

# Republic Of Ireland Quality Of Postal Service Monitor - 2008 Report

Items Posted On Or Between  
1<sup>st</sup> January & 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008



# Introduction

- TNS 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 year to date findings for items posted on or between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008 and the quarterly findings for items posted on or between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008.
- TNS mrbi is an independent provider of business information and is a fully owned subsidiary of TNS 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 TNS mrbi, on its behalf.

# Summary - I

## Next Day Delivery – 2008 Annual Performance

- National Next Day Delivery performance for single piece priority mail stands at 79% for the full year 2008, which represents an increase of two percentage points on 2007, but still remains fifteen percentage points short of the target of 94%, as set by ComReg.
- Next Day Delivery performance in Dublin actually worsened in 2008. Compared with 2007, mail posted in Dublin for delivery within Dublin decreased by 2%, from 78% in 2007 to 76% in 2008, while mail posted from outside Dublin for delivery within Dublin decreased by 1%, from 75% in 2007 to 74% in 2008.
- At overall level Local to Local mail (mail for delivery within county of posting) continues to perform poorly at 79%, the same level as the nationwide ‘anywhere to anywhere’ figure. However a noticeable increase in Local to Local excluding Dublin was registered in 2008 (83%) over 2007 (79%)
- Comparison of induction methods shows that Collection from Business (83% Next Day Delivery) continues to outperform Post Office (77%) and Post Box (77%).
- From 2003 to 2006, the performance quality across the different types of mail formats (Standard Letters, Large Envelopes and Packets) varied noticeably. In 2007 these differences narrowed somewhat, and in 2008 we see that all formats are, more or less, performing on a par.

# Summary - II

## Delivery Within Three Days - 2008 Annual Performance

- 97.5% of single piece priority mail was delivered within three working days for the full year 2008, against a ComReg target of 99.5%.

## Next Day Delivery - Q4 2008 Performance

- For the period of 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008, Next Day Delivery for single piece priority mail stands at 78%, a decrease of 2% over Q3 2008 performance but an increase of 5% over Q4 2007.
- Compared with the previous quarter, the following shifts are observed for the Next Day Delivery in Q4 2008 across the different variables;
  - The Post Box induction method has fallen from 80% in Q3 2008 to 75% in Q4 2008, while Collection From Business has increased by two percentage points to 84%.
  - Performance of Packets has decreased from 79% last quarter to 74% this quarter and performance of Standard Letters has fallen by three points to 77%. On the other hand, Large Envelopes experienced an increase in performance from 79% to 82%.

# Summary - III

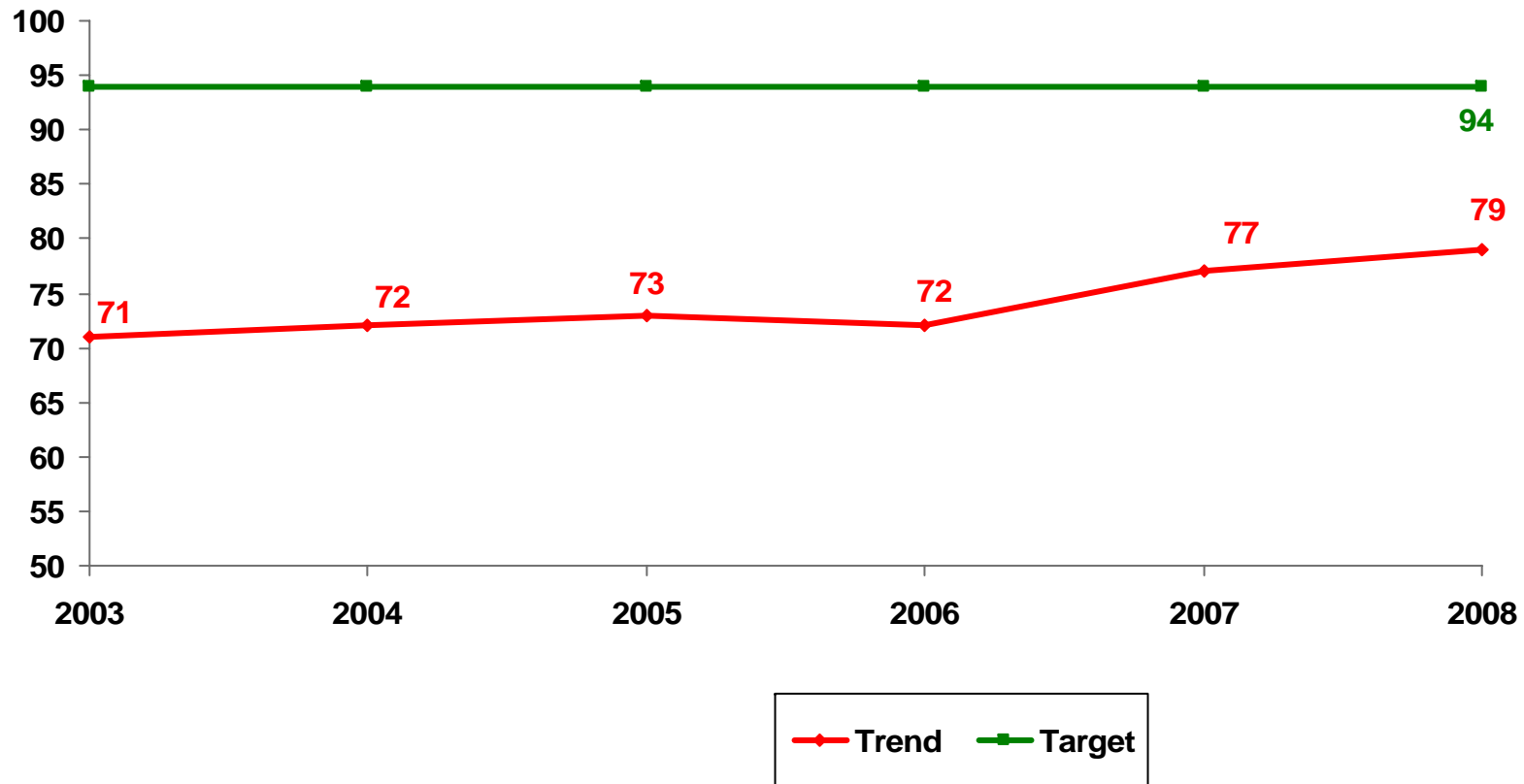
## Next Day Delivery - Q4 2008 Performance (Continued)

- The following changes between Q4 2008 and Q4 2007 were recorded;
  - Comparing regional mail flows, the largest increase in Next Day Delivery figures has occurred for local mail excluding Dublin (posted within the County for delivery within the County), from 75% in Q4 2007 up to 83% in Q4 2008. However, performance in Dublin for the same segment showed no improvement in Q4.
  - Collection From Business has increased from 78% to 84%; Post Box induction is up from 71% to 75%; Post Office induction has improved by three percentage points to 76%.
  - Large Envelope Mail has improved by eight percentage points, from 74% to 82%; Standard Letters have improved by four percentage points, to 77%; Packets performance has increased from 73% to 74%.

# Findings – Full Year Comparison

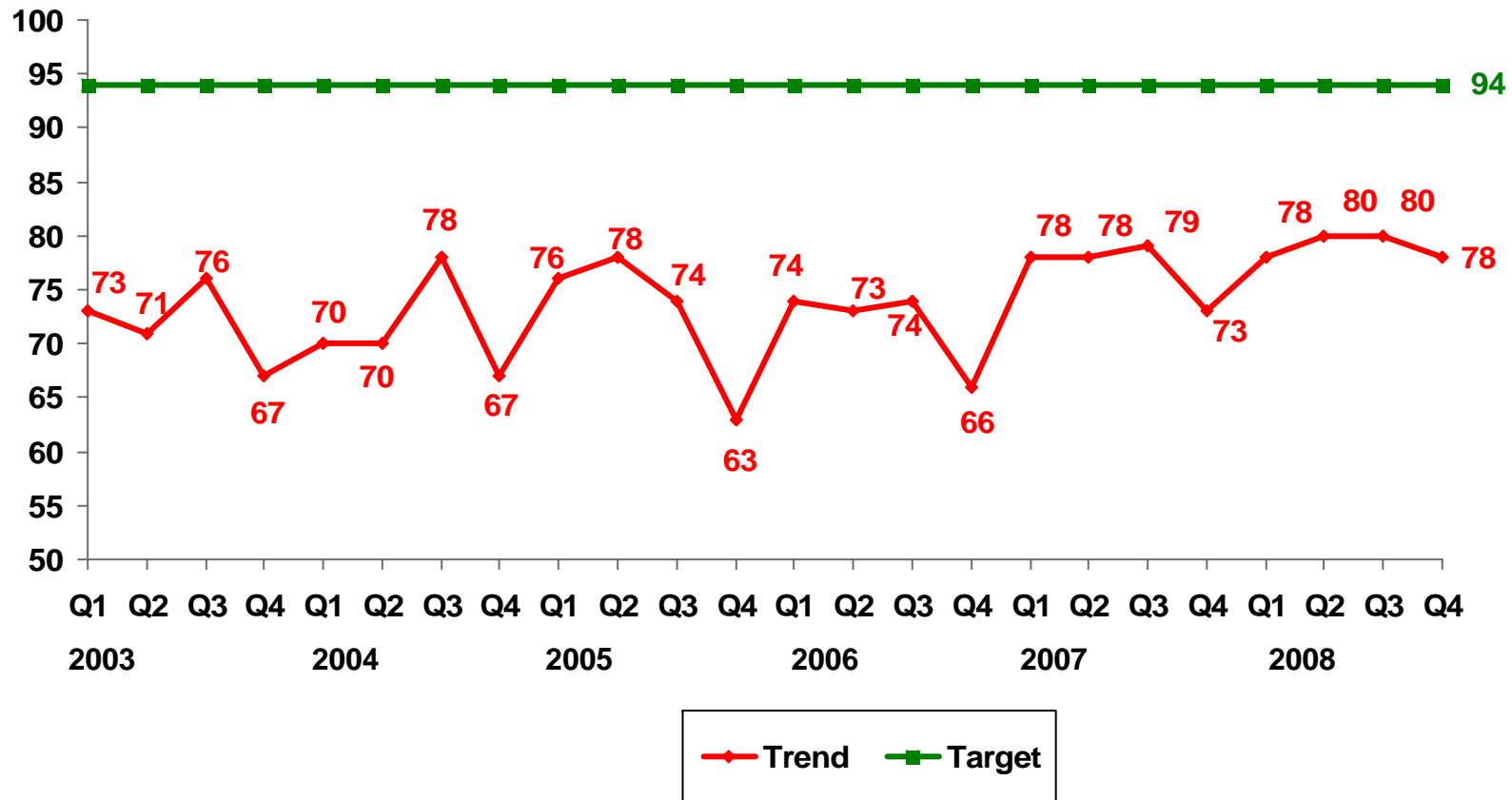
# National Next Day Delivery (D+1)

Full Year – 2003 to 2008



# National Next Day Delivery (D+1)

January 2003 to December 2008 By Quarter





# Quality Of Postal Service Targets

With Quarterly & Full Year An Post Performance for RoI

	TARGET	ACHIEVED Q4 '08	ACHIEVED JAN-DEC '08
<b>Next Day Delivery (D+1)</b>			
From Anywhere to Anywhere	94%	78%	79%
From Dublin County to Anywhere	94%	75%	77%
From outside Dublin County to Anywhere	94%	79%	80%
<b>Delivery Within 3 Days</b>			
From Anywhere to Anywhere	99.5%	97.2%	97.5%

# Next Day Delivery Nationally (D+1)

Items Posted On Or Between 1<sup>st</sup> January & 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
<b>POSTING (RoI)</b>	From Anywhere	<b>79%</b> (+/-1.0%)	<b>79%</b> (+/-1.5%)	<b>75%</b> (+/-2.1%)
	From Dublin county	<b>77%</b> (+/-2.0%)	<b>76%</b> (+/-2.8%)	<b>76%</b> (+/-2.8%)
	From outside Dublin County	<b>80%</b> (+/-1.0%)	<b>83%</b> (+/-1.3%)	<b>74%</b> (+/-2.5%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 29,263
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.

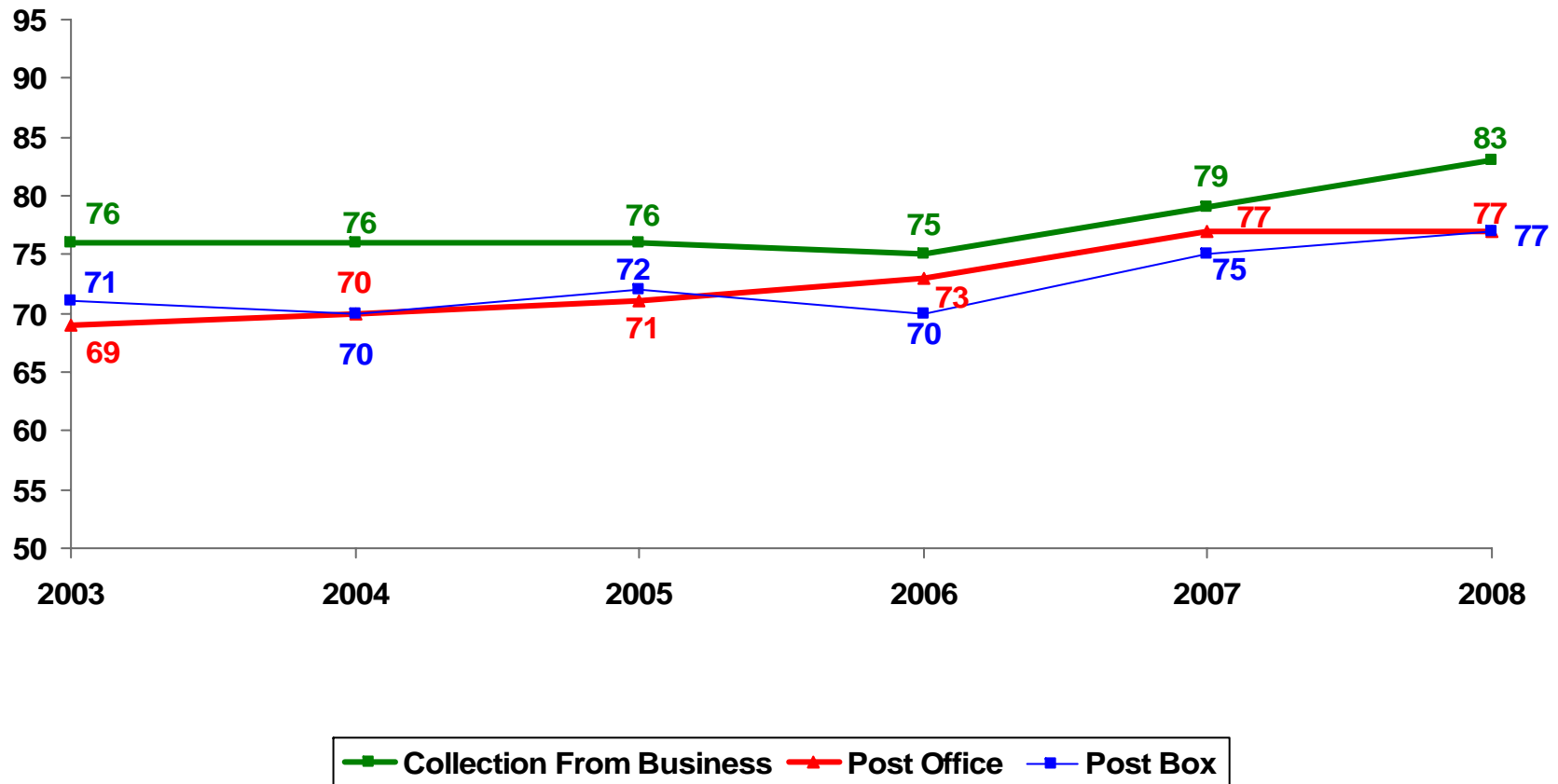
# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

## 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
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Anywhere to Anywhere	71	72	73	72	77	79
Anywhere to Local (Delivery within county of posting)	75	75	76	75	78	79
Anywhere To Dublin County	71	73	73	72	77	75
Dublin County to Anywhere	70	69	73	70	77	77
Dublin County to Dublin County (Local)	72	75	76	73	78	76
Outside Dublin County to Anywhere	73	73	73	75	77	80
Outside Dublin County to Local (Delivery within county of posting)	78	76	76	77	79	83
Outside Dublin County to Dublin County	68	70	68	70	75	74

# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

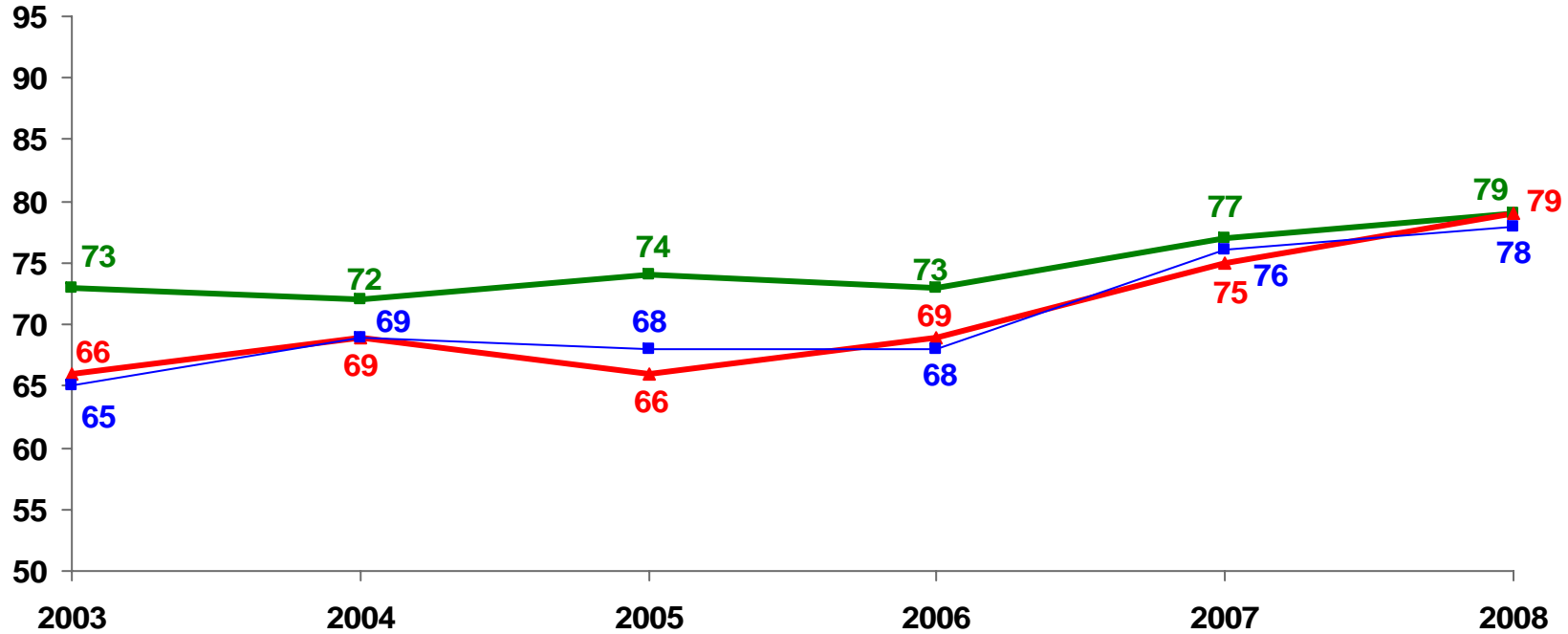
By Induction Method\* - 2003 to 2008



\* Metered Box items not reported due to small base sizes

# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Mail Format\* - 2003 to 2008



Standard Letter Large Envelope Packets

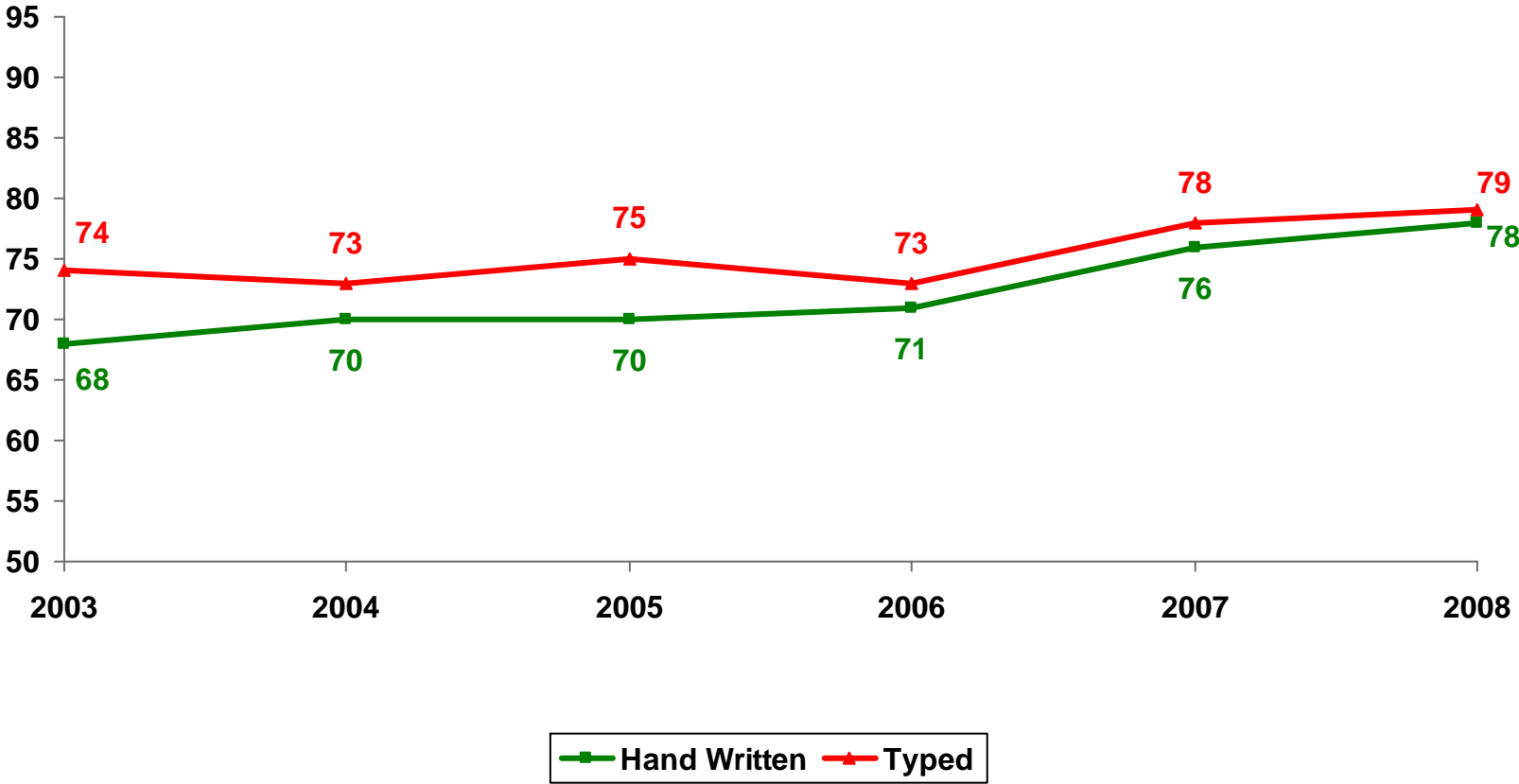


\*Standard Letter: Up to C5 size 162mm \* 235mm \* 5mm. Large Envelope: Up to 400mm \* 300mm \* 25mm. Packets: Max size (width + length + thickness) 900mm, Max length 600mm. In roll form (length + twice the diameter) 1040mm, Max length 900mm.

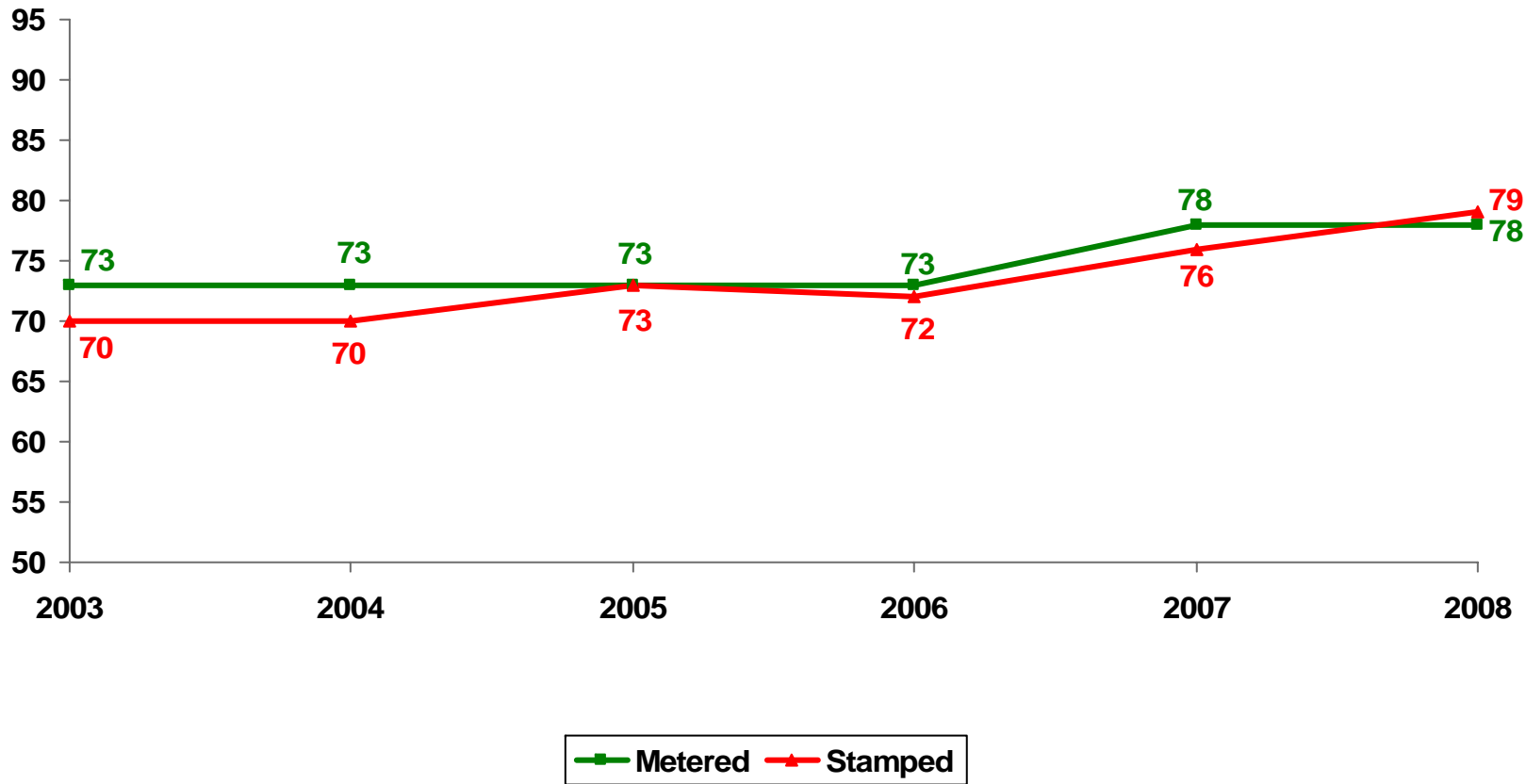
the sixth sense of business™

# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Address Method - 2003 to 2008



# Next Day Delivery (D+1) By Payment Method - 2003 to 2008



# Delivery Within Three Days (D+3)

Items Posted On Or Between 1<sup>st</sup> January & 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
<b>POSTING (RoI)</b>	From Anywhere	<b>98%</b> (+/-0.3%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.5%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.6%)
	From Dublin County	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.5%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.8%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.8%)
	From outside Dublin County	<b>98%</b> (+/-0.3%)	<b>98%</b> (+/-0.5%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.7%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 29,263
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

# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

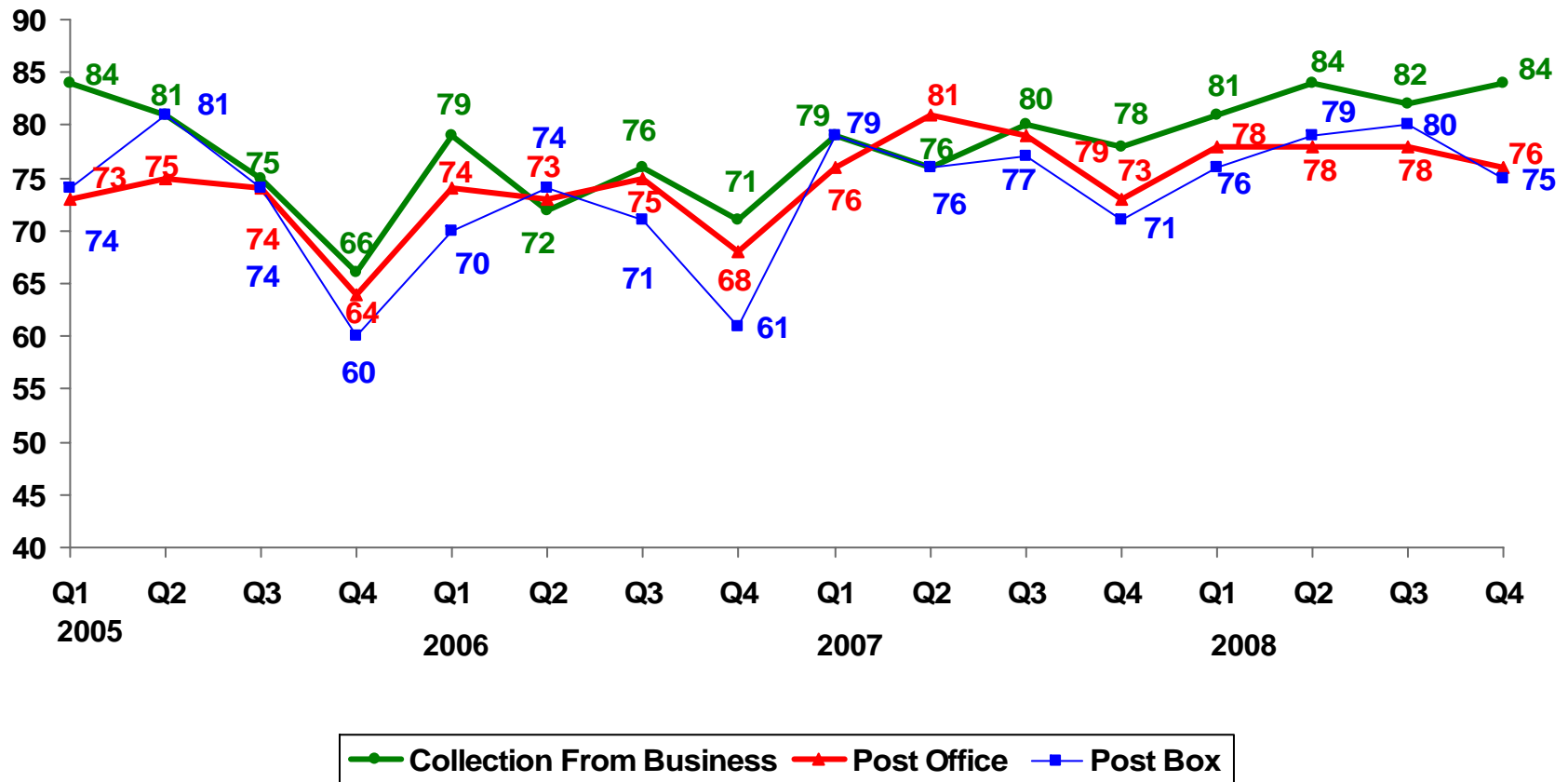
Items Posted On Or Between 1<sup>st</sup> October & 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
<b>POSTING (RoI)</b>	From Anywhere	<b>78%</b> (+/-2.1%)	<b>78%</b> (+/-3.1%)	<b>74%</b> (+/-4.2%)
	From Dublin County	<b>75%</b> (+/-4.2%)	<b>74%</b> (+/-5.9%)	<b>74%</b> (+/-5.9%)
	From outside Dublin County	<b>79%</b> (+/-1.9%)	<b>83%</b> (+/-2.6%)	<b>75%</b> (+/-4.5%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 7,578
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)

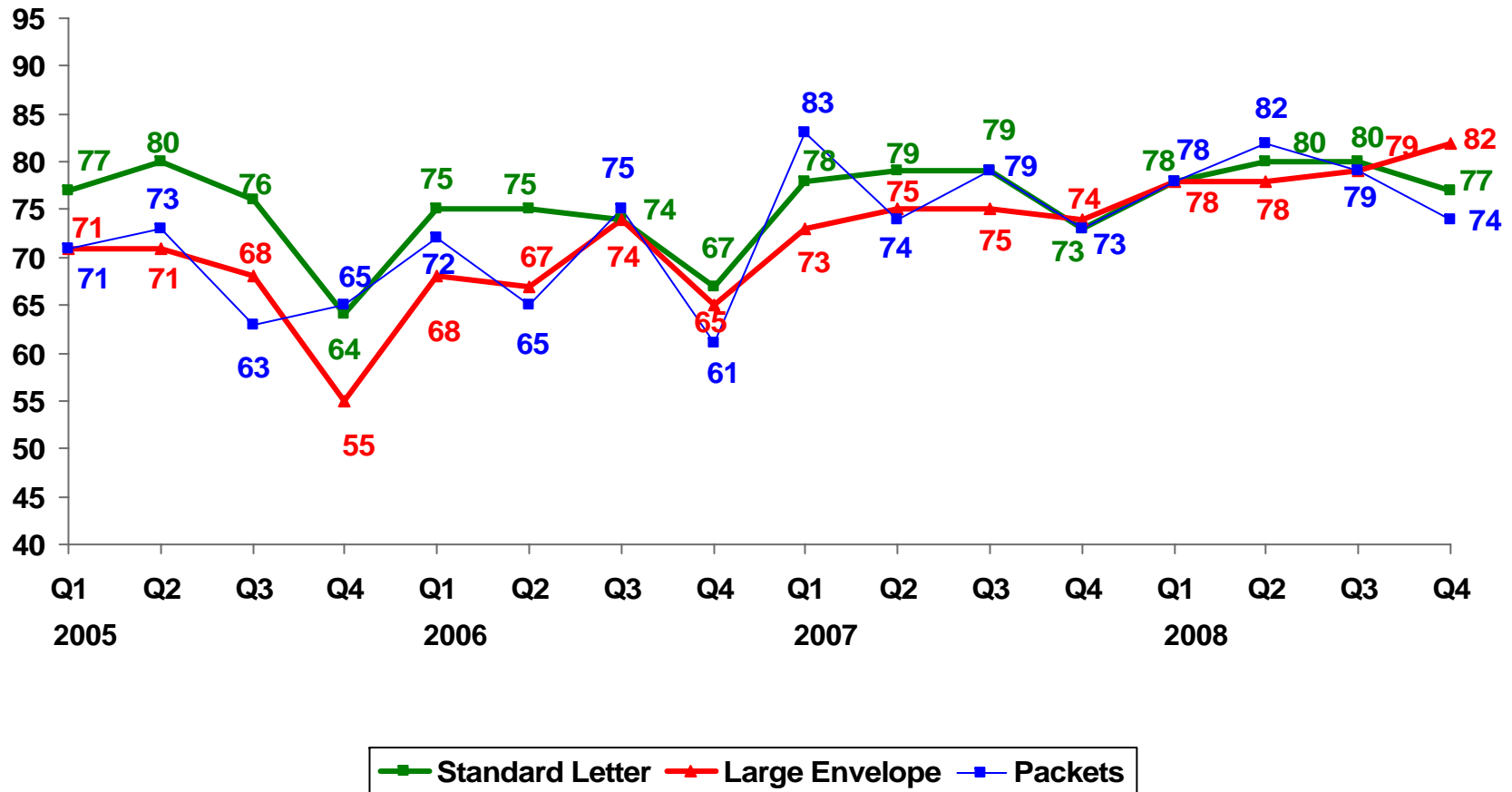
By Induction Method\* - January 2005 to December 2008 By Quarter



\* Metered Box items not reported due to small base sizes

# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Mail Format\* - January 2005 to December 2008 By Quarter

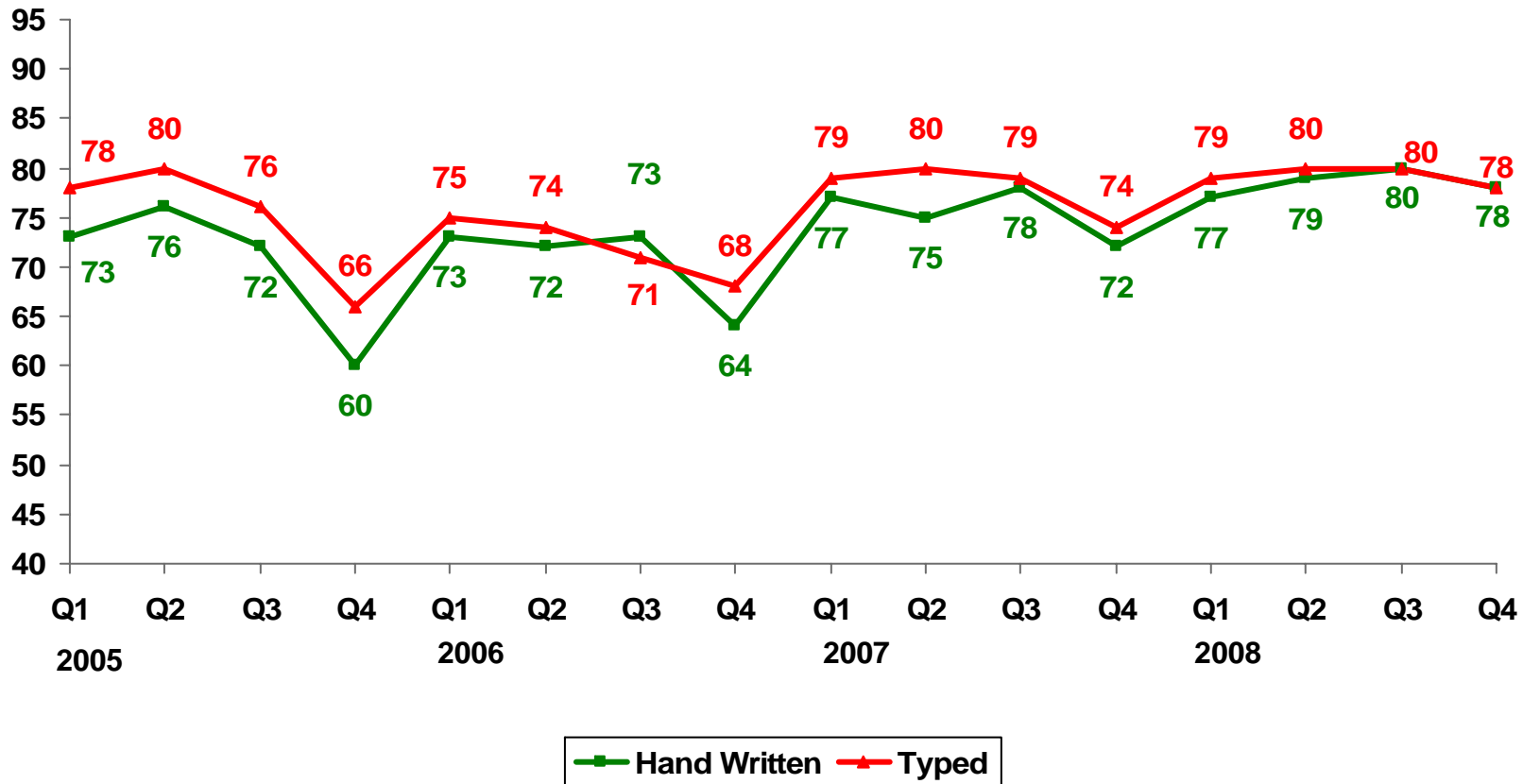


\*Standard Letter: Up to C5 size 162mm \* 235mm \* 5mm. Large Envelope: Up to 400mm \* 300mm \* 25mm. Packets: Max size (width + length + thickness) 900mm, Max length 600mm. In roll form (length + twice the diameter) 1040mm, Max length 900mm.

the sixth sense of business™

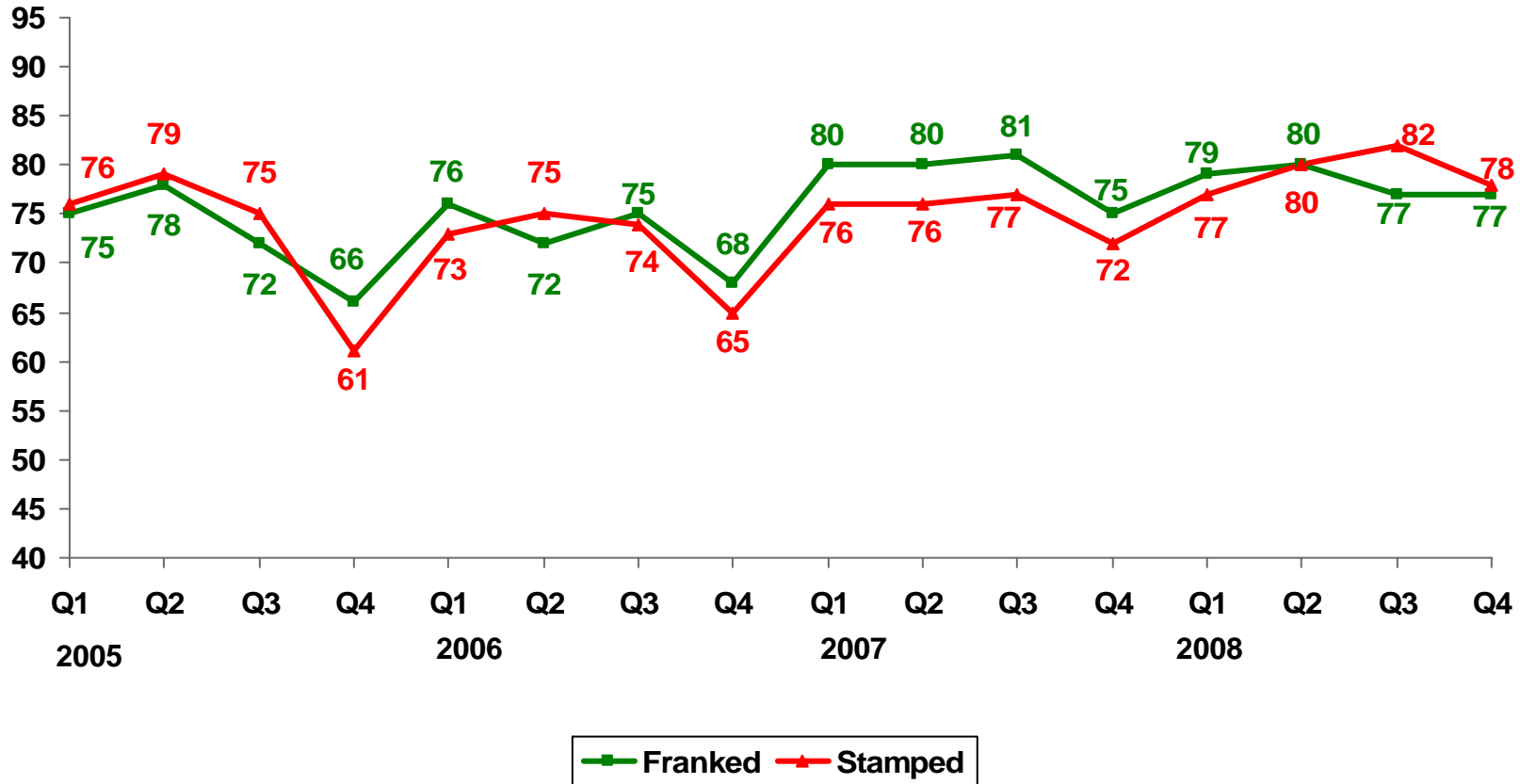
# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Address Method - January 2005 to December 2008 By Quarter



# Next Day Delivery (D+1)

By Payment Type - January 2005 to December 2008 By Quarter



# Delivery Within Three Days (D+3)

Items Posted On Or Between 1<sup>st</sup> October & 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2008

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
<b>POSTING (RoI)</b>	From Anywhere	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.6%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.9%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-1.2%)
	From Dublin County	<b>97%</b> (+/-1.1%)	<b>96%</b> (+/-1.7%)	<b>96%</b> (+/-1.7%)
	From outside Dublin County	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.6%)	<b>97%</b> (+/-0.8%)	<b>98%</b> (+/-1.0%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 7,578
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



# Methodology

- 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.

# Methodology (Cont'd)

## *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.

# Methodology (Cont'd)

## *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

# Project Team

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

Independent Audit By Dr Myra O'Regan

# Introduction

- The aim of the project is to review the study carried out by TNS/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 2008. 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.

# Methodology

- 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 29,263 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 and businesses located throughout the country roughly in proportion to the density of the population and businesses. 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.

# Examination of the Data

- 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.



# Calculation of Estimates

- Based on these data the percentage of mail delivered within one, two or three days was computed. The overall figures were 79% (a 2% increase from last year) for the next day delivery and 98% for delivery within 3 days (a 1% increase from last year). 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. The resulting 95% confidence intervals were  $\pm 1.0\%$  and  $\pm 0.3\%$  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.

# Dataset

- This is a great dataset and as I mention each year I would like to see it used for further analyses.

# Conclusion

- In my considered opinion the study titled Quality of the Postal in the Republic of Ireland in 2008 was carried out thoroughly and effectively. As I suggested last year I would like to see the number of pieces mailed but not delivered within 30 days. This is not an absolute necessity as the methodology currently 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

# Republic Of Ireland Quality Of Postal Service Monitor - 2008 Report

Items Posted On Or Between  
1<sup>st</sup> January & 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008

