

ComReg Doc
No. 12/31

Republic Of Ireland Quality Of Postal Service Monitor - 2011 Report

Items Posted On Or Between 1st January 2011 & 31st December 2011

- 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 + A1:2007, '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 an annual and quarterly/ year-to-date basis.
- This report represents the full year performance and the quarterly performance figures for items posted on or between 1st January and 31st December 2011 and between 1st October and 31st December 2011.
- Ipsos MRBI is an independent provider of business information and is a fully owned subsidiary of Ipsos Group.
- To comply with EN 13850 + A1:2007, 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 – 2011 Full Year Performance (Q1 – Q4 2011)

- The Next Day Delivery performance of single piece priority mail stands at 83% for the period January 1st to December 31st 2011. This is two percentage points below the 2010 score, which excluded the two periods of unusual weather conditions (*28th November-15th December and 17th December-30th December inclusive*). The ComReg target for Next Day Delivery is 94%.
- Mail posted for delivery within the county of posting (excluding Dublin) was the best performing mail flow at 84%, while mail posted in Dublin County for delivery in Dublin County came in at 83%.
- Items posted from Outside Dublin to Dublin performed poorest with a Next Day Delivery score of 82%.
- Comparing 2011 against 2010 across the different variables for Next Day Delivery, the following shifts are observed:
 - The induction method Collection from Business remains steady at 87%, while Post Office declined by one percentage point to 83% and Post Box decreased by three percentage points to 81%.
 - At 84%, performance of Packets remains stable. Standard letters and Large Envelopes both decreased by two percentage points and now stand at 83% and 82% respectively.
 - Performance of Franked mail fell by one point to 84%, while Stamped mail declined from 85% to 82%.

Delivery Within Three Days – 2011 Full Year Performance (Q1 – Q4 2011)

- 98.2% of single piece priority mail was delivered within three working days for the timeframe January 1st to December 31st 2011. The ComReg target is 99.5%.

Next Day Delivery – Q4 2011 Compared With Q4 2010 (1st October – 31st December 2011)

- Compared to the performance measured in Q4 2010, performance of Next Day Delivery of single piece priority mail in Q4 2011 has decreased by five percentage points, from 84% down to 79%. Q4 2011 performance, at 79%, is 1% higher than the level of performance achieved for Q4 2008.
- Comparing these two quarterly results (Q4 2011 versus Q4 2010), the following shifts are observed for Next Day Delivery across the different variables:
 - Performance of all three induction methods of Collection from Business, Post Office and Post Box declined in Q4 2011. Post Box experienced the largest decrease, from 84% in Q4 2010 to 75% in Q4 2011. Post Office and Collection from Business both decreased by two percentage points to 80% and 85% respectively.
 - In Q4 2011 performance of Large Envelopes fell to 77%, from 84% in the same quarter last year. Performance of Packets declined from 83% to 76%. Standard Letters also declined, albeit not to the same extent; from 85% in the comparative period in 2010 to 80% in Q4 2011.
 - Performance of Stamped mail declined by seven percentage points to 76%. Franked mail has fallen to 83%, from 87% in Q4 2010

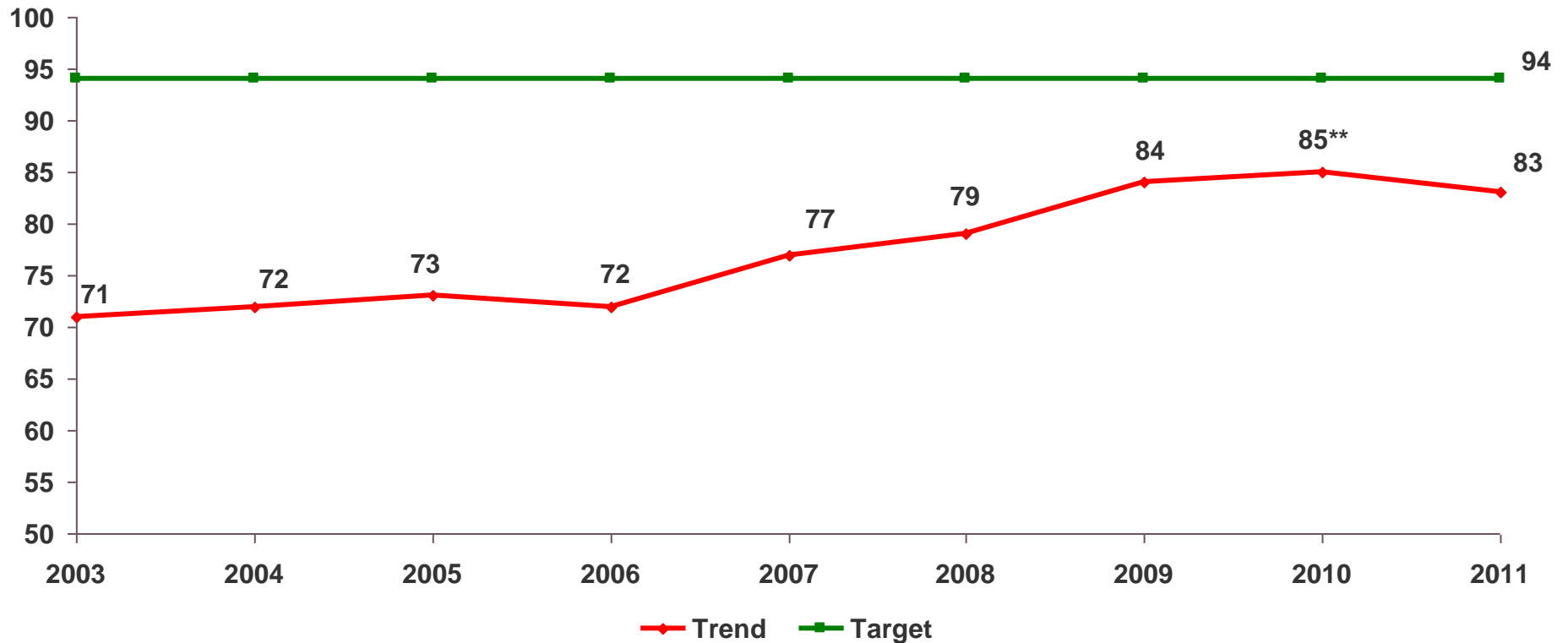
Next Day Delivery – Q4 2011 Compared With Q3 2011

- For the period 1st October to 31st December 2011 a performance of 79% was recorded for the Next Day Delivery of single piece priority mail, compared to a performance of 84% for the period 1st July to 30th September 2011.
- The mail flow that saw the largest decrease in performance levels for Next Day Delivery from Q3 2011 to Q4 2011 was Outside Dublin to Dublin (from 83% to 75% in Q4 2011).

Findings

– Full Year Comparisons

National Next Day Delivery (D+1) Full Year – 2003 to 2011



**The result shown for 2010 excludes items posted on or between 28th November-15th December and 17th December-30th December due to the unusual weather conditions experienced in these two periods.

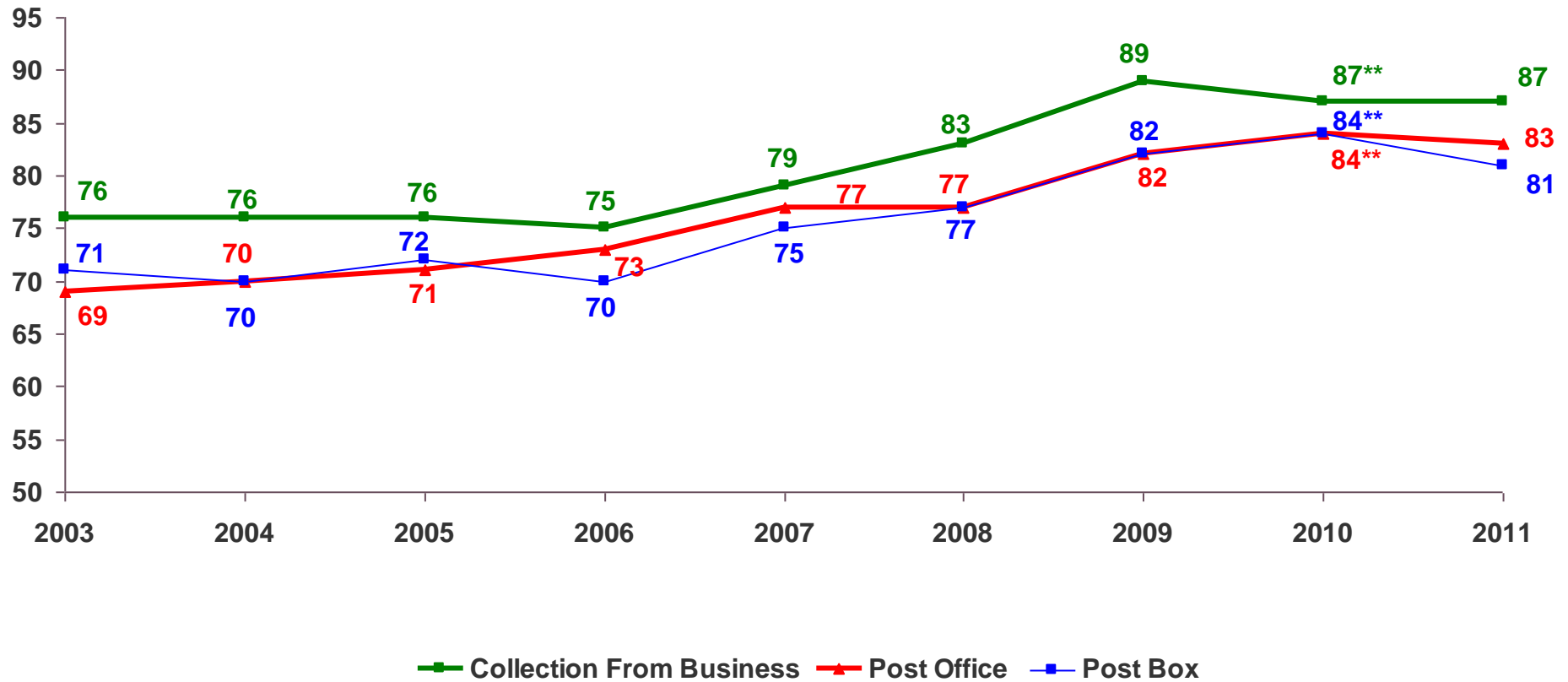
Next Day Delivery (D+1)

Items Posted On Or Between 1st Jan to 31st Dec 2011

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	83% (+/-0.8%)	84% (+/-1.2%)	83% (+/-1.5%)
	From Dublin County	83% (+/-1.4%)	83% (+/-2.0%)	83% (+/-2.0%)
	From Outside Dublin County	83% (+/-1.0%)	84% (+/-1.5%)	82% (+/-2.0%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 29.530
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.

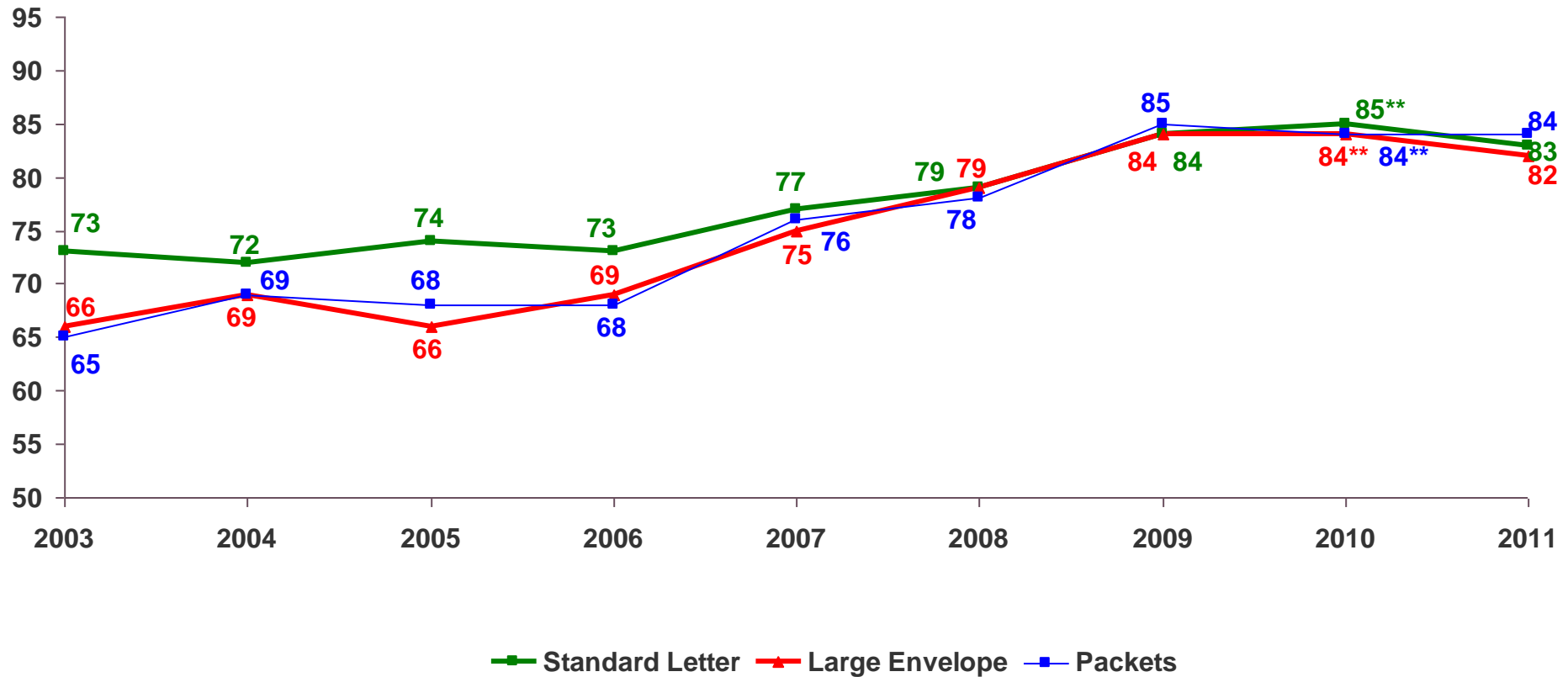
Next Day Delivery (D+1) - By Induction Method* 2003 to 2011



* Metered Box items not reported due to small base sizes

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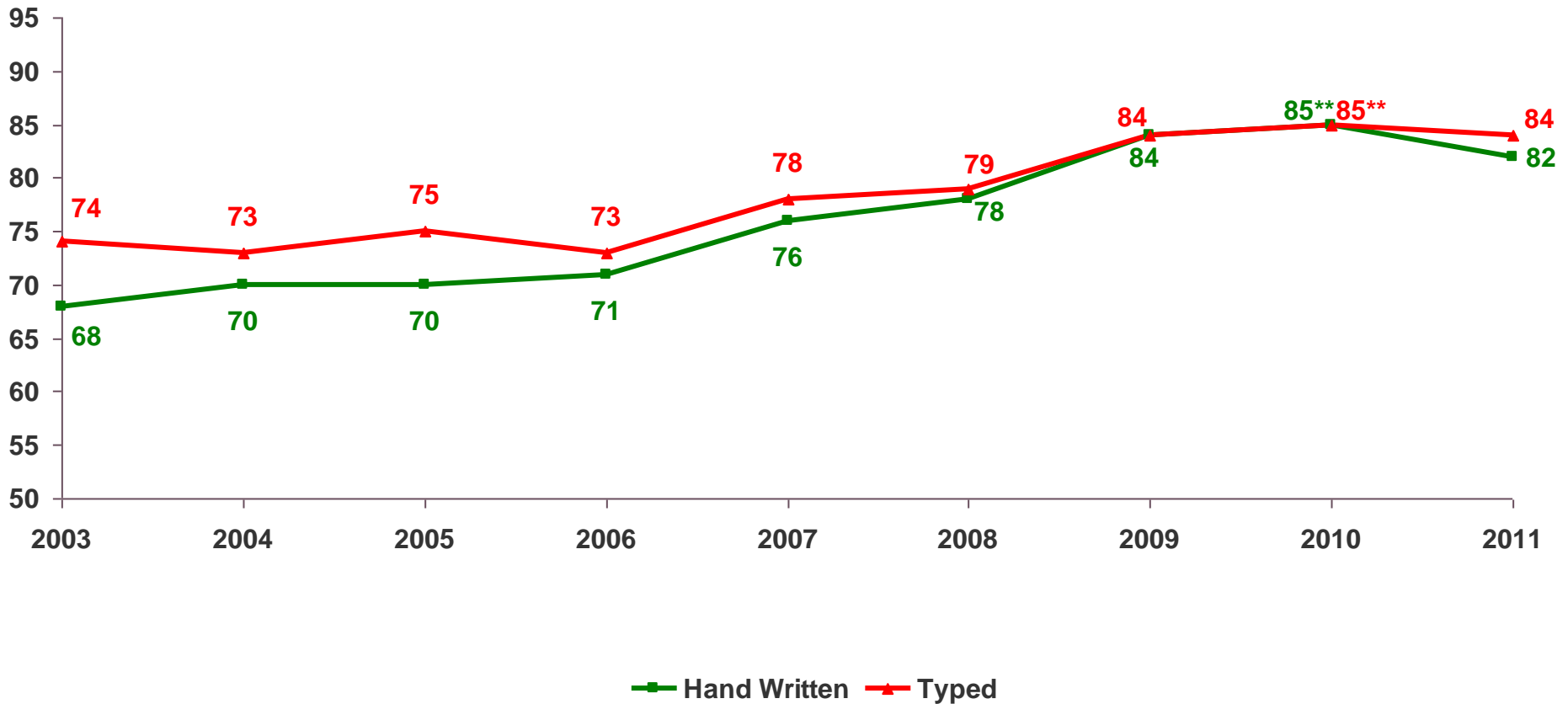
Next Day Delivery (D+1) - By Mail Format* 2003 to 2011



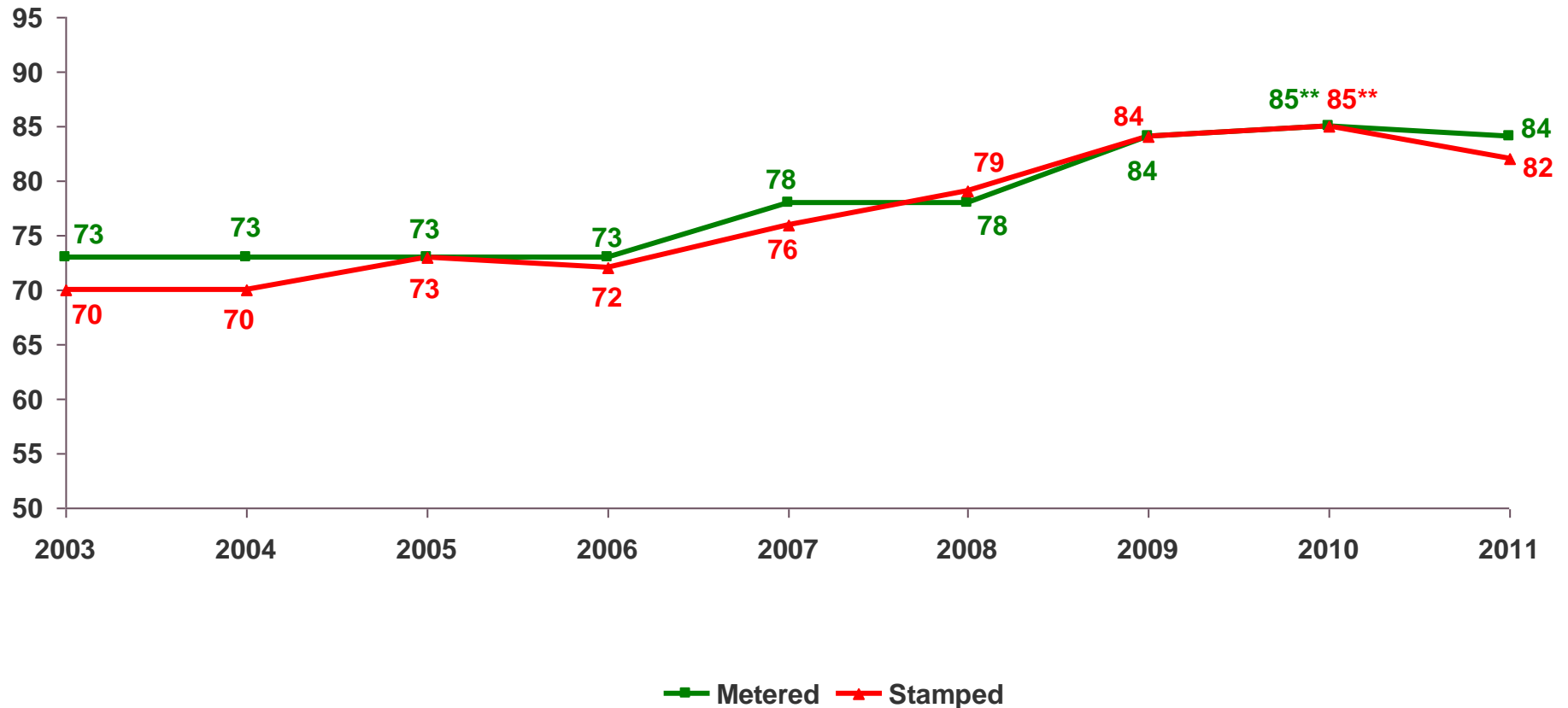
*Standard Letter: Up to C5 size 162mm * 235mm * 5mm. Large Envelope: Up to 400mm * 300mm * 25mm.
Packets: Max size (width + length + thickness) 900mm, Max length 600mm. In roll form (length + twice the diameter) 1040mm, Max length 900mm.

**The result shown for 2010 excludes items posted on or between 28th November-15th December and 17th December-30th December due to the unusual weather conditions experienced in these two periods.

Next Day Delivery (D+1) - By Address Method 2003 to 2011



Next Day Delivery (D+1) - By Payment Method 2003 to 2011



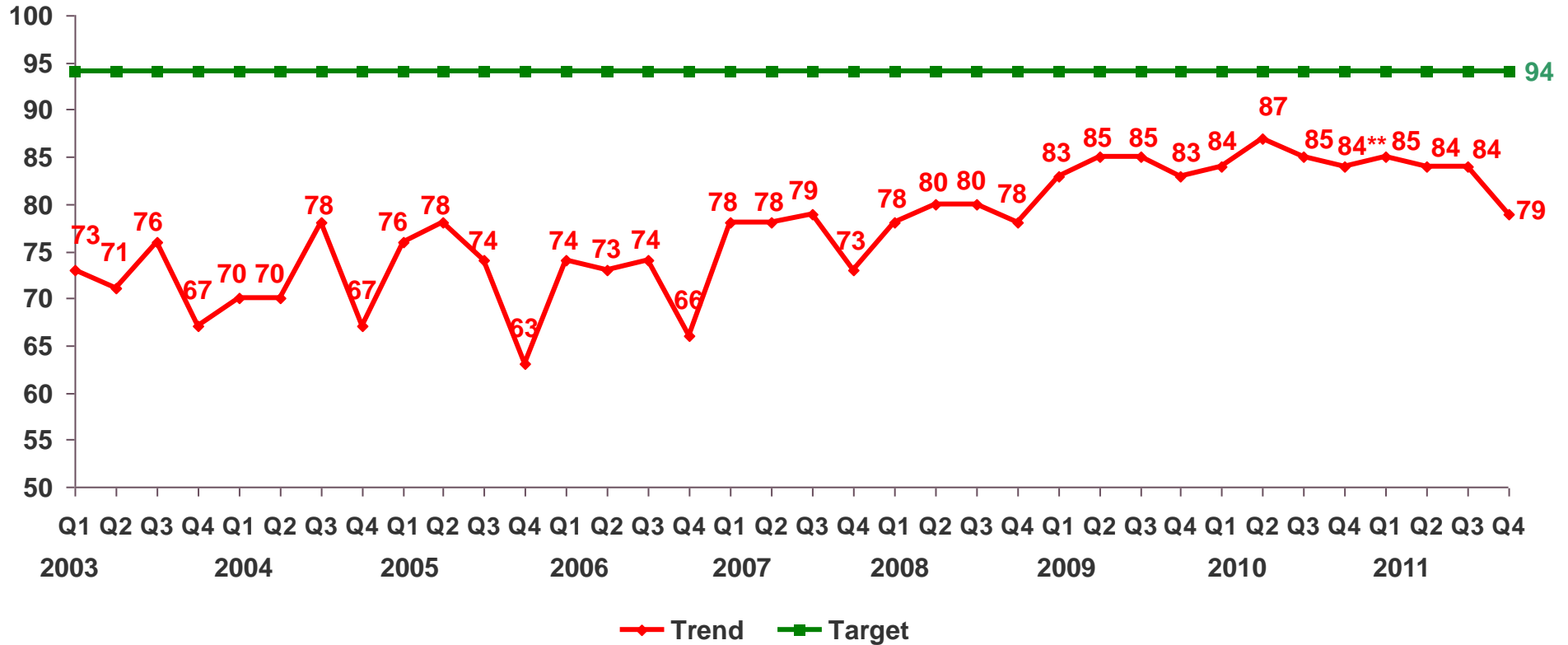
Delivery Within Three Days (D+3) Items Posted On Or Between 1st Jan & 31st Dec 2011

		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% (+/-0.5%)
	From Dublin County	98% (+/-0.4%)	98% (+/-0.6%)	98% (+/-0.6%)
	From outside Dublin County	98% (+/-0.3%)	98% (+/-0.4%)	98% (+/-0.6%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 29,530
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

National Next Day Delivery (D+1) - Jan 2003 to Dec 2011 By Quarter



Quarterly & Full Year An Post Performance for Rol

	TARGET	ACHIEVED Q4 2011	ACHIEVED Jan – Dec 2011
		Next Day Delivery (D+1)	
From Anywhere to Anywhere	94%	79%	83%
From Dublin County to Anywhere	94%	79%	83%
From outside Dublin County to Anywhere	94%	79%	83%
		Delivery Within Three Working Days (D+3)	
From Anywhere to Anywhere	99.5%	97.3%	98.2%

Next Day Delivery (D+1)

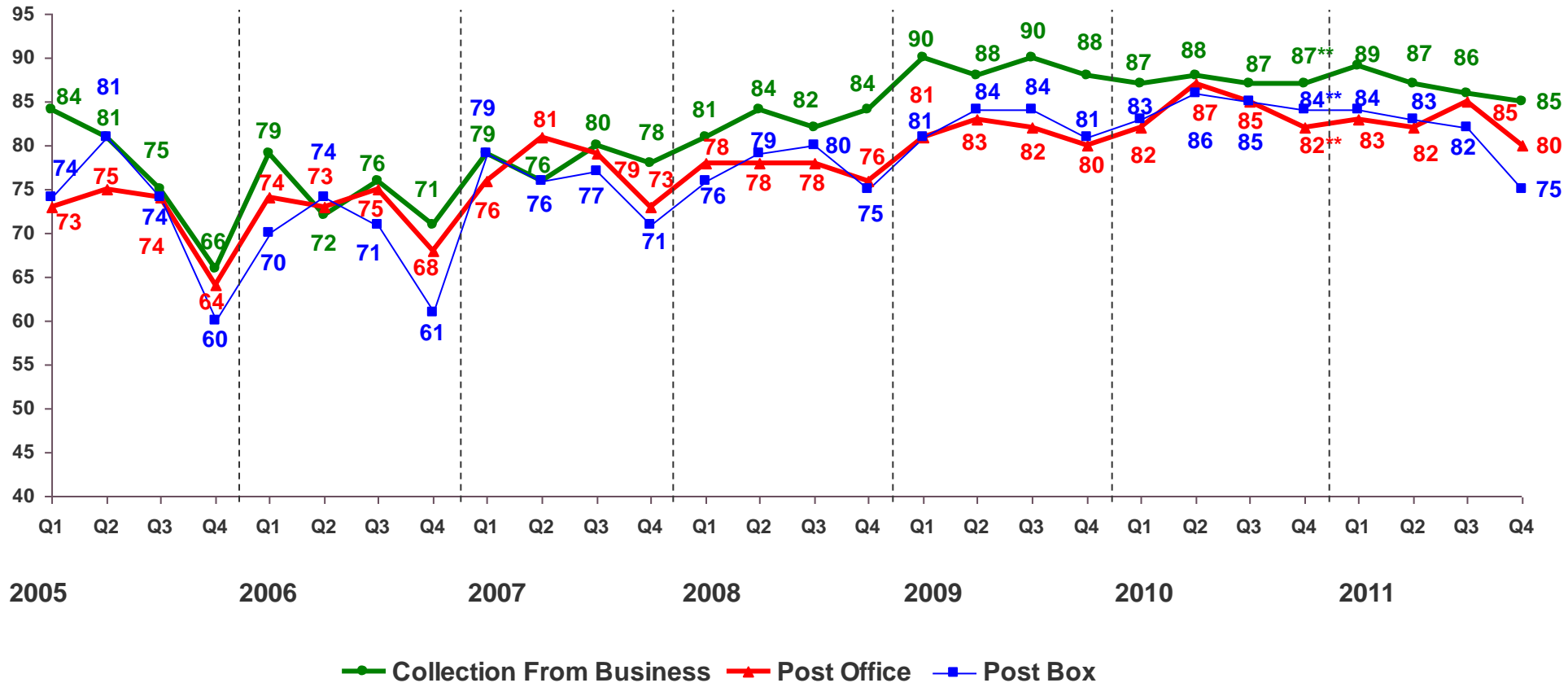
Items Posted On Or Between 1st Oct to 31st Dec 2011

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	79% (+/-1.9%)	80% (+/-3.0%)	78% (+/-3.8%)
	From Dublin County	79% (+/-3.3%)	79% (+/-5.1%)	79% (+/-5.1%)
	From Outside Dublin County	79% (+/-2.1%)	81% (+/-3.3%)	75% (+/-4.9%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 7,616
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 2011 By Qtr

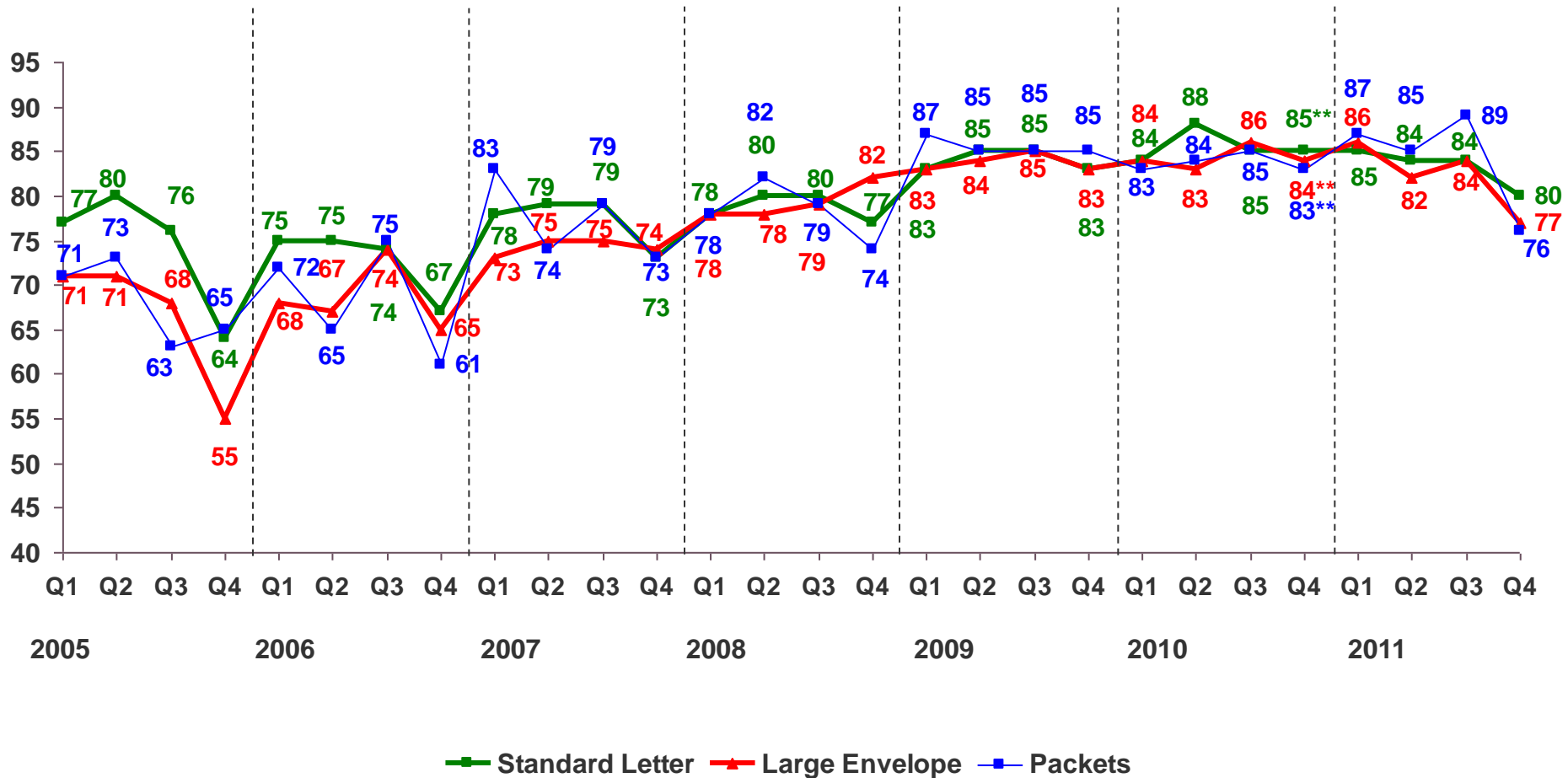


* Metered Box items not reported due to small base sizes

**The result shown for Q4 2010 excludes items posted on or between 28th November-15th December and 17th December-30th December due to the unusual weather conditions experienced in these two periods.

Next Day Delivery (D+1)

- By Mail Format* Jan 2005 to Dec 2011 By Qtr



*Standard Letter: Up to C5 size 162mm * 235mm * 5mm. Large Envelope: Up to 400mm * 300mm * 25mm.

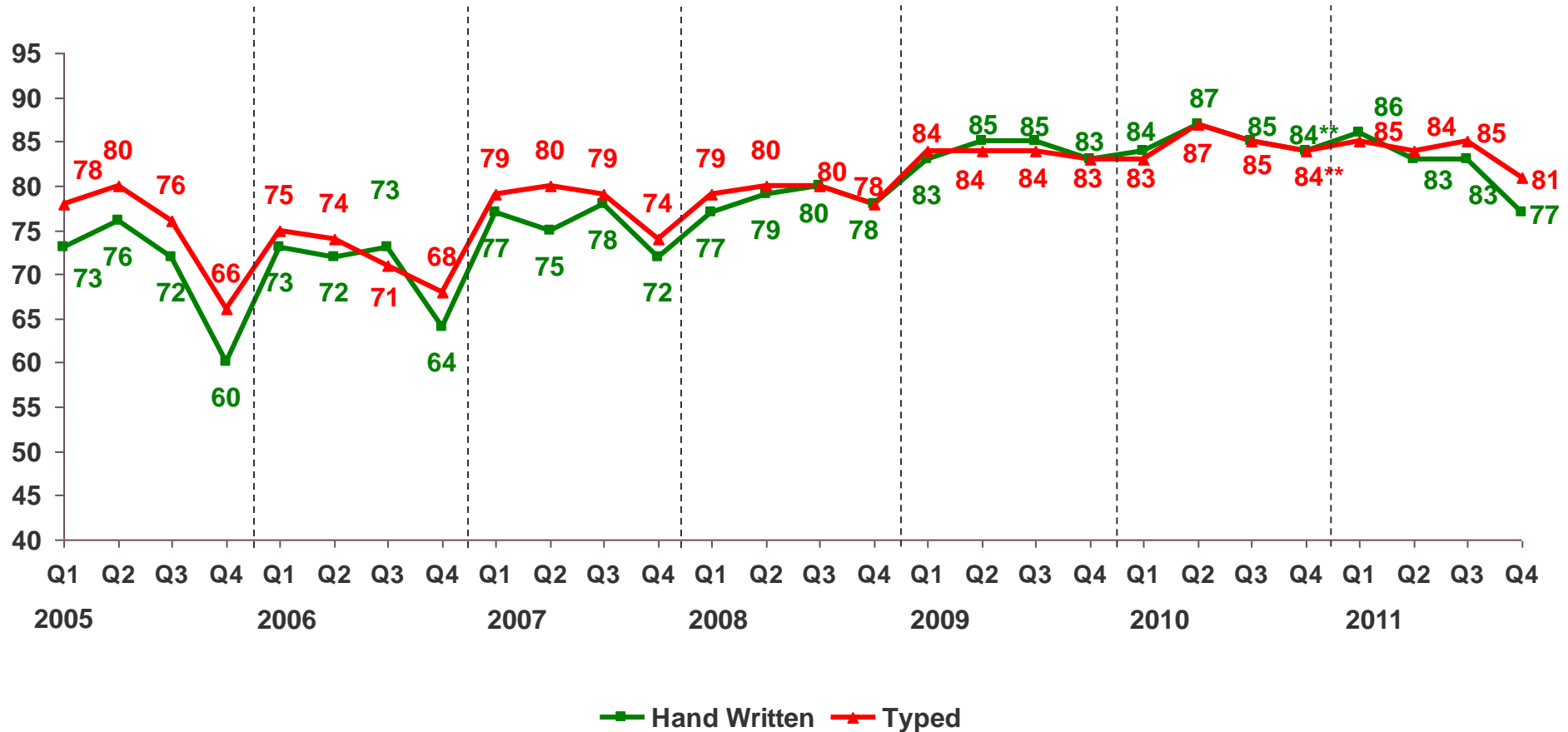
Packets: Max size (width + length + thickness) 900mm, Max length 600mm. In roll form (length + twice the diameter) 1040mm, Max length 900mm.

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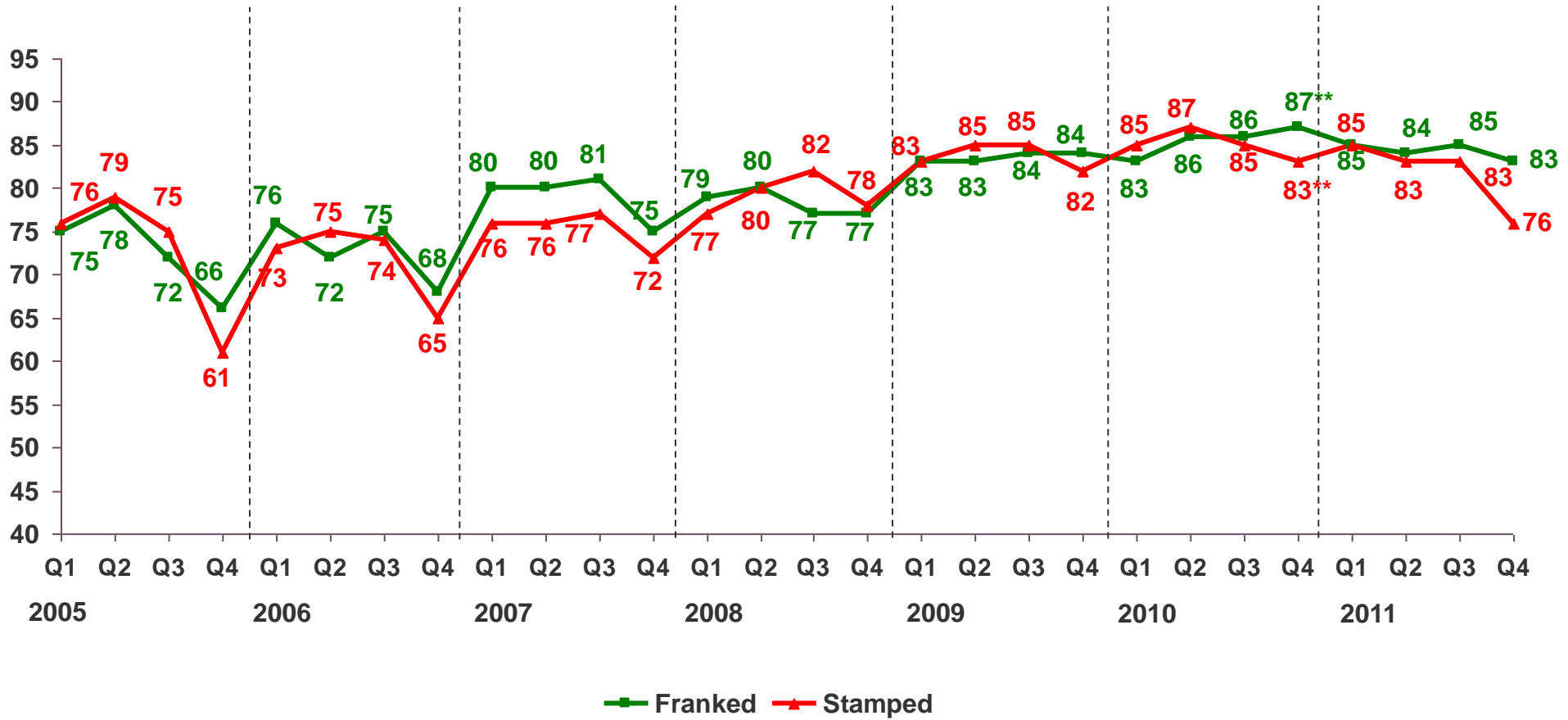
Next Day Delivery (D+1)

- By Address Method Jan 2005 to Dec 2011 By Qtr



Next Day Delivery (D+1)

– By Payment Type Jan 2005 to Dec 2011 By Qtr



Delivery Within Three Days (D+3) Items Posted On Or Between 1st Oct & 31st Dec 2011

		DELIVERY (RoI)		
		To Anywhere	To Local (Delivery within county of posting)	To Dublin County
POSTING (RoI)	From Anywhere	97% (+/-0.5%)	97% (+/-0.8%)	97% (+/-1.1%)
	From Dublin County	98% (+/-0.9%)	97% (+/-1.4%)	97% (+/-1.4%)
	From outside Dublin County	97% (+/-0.6%)	97% (+/-1.0%)	96% (+/-1.6%)

1. () figures in brackets relate to accuracy levels at 95% confidence
2. Total number of effective observations – 7,616
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 + A1:2007 '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
- Tara Harris – Panel Manager
- Pauline Egan – Research Consultant

Independent Audit By Dr Myra O'Regan

- The aim of the project is to review the study carried out by Ipsos MRBI in 2011 to monitor the quality of postal service in the Republic of Ireland with reference to the “European and Irish Standard I.S. EN 13850 +A1: 2007, Postal service - Quality of service - Measurement of the transit time of end-to end-services for single piece priority mail and first class mail”. 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 and an Excel spreadsheet were received. These documents together with the Standards provided the basis for conducting the review.

- In order to estimate the quality of service, 29,530 pieces of mail were posted and received within 30 days using a panel of private homes and businesses
- As in other years the number of pieces of mail that are posted and never delivered is not recorded. The dataset included 29,530 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 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.

- Based on these data the percentage of mail delivered within one, or three days was computed for 2011. The overall figures were 83% ($\pm 0.8\%$) for the next day delivery and 98% ($\pm 0.2\%$) 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. All these correlations were positive for the D+1 results.
- 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.

- In my considered opinion the study titled Quality of the Postal in the Republic of Ireland in 2011 was carried out thoroughly and effectively. Although not specified in the Standards I would like to see the number of pieces mailed sent but not delivered within 30 days. The current methodology adopted conforms to the Standards. 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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