



Republic Of Ireland Quality Of Postal Service Monitor - 2009 Report

Items Posted On Or Between 1st January & 31st December 2009

- Ipsos MRBI has been commissioned by ComReg to monitor the quality of postal service in the Republic of Ireland, in accordance with the European and Irish Standard, I.S. EN 13850: 2002, 'Postal Services – Quality of Service – Measurement of transit time of end-to-end services for single piece priority mail and first class mail' in parallel with the Guide for the implementation of EN 13850, TR 14709. For monitoring purposes, the universe of post is defined as all single piece priority mail and first class mail posted and delivered in the Republic of Ireland. Monitoring is conducted via a nationwide panel of homes and business premises posting and receiving mail on a continuous basis.
- Reports are issued on a year-to-date and quarterly basis.
- This report presents the full year performance findings for items posted on or between 1st January and 31st December 2009 and the quarterly findings for items posted on or between 1st October and 31st December 2009.
- Ipsos MRBI is an independent provider of business information and is a fully owned subsidiary of Ipsos Group.
- To comply with EN 13850 ComReg has approved the appointment of Dr. Myra O'Regan, Department of Statistics, Trinity College, Dublin for the duration of the current contract to conduct an annual year-end audit certification of the monitor carried out by Ipsos MRBI, on its behalf.

Next Day Delivery – 2009 Full Year Performance

- For single piece priority mail, the 2009 performance for Next Day Delivery stands at 84% for the period January to December 2009, which is an increase of five percentage points on the 2008 result. At 84%, Next Day Delivery performance falls ten percentage points short of the target of 94%, as set by ComReg.
- Comparing 2009 to 2008 for the mail flows ‘Anywhere to Anywhere’, ‘Dublin to Anywhere’ and ‘Outside Dublin County to Anywhere’, the largest increase was recorded for ‘Dublin to Anywhere’ with a seven percentage point improvement.
- Mail sent from ‘Dublin County’ for delivery within ‘Dublin County’ also achieved an eight percentage point improvement in Next Day Delivery performance. As such ‘Dublin County’ to ‘Dublin County’ now compares favourably with the other mail flows. However, mail posted ‘Outside Dublin County’ for delivery in ‘Dublin County’ continues to achieve the lowest level of performance, at just 81% Next Day Delivery in 2009.
- It is interesting to note that the annual performances of Standard Letters, Large Envelopes and Packets have converged over the past six years. However, in 2009 Business Collection performance has moved 7% ahead of Post Office and Post Box induction performance.

Delivery Within Three Days – 2009 Full Year Performance

- The year to date performance for Delivery Within Three Days for single piece priority mail stands at 98.3%, against a ComReg target of 99.5%.

Next Day Delivery – Q4 2009 Compared With Q3 2009

- Contrasting the periods 1st July to 30th September 2009 and 1st October to 31st December 2009, Next Day Delivery for single piece priority mail has fallen by two percentage points to 83%.
- When Q4 2009 is compared with Q3 2009, no significant changes are observed in performance across the differing mail flows.
 - There is a slight downturn in the Outside Dublin mail flows. This is driven by the fall in Next Day Delivery for mail posted Outside Dublin to Dublin, from 84% in Q3 2009 to 80% in Q4 2009.
- Compared with Q3 2009, the following shifts are observed for the Next Day Delivery in Q4 2009 across the various discriminating characteristics;
 - The Collection From Business induction method has decreased from 90% in Q3 2009 to 88% in Q4 2009 and is currently outperforming Post Box and Post Office induction at 81% and 80% respectively.

- Performance of Packets remains unchanged from last quarter, at 85%. Large Envelopes and Standard Letters have both experienced a two percentage point decrease in performance, from 85% to 83% for each measure.

Next Day Delivery – Q4 2009 Compared With Q4 2008

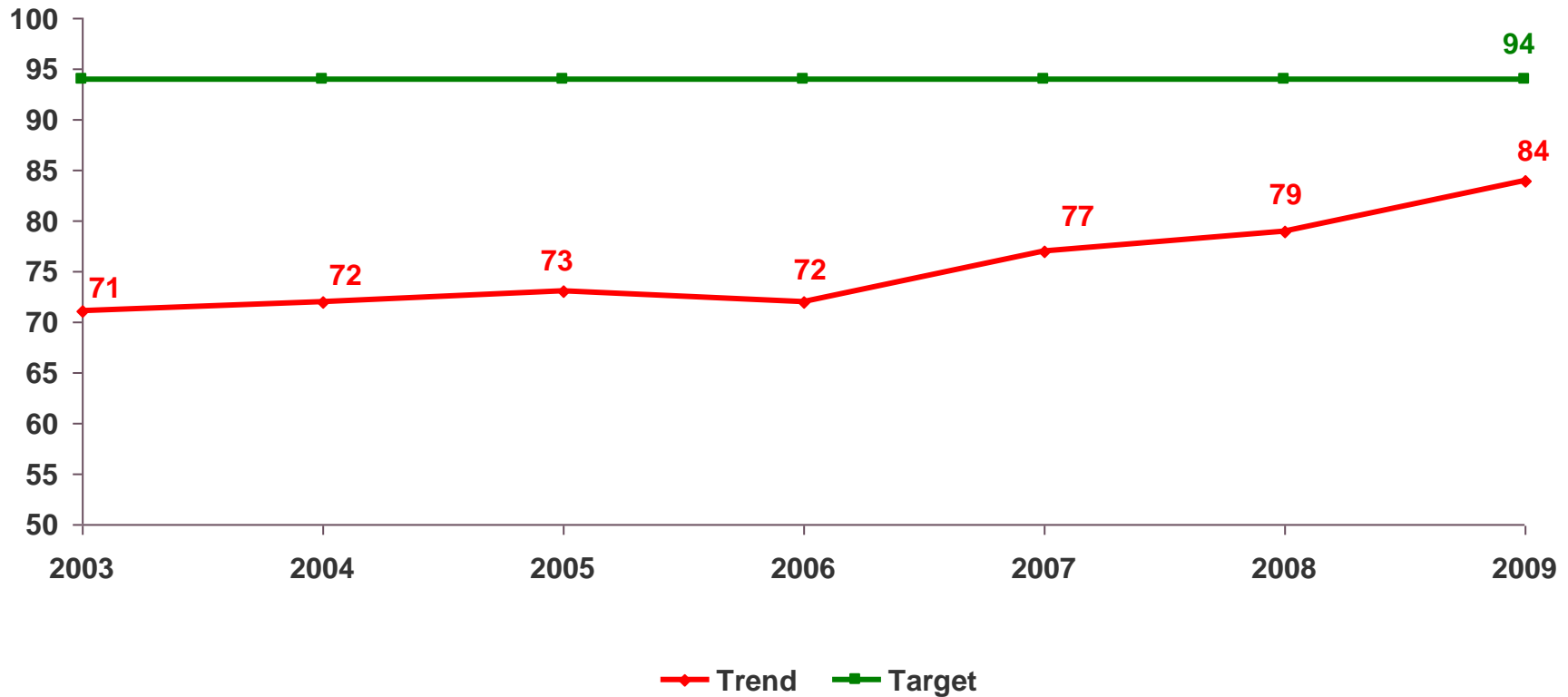
- Next Day Delivery for single piece priority mail in Q4 2009 registered an increase of five percentage points compared with the same period in 2008, which incidentally had also experienced a five point increase over Q4 in 2007. The following changes between Q4 2009 and Q4 2008 were also recorded:
 - Comparing regional mail flows, the largest increase in Next Day Delivery has occurred for local mail posted from ‘Dublin County’ for delivery within ‘Dublin County’, from 74% in Q4 2008 up to 85% in Q4 2009.
 - Collection From Business has increased from 84% to 88%; Post Box induction is up from 75% to 81%; Post Office induction has improved by four percentage points to 80%.
 - Packet mail has improved by eleven percentage points, from 74% to 85%; Standard Letters have improved by six percentage points, to 83%; Large Envelope performance has increased by one percentage point to 83%.

Delivery Within Three Days – Quarter 4 2009

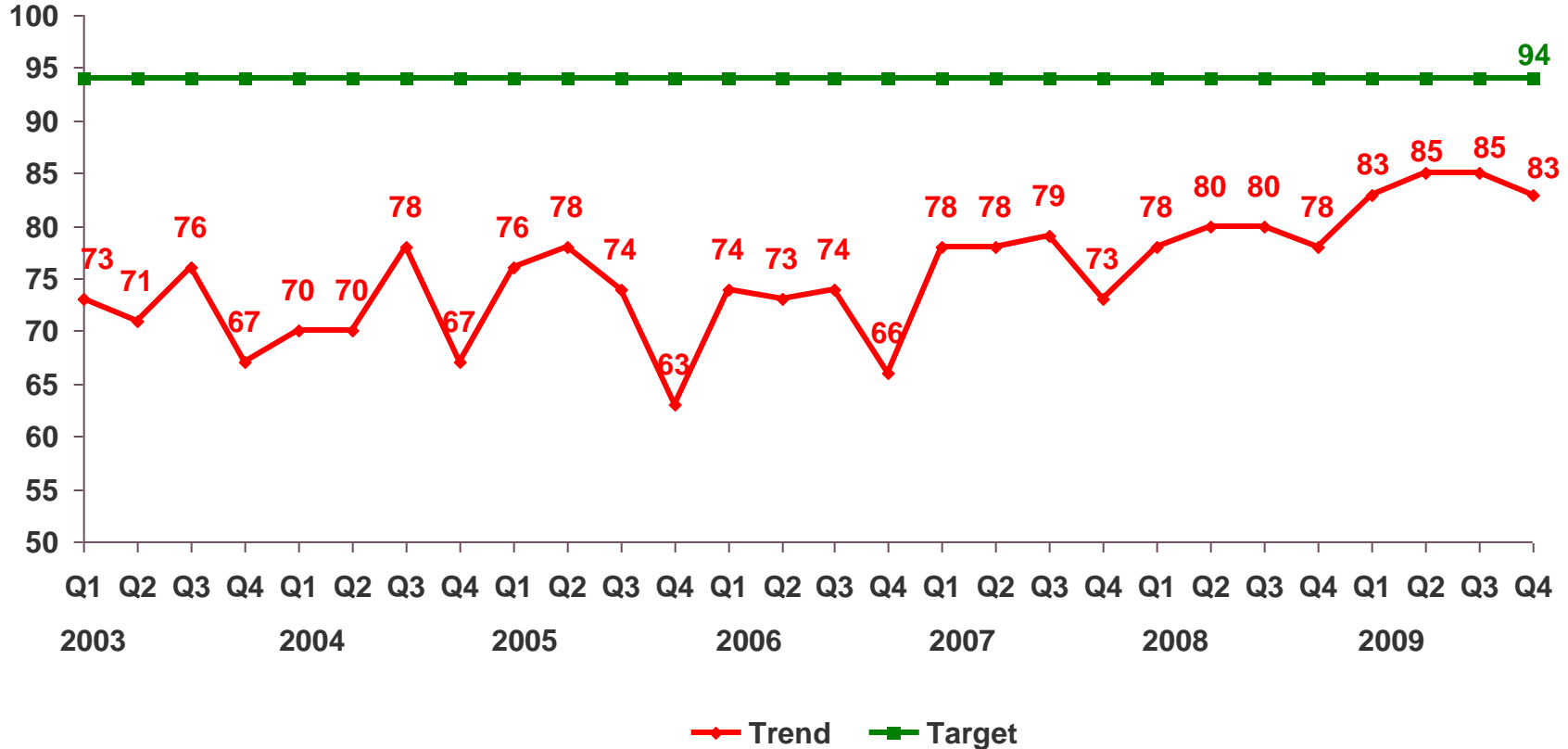
- For the period 1st October to 31st December 2009, 98.2% of single piece priority mail was delivered within three days of posting, against a ComReg target of 99.5%.

The inclement weather conditions experienced during the periods 19th November to 8th December and 24th , 30th and 31st December 2009 may also have slightly impaired Quality of Service performance during this quarter.

National Next Day Delivery (D+1) Full Year – 2003 to 2009



National Next Day Delivery (D+1) January 2003 to December 2009 By Quarter



Findings

- Full Year Comparisons**

Next Day Delivery Nationally (D+1)

Items Posted On Or Between 1st Jan & 31st Dec 2009

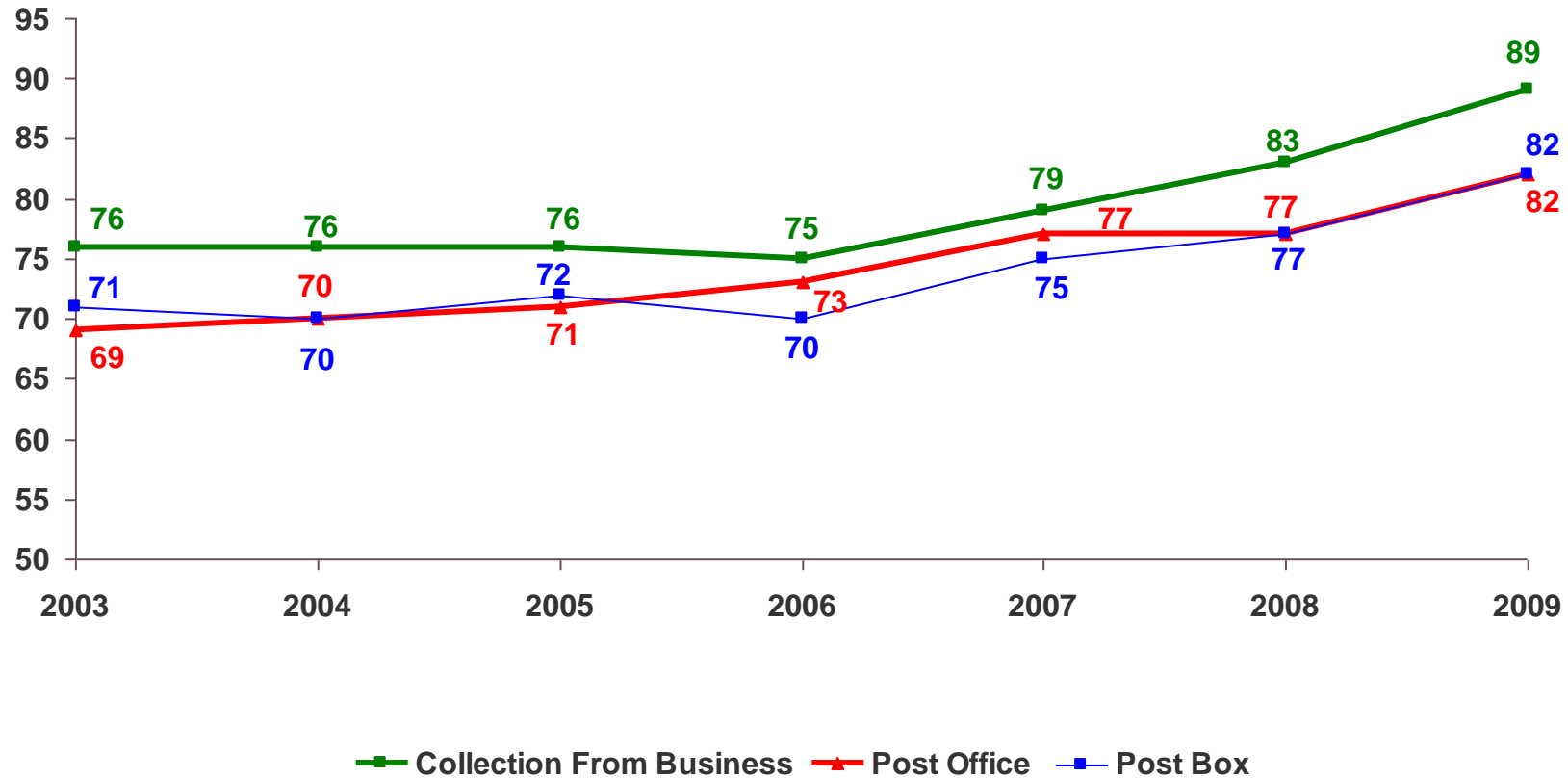
		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	84% (+/-0.9%)	85% (+/-1.4%)	83% (+/-1.8%)
	From Dublin county	84% (+/-1.7%)	84% (+/-2.5%)	84% (+/-2.5%)
	From outside Dublin County	84% (+/-0.9%)	85% (+/-1.3%)	81% (+/-2.1%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 29,067
3. Dublin County consists of the administrative areas of the Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council and Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council.

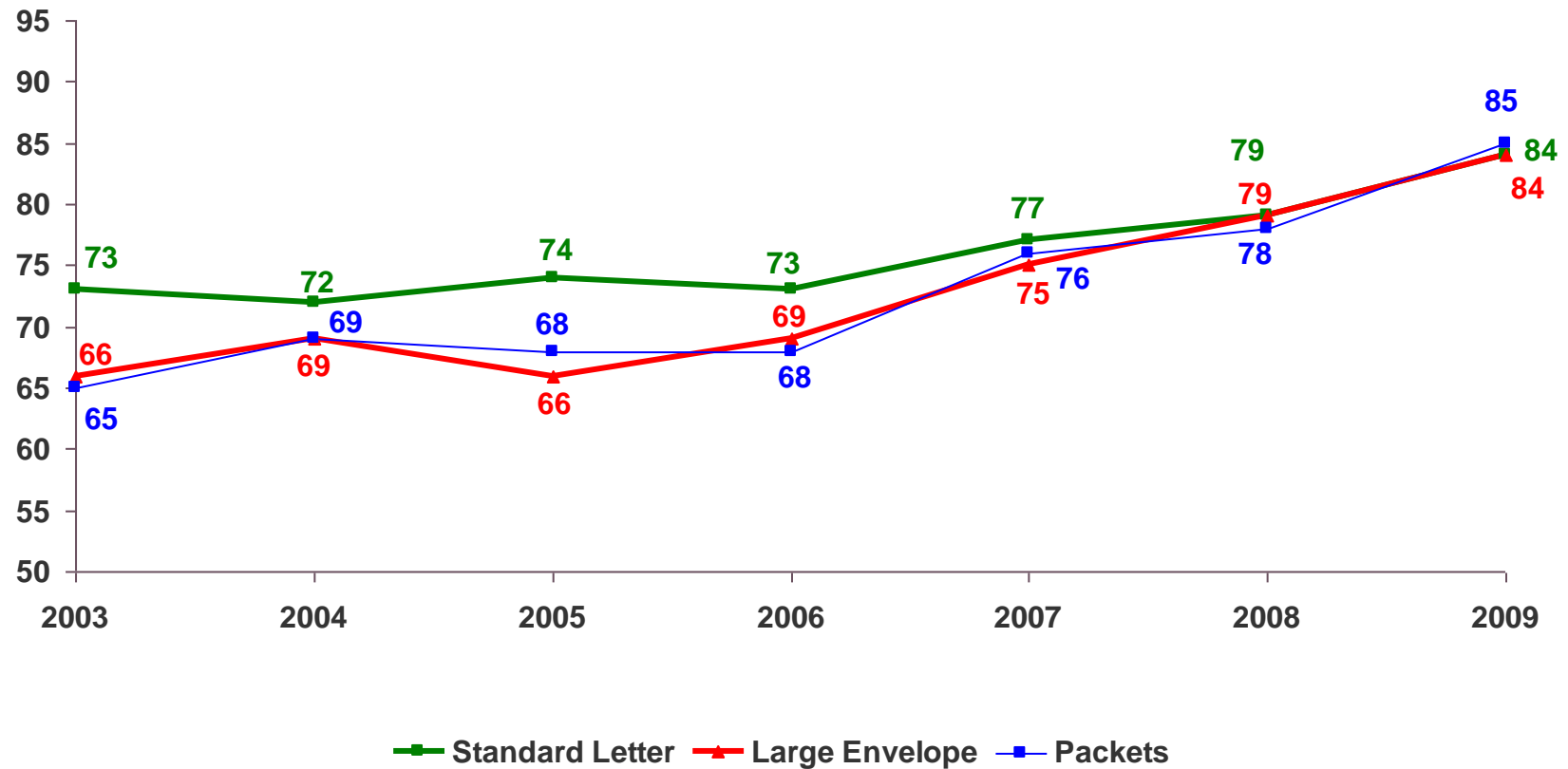
Next Day Delivery (D+1) Performance of Mail – Full Year Comparisons

	2003 Jan to Dec %	2004 Jan to Dec %	2005 Jan to Dec %	2006 Jan to Dec %	2007 Jan to Dec %	2008 Jan to Dec %	2009 Jan to Dec %
Anywhere to Anywhere	71	72	73	72	77	79	84
Anywhere to Local (Delivery within county of posting)	75	75	76	75	78	79	85
Anywhere To Dublin County	71	73	73	72	77	75	83
Dublin County to Anywhere	70	69	73	70	77	77	84
Dublin County to Dublin County (Local)	72	75	76	73	78	76	84
Outside Dublin County to Anywhere	73	73	73	75	77	80	84
Outside Dublin County to Local (Delivery within county of posting)	78	76	76	77	79	83	85
Outside Dublin County to Dublin County	68	70	68	70	75	74	81

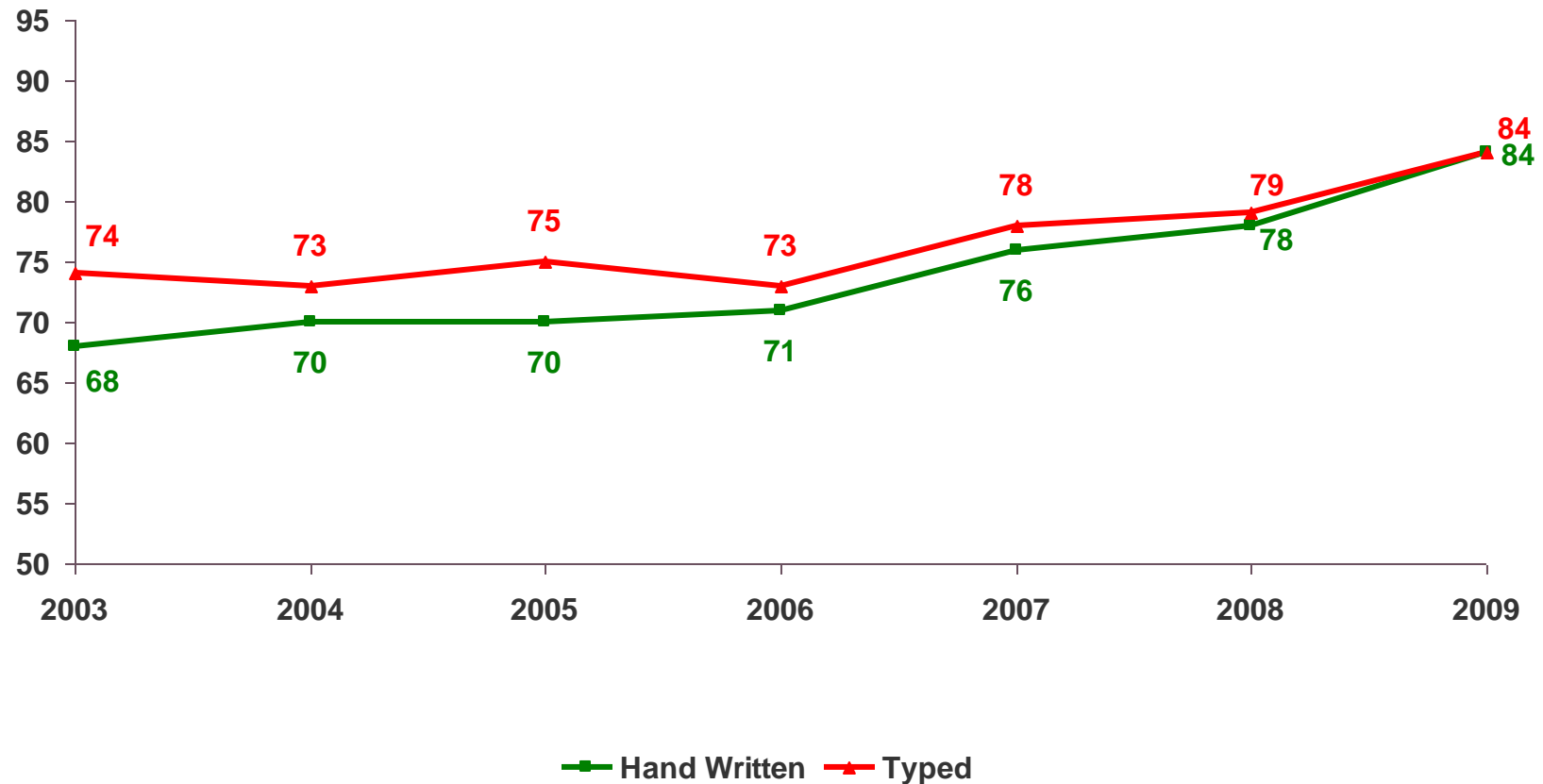
Next Day Delivery (D+1) By Induction Method* - 2003 to 2009



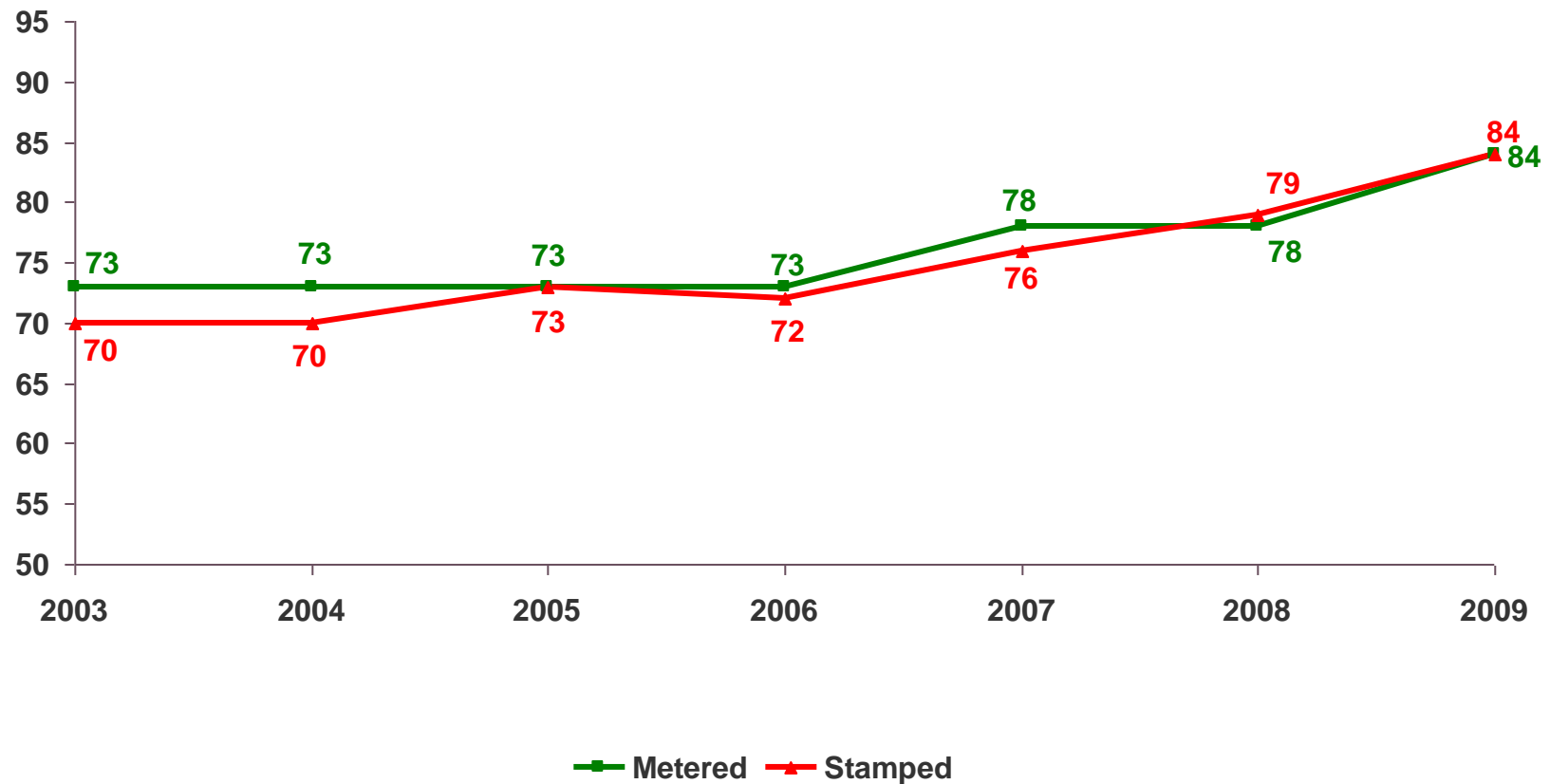
Next Day Delivery (D+1) By Mail Format* - 2003 to 2009



Next Day Delivery (D+1) By Address Method - 2003 to 2009



Next Day Delivery (D+1) By Payment Method - 2003 to 2009



Delivery Within Three Days (D+3) Items Posted On Or Between 1st Jan & 31st Dec, 2009

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	98% (+/-0.2%)	98% (+/-0.3%)	98% (+/-0.4%)
	From Dublin County	98% (+/-0.4%)	98% (+/-0.6%)	98% (+/-0.6%)
	From outside Dublin County	98% (+/-0.3%)	99% (+/-0.4%)	98% (+/-0.6%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 29,067
3. Dublin County consists of the administrative areas of the Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council and Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council.

Findings - Quarterly

Quality Of Postal Service Targets With Quarterly & Full Year An Post Performance for RoI

	TARGET	ACHIEVED Q4 2009	ACHIEVED JAN-DEC 2009
Next Day Delivery (D+1)			
From Anywhere to Anywhere	94%	83%	84%
From Dublin County to Anywhere	94%	84%	84%
From outside Dublin County to Anywhere	94%	82%	84%
Next Day Delivery (D+3)			
From Anywhere to Anywhere	99.5%	98.2%	98.3%

Next Day Delivery (D+1)

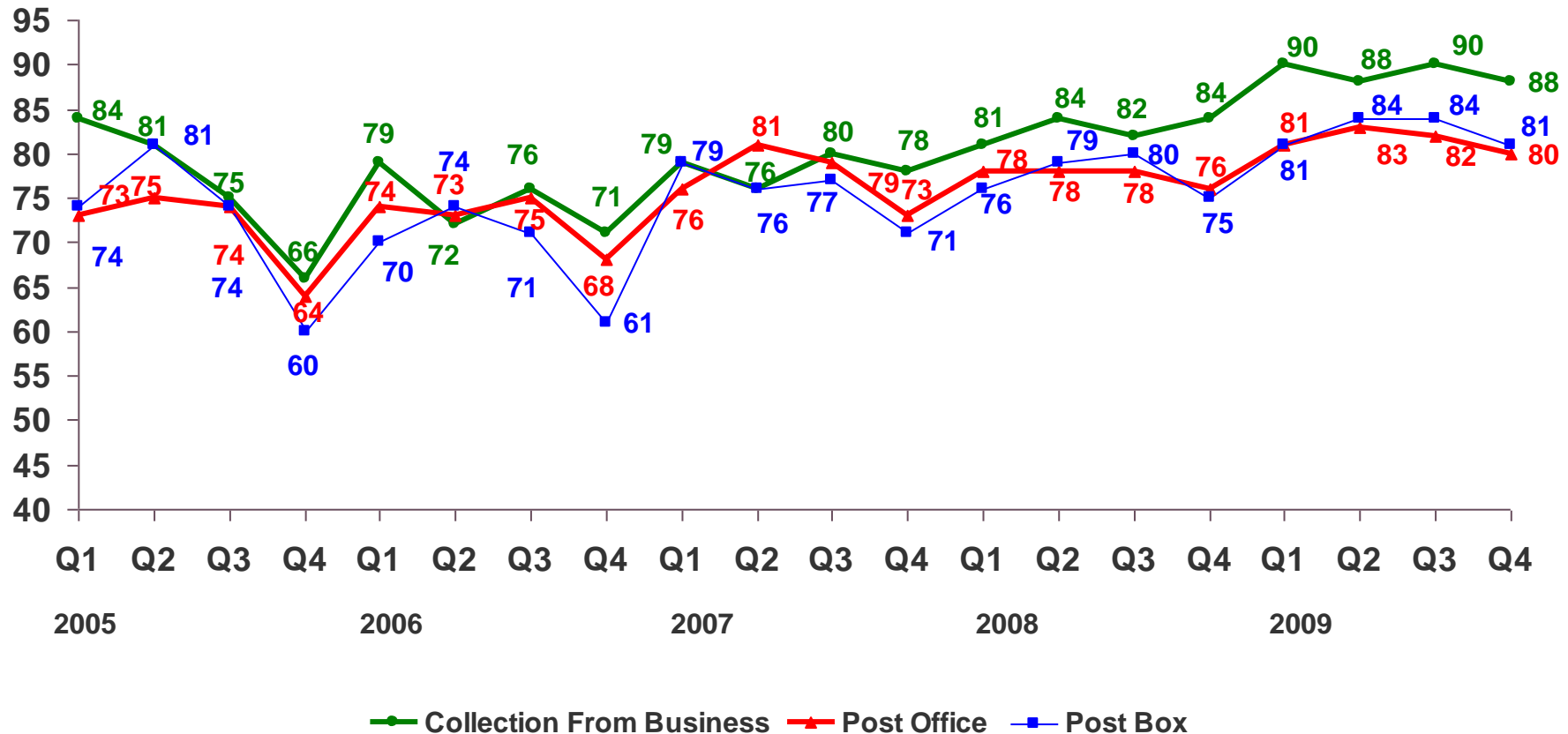
Items Posted On Or Between 1st Oct to 31st Dec, 2009

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	83% (+/-1.6%)	85% (+/-2.4%)	83% (+/-3.2%)
	From Dublin County	84% (+/-3.0%)	85% (+/-4.3%)	85% (+/-4.3%)
	From outside Dublin County	82% (+/-1.8%)	85% (+/-2.4%)	80% (+/-4.3%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 7,651
3. Dublin County consists of the administrative areas of the Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council and Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council.

Next Day Delivery (D+1)

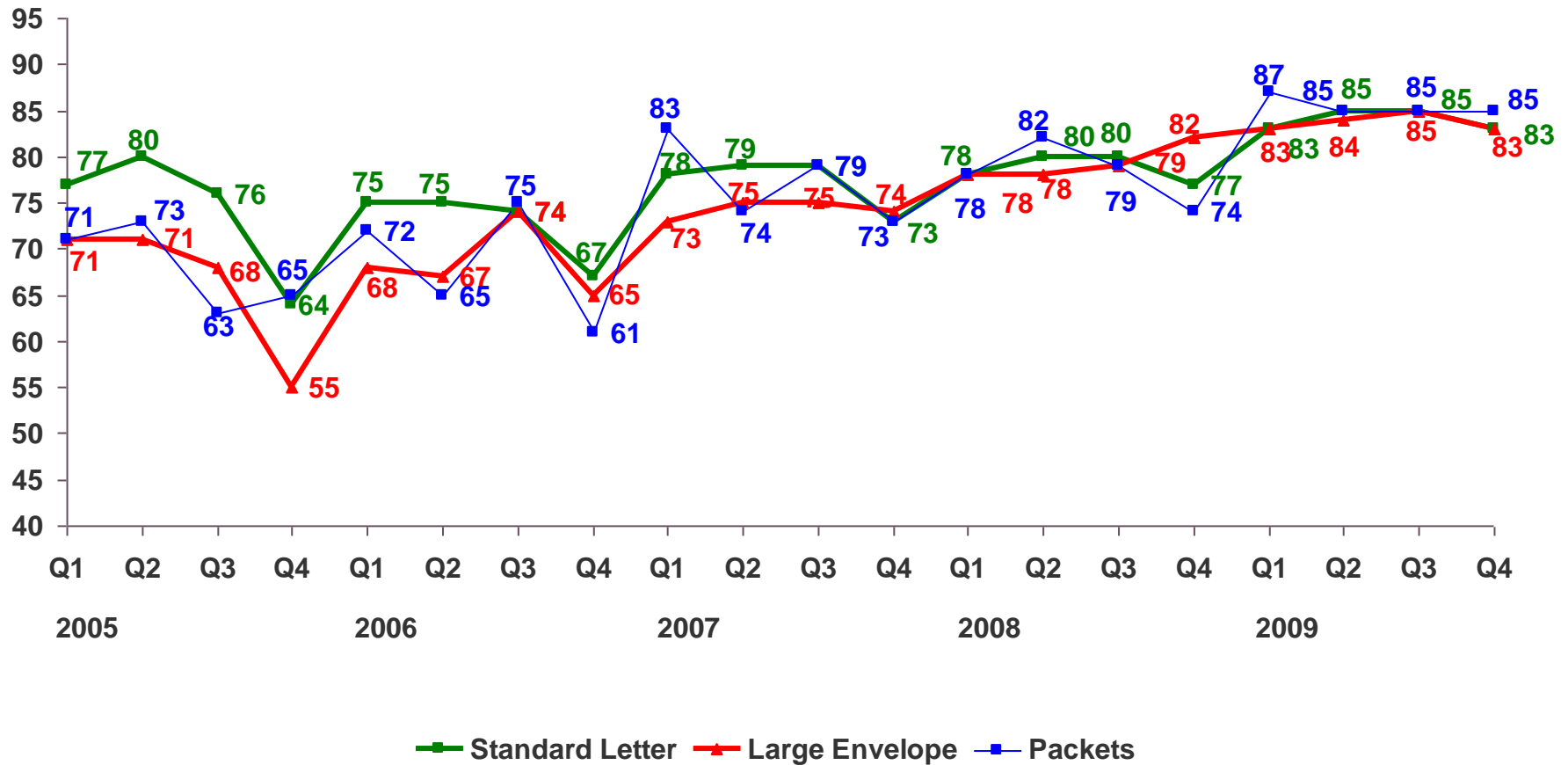
By Induction Method* - Jan 2005 to Dec 2009 By Qtr



* Metered Box items not reported due to small base sizes

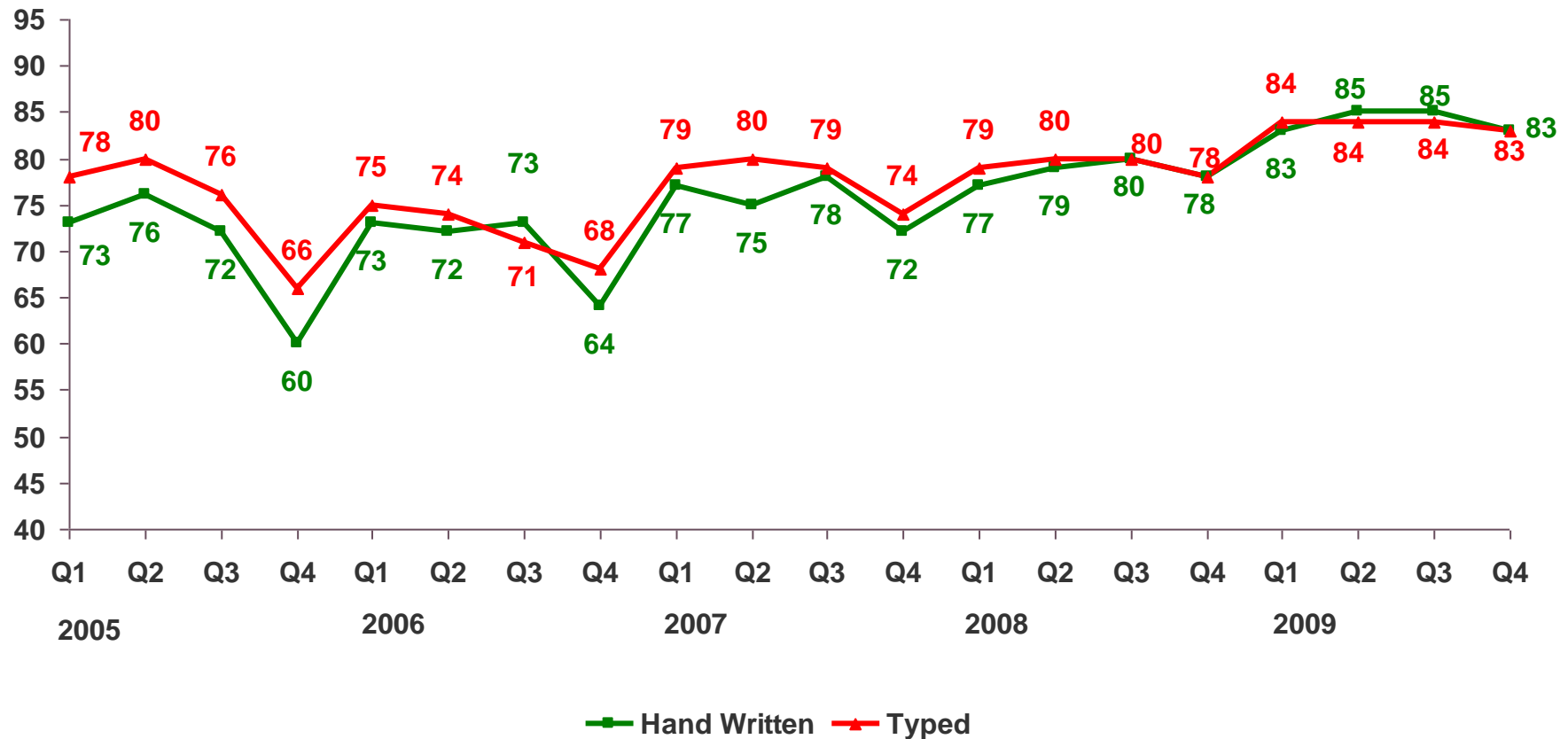
Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Mail Format* - Jan 2005 to Dec 2009 By Qtr



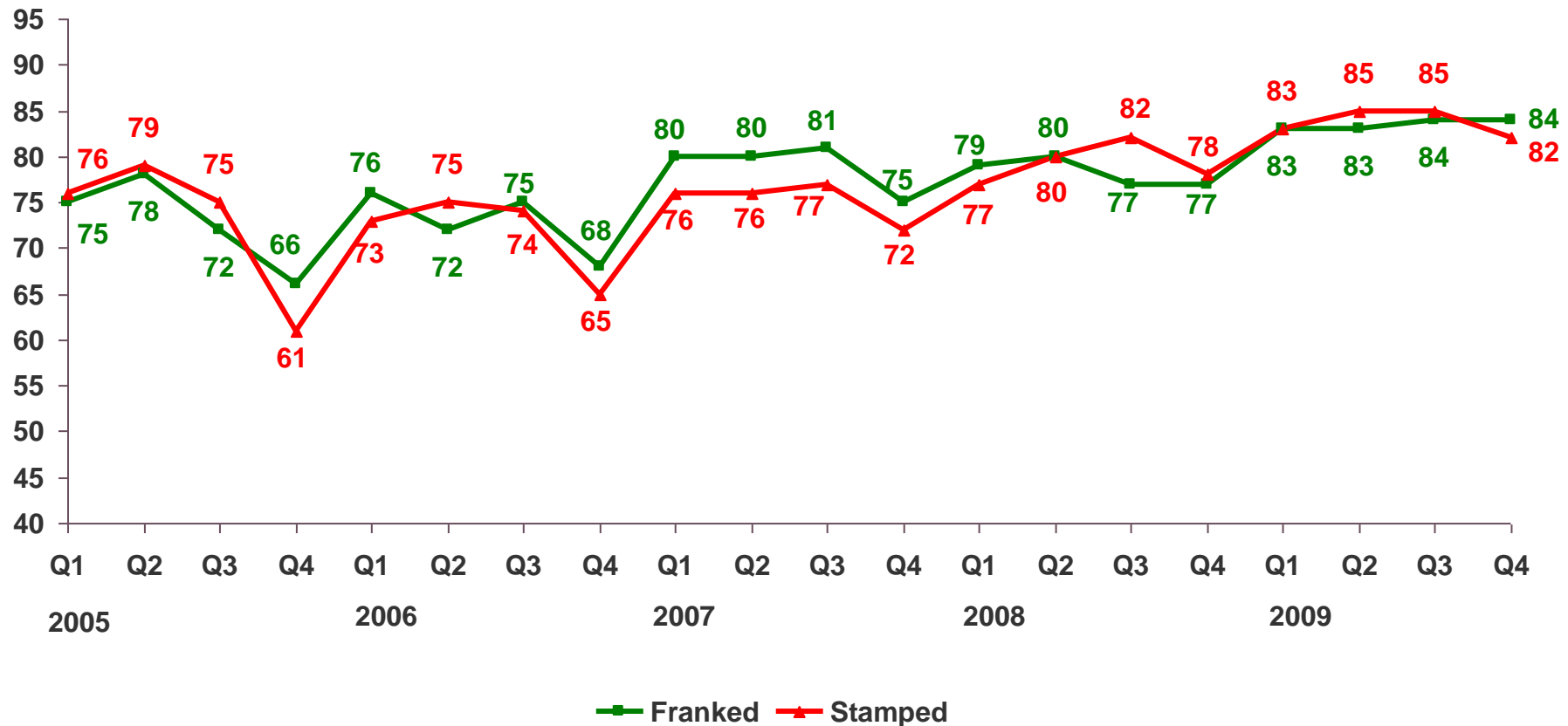
Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Address Method - Jan 2005 to Dec 2009 By Qtr



Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Payment Type - Jan 2005 to Dec 2009 By Qtr



Delivery Within Three Days (D+3) Items Posted On Or Between 1st Jul & 31st Dec, 2009

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	98% (+/-0.4%)	98% (+/-0.7%)	97% (+/-0.9%)
	From Dublin County	98% (+/-0.7%)	98% (+/-1.2%)	98% (+/-1.2%)
	From outside Dublin County	98% (+/-0.5%)	99% (+/-0.6%)	97% (+/-1.5%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 7,651
3. Dublin County consists of the administrative areas of the Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council and Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council.

Methodology & Project Team

- The method of monitoring is in full accordance with European and Irish Standard, I.S. EN 13850: 2002, 'Postal Services – Quality of Service – Measurement of transit time of end-to-end services for single piece priority mail and first class mail'.

Calculation Of Transit Time

- From the 1st September 2005 onwards mail posted on Saturday and Sunday are treated as mail posted on Monday. This change reflects the fact that there is no longer a weekend collection service. The Last Time of Posting (LTOP) for next-day delivery is clearly displayed on pillar-boxes and states 'No weekend or public holiday collections or deliveries'. Any test mail items posted on a Saturday, Sunday or Public Holiday, delivered on the next working day will be treated as a D+0 item. D+0 items are included in the D+1 figures for the purposes of calculating next-day delivery.

Sample Design

- The sample design corresponds with the most accurate and up-to-date estimates of real mail flow and discriminant characteristics provided by An Post. The sample employs strict proportionality across all key characteristics. Discriminant characteristics are defined as:
 - Method of posting
 - Method of addressing
 - Envelope colour
 - Envelope size
 - Method of payment
 - Day of week of posting

- Regional mail flows are quota controlled with weighting used to restore proportionality.

Geographical Distribution

- Stratified random sampling is employed to achieve the required panel geographical distribution. All addresses are verified with panellists for accuracy and completeness.

Calculation Of Results

- Accuracy of the transit time is assessed by calculating the variance of the estimator and the design factor, taking into account:
 - number of points of induction and receiving
 - correlation of test items

- Damian Loscher – Managing Director
- Louise Soye – Account Director
- Annette Farrell – Project Manager
- Silke Heinzl – Research Consultant

Independent Audit By Dr Myra O'Regan

- The aim of the project is to review the study carried out by Ipsos MRBI to monitor the quality of postal service in the Republic of Ireland with reference to the European and Irish Standard I.S. EN 13850: 2002, 'Postal Services - Quality of Service- Measurement of transit time of end-to-end services for single piece priority mail and first class mail' in 2009. This document will be referred to as the Standards from herein. Documents describing in detail the conduct of the study together with the raw data were received. These documents together with the Standards provided the basis for conducting the review.

- In order to estimate the quality of service, approximately 29,000 pieces of mail were posted and received within 30 days using a panel of private homes and businesses. The number of pieces of mail that are never posted and never delivered is not recorded. The dataset included 29,067 cases with 5 variables item id, sender id, receiver id, county of sender, county of receiver, the day of delivery. The study included private homes (43%) located throughout the country roughly in proportion to the density of the population and businesses (57%). Each of these induction points were required to send and receive items of mail.
- The type of mail was characterised by method of posting, method of addressing, envelope colour, envelope size, method of payment and day of week of posting where the distribution of each characteristic was determined by the relevant % in the population. The data are recorded and returned to the Dublin office where a number of quality control procedures were undertaken. The above methodology is considered to be appropriate and was implemented very effectively and thoroughly. At all stages a number of checks were carried out resulting in a large dataset. The panels were treated well with various incentives e.g. a magazine subscription.

- It is stated in the Standards that postal items not delivered by J+30 days can be excluded. However, it is suggested that the number of pieces of mail that are posted and never received is recorded if possible. The problems arise here from differentiating mail that is lost in the system or never posted. In my opinion the standards should be changed to take this into account. In an extreme example if 50% of the mail sent was not received within 30 days this would not be taken into account.

- Based on these data the percentage of mail delivered within one, or three days was computed. The overall figures were 84% (a 5% increase from last year) for the next day delivery and 98% (same as last year) for delivery within 3 days. The formula used to calculate the variance of these estimates was taken from the Standards. The estimated correlations r_1 and r_2 between on-time indicator variables for postal items sent from the same induction points to different receiving points and between on-time indicator variables for postal items sent from different induction points to the same receiving points respectively were calculated from the data. In all cases these correlations were positive. The resulting 95% confidence intervals were $\pm 0.9\%$ and $\pm 0.2\%$ for D+1 and D+3 respectively. Various other estimates are also provided. In my opinion these estimates provide a valid and reliable estimate of the accuracy and precision of the % of mail delivered by D+1 and D+3 where the % is based on all items delivered within D+30. As I mentioned the number of items lost should also be given.

- This is a great dataset and as I mention each year I would like to see it used for further analyses. I would suggest that the various types of mail are recorded together with the number of total pieces of mail sent.

- In my considered opinion the study titled Quality of the Postal in the Republic of Ireland in 2009 was carried out thoroughly and effectively. Although not specified in the Standards I would like to see the number of pieces mailed but not delivered within 30 days. The current methodology adopted conforms to the Standards. Again it may be informative to use the data collected to investigate the reasons for late delivery of mail.

Dr. Myra O' Regan



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