supplied with a date-stamp. They are *not* listed on Canada Post’s website as an office.

**Type 59 / Contracted Postal Services (CPS1)** – This type of office is operated under an agreement between *Canada Post Corporation* and *an individual or company* for the provision of postal services from *one* office.

**Type 60 / Contracted Postal Services (CPS2)** – This type of office is operated under an agreement between *Canada Post Corporation* and *a community, hamlet or Indian Band Council* for the provision of postal services from *one* office.

**Type 61 / Contracted Postal Services (CPS3)** – This type of office is operated under an agreement between *Canada Post Corporation* and an umbrella organization (e.g. Northern Stores) for the provision of postal services from *a number* of offices.

**Type 62 / Corporate Retail Outlet (CRO)** – A retail outlet providing full postal services operated by Canada Post employees, therefore not a franchise.