

# PVI Primer

For the uninitiated into this overlooked collecting field, Postage Validation Imprints.

These were introduced in 1992 in the San Diego area (April 16th according to John Hotchner) and then at Daytona Beach and Gainesville in Florida in the first week of May. Experimental PVI's began in Flushing, NY in August of 1974 (Ken Lawrence).

There are several different types but most contain the same information.



The figure above shows one type (which I'll designate Type IA) which contains information in three columns. To the left is the USPS emblem and the mail class code\*. To the right is the information concerning date, postage paid, originating zip code, originating town and the ID number of the IRT (Integrated Retail Terminal). In the center is the bar code and receiving zip code. At the top is a pink line, this can vary from light pink to deep red. Note that it is not cancelled - the normal situation. Note how the ink has a tendency to fade in these early PVI's.

\*The USPS seems somewhat loathe to use the Mail Class code, a code so hidden that postal clerks apparently do not know it, usually going with the defaults of 0000 and 9999. Of the 1,578 pieces in my collection, (last updated September 26th, 2006) the breakdown is as follows (note the EKU's (earliest known usages) and MRU's (most recent usages) are for those in my collection only):

Code	Total	Type IA	Type IB	Type IC	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type V	Type VI
0000	690	65 EKU 08/11/93 MRU 04/13/06	82 EKU 09/09/93 MRU 03/05/03	9 EKU 11/04/93 MRU 01/10/05	103 EKU 12/12/96 MRU 09/09/06	330 EKU 10/10/97 MRU 09/23/06	3 EKU 03/05/03 MRU 11/18/05	99 EKU 08/15/00 MRU 08/22/06	
9130	2				2 EKU 08/29/05 MRU 09/20/05				
9131	1				1 EKU 02/20/04				

					MRU 02/20/04				
9140	21				20 EKU 11/30/00 MRU 08/27/05	1 EKU 05/18/06 MRU 05/18/06			
9141	2								
9142	3				3 EKU 03/18/02 MRU 07/25/05				
9240	1						1 EKU 05/24/05 MRU 05/24/05		
9241	2					2 EKU 09/28/04 MRU 10/13/04			
9242	10					9 EKU 09/13/99 MRU 03/21/06			
9243	1					1 EKU 04/09/04 MRU 04/09/04			
9244	34					34 EKU 11/30/99			

						MRU 06/08/06			
9251	22				22 EKU 03/11/03 MRU 05/10/06				
9252	25				25 EKU 02/06/03 MRU 12/21/05				
9261	494	2 EKU 10/30/04 MRU 11/15/04				465 EKU 03/25/00 MRU 06/13/06	10 EKU 12/05/03 MRU 12/05/05	14 EKU 02/14/04 MRU 04/28/06	2 EKU 02/03/05 MRU 09/19/05
9262	71	1 EKU 01/26/05 MRU 01/26/05				69 EKU 09/07/99 MRU 06/20/06		1 EKU 08/27/05 MRU 08/27/05	
9263	10					10 EKU 02/22/02 MRU 07/29/06			
9264	78	1 EKU 02/08/05 MRU 02/08/05			2 EKU 12/30/03 MRU 11/20/04	75 EKU 05/24/02 MRU 04/05/06			
9265	4					4 EKU 02/09/00			

						MRU			
						05/12/05			
9267	21					18		3	
						EKU 06/20/02		EKU 02/25/03	
						MRU 12/02/05		MRU 12/07/05	
9268	3					3			
						EKU 11/20/03			
						MRU 11/22/05			
9999	84				84				
						EKU 05/05/00			
						MRU 09/08/05			
Total	1578	68	80	9	260	1009	13	112	2
		Type IA	Type IB	Type IC	Type II	Type III	Type IV	Type V	Type VI

**If anyone has numbers not listed above, please inform me.**

**Now, I find that the USPS has begun putting a code for countries into the area where the receiving zip is used on the vertically bar coded PVI's.**

**Again, I have no idea as to why specific numbers have been assigned to certain countries.**

**So far we have:**

**Australia at 00404**

**Austria at 00113**

**Chile at 00457**

**Denmark at 00105**

**Eire (at least Dublin) at 00126**

**United Arab Emirates at 00195**

**United Kingdom at 00122 and 00144**

Click [here](#) to see some examples.



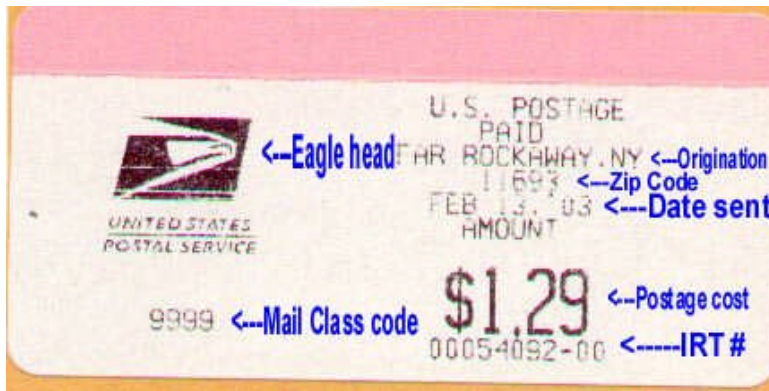
OK, the above example I have designated Type IB, with full eagle and two columns.



The above is Type IC, full eagle and bar code along base.



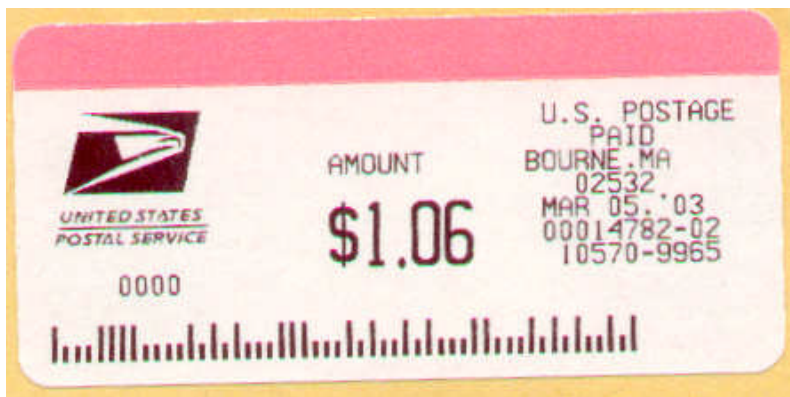
It seems that the same machine was capable of producing types IA and IB at the same time.



The next type has just the head of the Eagle. I will designate this as Type II. Note only two columns.



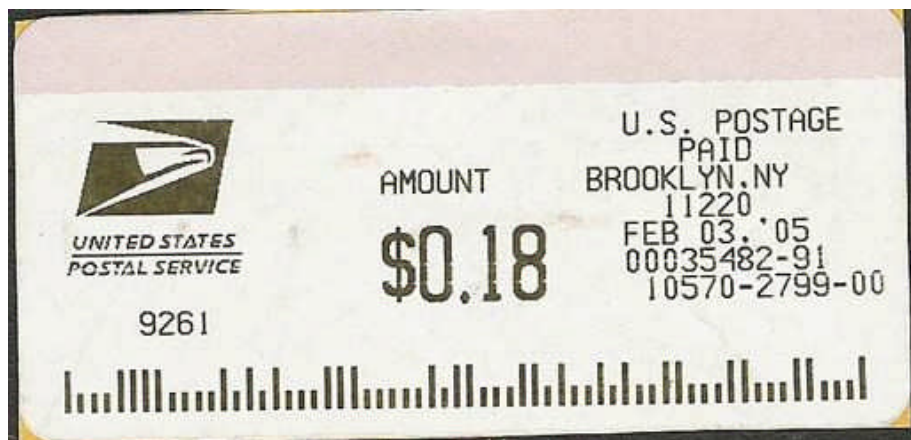
The next, designated Type III, has a full length bar code and again with the receiving zip underneath it.



The next, designated Type IV shows the information in three columns and additionally has the receiving zip code under the IRT # and a bar code along the base stretching from the "P" of "Postal" to the fifth digit of the receiving zip code.



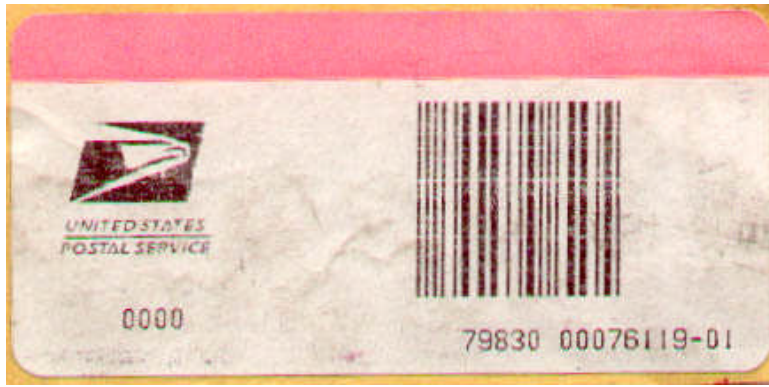
The most recent example, designated Type V, is similar to Type IV except that the bar code only extends from beneath the "P" of "Postal" to the decimal point of the paid amount.



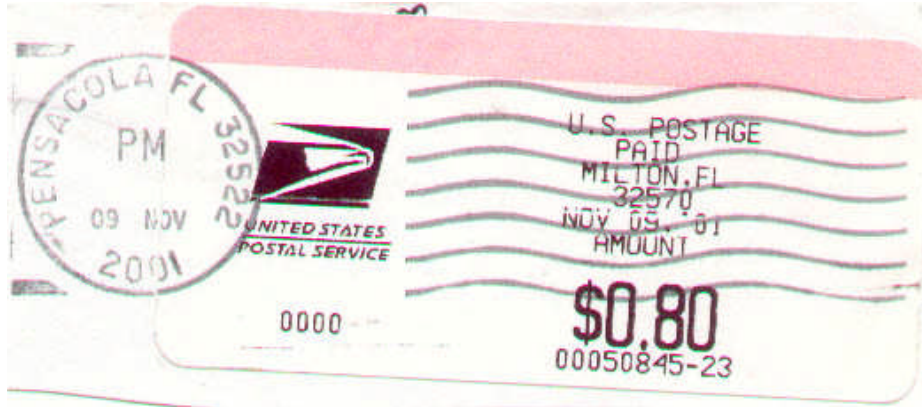
Type VI - I only have one of these but it has been confirmed by Joe Angelucci, so Bar code extends all the way to the right with a 5-4-2 zip code.



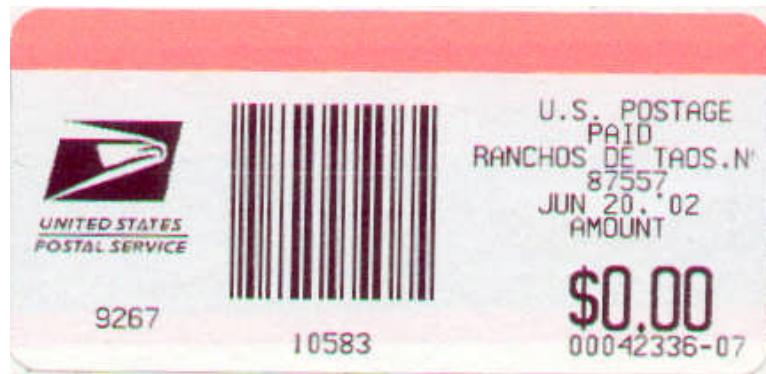
It also seems that the same machine is capable of producing the Types III and V, PVI's.



A strange one, has IRT # and my zip code but nothing else to indicate postage rate or date.



Sometimes the PVI did not escape the cancelling machine.

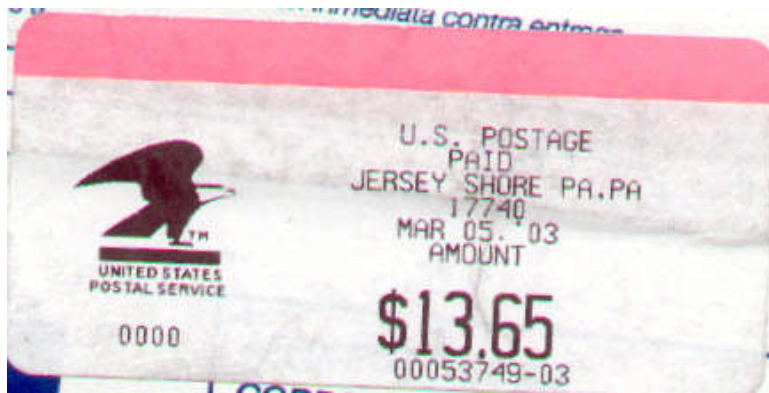


With valuable items the post office sometimes got carried away.

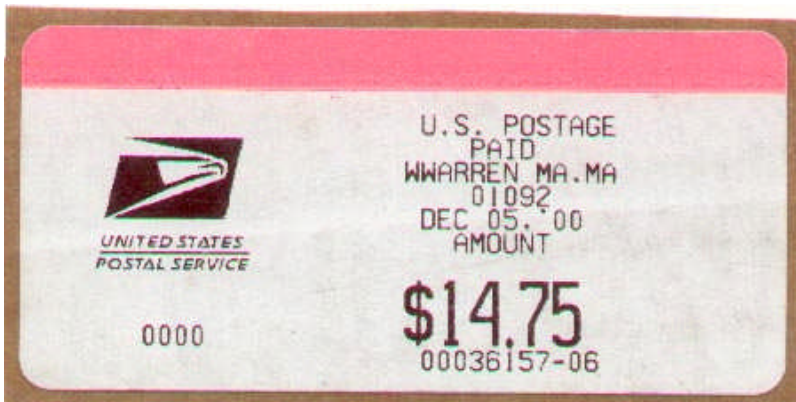
This was also used to mark correctly paid mail handed in at PO counter.

Used extensively during anthrax crisis.





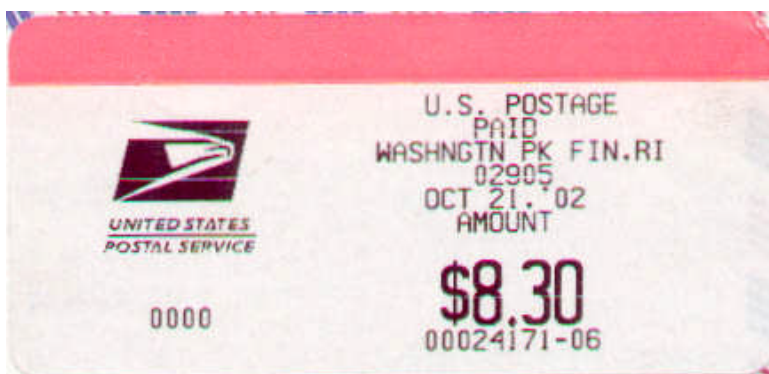
Sometimes the programmer got carried away and repeated state name.



A programmer with a stutter in both town and state name.



Sometimes it looks like programmer ran out of room for state name.



At other times the programmer engaged in shorthand. Washington I follow. PK = park or peak. Fin. it has been

suggested stands for either finance or financial. RI = Rhode Island. The Zip code is actually for Cranston, Rhode Island.



One can also find PVI's for territories, again with a stutter for Puerto Rico.



An uncommon PVI - that of the Army Post Office



An oddball, two PVI's with different mail class codes.



**An even rarer one, an overseas PO, this time from Yokosuka, Japan**

**Thanks to Steve.**



**And, saving the best for last, only one of four I've seen in well over a thousand PVI's, an inverted PVI.**

**Thanks to "nomad".**

**Many thanks to the people who have supplied PVI's for this primer, especially Marty, Terry, Jim, Burton and Ed.**