

## 4.12 MISCELLANEOUS

### AFFIXING STAMPS

It is no part of the duties of the Post Office to affix stamps to correspondence or parcels, or to see that customers purchase or affix the proper amounts, nor can Post Office staff, in any circumstances, undertake to do so. Stamps should be affixed to the top right-hand corner of the address side of the envelope or wrapper.

### CERTIFICATES OF POSTING

#### Unregistered postal packets

If proof is desired that an unregistered letter, postcard, printed papers or small packet has been posted to a particular person, it must be handed in at a post office and a certificate of posting obtained. The charge is \$1.2, payable by means of postage stamps which must be affixed by the sender to the certificate.

A single certificate for several packets of the same kind posted at the same time can be obtained if a list of the names and address borne by the packets is presented with them. The fee will be \$1.2 for each article.

It must be clearly understood that packets for which these certificates are issued are not registered and that they will be treated as if they have been posted in a letter-box; that in the event of loss, damage, or delay, the certificate will confer no title to compensation; and that it furnishes no proof of the nature of the contents.

#### Recorded Delivery packets

A certificate of posting for a Recorded Delivery packet is issued free of charge at the time of posting, and the sender should keep it for use in the event of enquiry regarding the packet.

#### Registered postal packets

A certificate of posting for a registered packet is issued free of charge at the time of posting, and the sender should preserve it carefully for use in the event of enquiry regarding the packet. A duplicate certificate of posting may be obtained at the time of posting for a fee of \$1.2.

#### Insured letters and parcels

A certificate of posting is issued free of charge and must always be obtained by the sender or his representative at the time of posting. Particulars of the amount for which the packet is insured are entered on the certificate, and the sender or his representative should at once satisfy himself that the entry is correct.

#### Uninsured parcels

A certificate of posting is given as a matter of course for every parcel whether insured or not. A duplicate certificate of posting may be obtained at the time of posting for a fee of \$1.2.

## CHANGE

Post Office staff are not bound to give change when receiving a payment, nor are they authorised to demand it when making a payment; and when money is paid at a post office, whether as change or otherwise, no question as to its right amount, goodness or weight can be entertained after it has been removed from the counter.

## CHEQUES

Cheques may be tendered in payment for licences, private box and bag rents, postage meter deposits and, under certain conditions, stamps and so on. Firms and other organisations transacting considerable business with a post office are invited to consult the Postmaster General concerning payment by cheque. Cheques should be drawn in favour of the Postmaster General and crossed.

## CIRCULARS POSTED IN BULK

Circulars should be tied in bundles, with all the addresses in one direction, and should be posted early in the day to secure due despatch.

## CLUBBED PACKETS

Clubbed packets cannot be sent or received unless authorised in the form of a licence issued by the Postmaster General. Applications should be addressed to the Postmaster General, Hongkong Post Headquarters, 2 Connaught Place, Central, Hong Kong. See Item 27 in *Letter Post* under PROHIBITIONS in Section 6.

## EVASION OF POSTAGE

Nothing sent through the post may contain an enclosure which is directed to a name and an address different from the name and address borne on the cover, and which is enclosed with the intention of evading postage. Any such forbidden enclosure if observed is liable to be taken out and forwarded to the addressee charged with separate postage at the rate properly prepayable.

## EXCEPTIONAL DETENTION

The Post Office has power to delay the despatch or delivery of all other postal packets when it is necessary to do so in order to secure the due despatch or delivery of letters.

## FOREIGN CURRENCY

Foreign currency is not acceptable for the purchase of postage stamps, or in the payment for postal services. All such purchases or payments must be made in Hong Kong currency.

## LARGE POSTINGS MADE ABROAD

The Post Office has the power to take action in regard to large numbers of letter post items posted abroad for delivery in Hong Kong where these postings are made by or on behalf of persons or firms resident in or carrying on business in Hong Kong. The action taken will consist either of returning the items to the country of origin, or of charging postage on them at the appropriate local rates.

## LARGE POSTINGS ON BEHALF OF FOREIGN FIRMS

Any person or organisation in Hong Kong making large postings to another country on behalf of persons or organisations resident or carrying on business in that country may find that the Post Office in that country will require its inland postage to be paid before the mail is delivered. If payment is not made, the mail is due to be returned to the sender.

Not all countries exercise these powers (which are similar to those explained in the previous heading LARGE POSTINGS MADE ABROAD), but senders are advised to ask their clients in the country of destination to check whether they may be liable for payment of inland postage.

See also Item 32 in *Letter Post* under PROHIBITIONS in Section 6.

## LETTER-BOXES

The door of every building at which letters are delivered should have a letter-box; this saves trouble to all concerned. For private houses it is recommended that the size of the aperture should be 235mm x 20mm. Ideally, it should be 1,070mm from the ground. Alternatively in the case of blocks of flats a nest of delivery boxes should be provided in the entrance lobby.

The minimum internal dimensions of each letter box :

- Horizontal type : 100mm (H) x 235mm (W) x 330mm (D)
- Aperture size : 20mm (H) x 235mm (W)
- Height from aperture to the base of the letter box at least 70mm
- Minimum height of the bottom row of letter box aperture from the ground : 700mm
- Maximum height of the top row of letter box aperture from the ground : 1.8m

To ensure reliable mail delivery, the floor number and unit number should be clearly indicated on the front of letter boxes. Such indication should at least be 12mm in height. Letter boxes should be arranged in order and vertically so as to help the postman deliver mail efficiently. They should also be installed at a well-illuminated and easily accessible location. To ensure mail security, they should be kept in good condition and affixed with secure locks.

## LETTERS NOT SUBJECT TO POSTAGE

Candidates at the Legislative Council and District Board elections are permitted, subject to certain conditions, to send free of postage, election communication to electors registered on the electoral roll. For the Legislative Council elections two letters for each elector are permitted, whereas for the District Board election, one letter is allowed. Each letter must not exceed 50 g in weight. Details of the facilities may be obtained from the General Manager (Mail Distribution).

## LIABILITY OF SENDER FOR PAYMENT OF POSTAGE

The sender is legally liable for any charges raised upon a postal packet which has been posted either unpaid or underpaid, and if the addressee cannot be found, or if he refuses to pay the charges or accept the packet, the charges can be recovered from the sender by legal process. See *Parcels* under NON-DELIVERY in this Section regarding charges on undelivered parcels.

## LOSS, DAMAGE, DELAY, NON-DELIVERY, MISSENDING OR MISDELIVERY OF A POSTAL PACKET

The Post Office is not legally liable for any loss or inconvenience which may arise from damage, delay, non-delivery, missending, or misdelivery of a postal packet, but claims for actual loss or damage are admitted on certain conditions in the case of registered or insured packets.

## POSTMARKS

Postmarks have two main purposes : (i) to cancel adhesive stamps so that they cannot be used again; (ii) for internal control. While every effort is made to ensure that all letters are properly postmarked, the Post Office is not liable for any results from its failure to do so.

Items to be postmarked are restricted to bona fide items of mail only. They must conform to the regulations on the make up of postal articles, bear an address and bear no other cancellation. No postmarks will be made on sheets or blocks of mint stamps, blank paper, diaries, maps or on any other non-mail item.

The Hongkong Post Stamps pictorial datestamps are used for postmarking the following items only :-

- (a) all items processed by Hong Kong Stamps;
- (b) all items posted in the philatelic posting box of a philatelic counter;
- (c) first day covers collection from temporary posting boxes provided on the first day of a special stamp issue at post offices with philatelic counters.

## RECALL, DETENTION OR DIVERSION OF POSTAL PACKETS

No letter, parcel or other postal packet, once it has been posted in a post office receptacle or handed to any officer of the Post Office in the course of his duty, may be taken out of the post, even if application be made for it by a person who can prove that he is the sender. Nor can it be detained or delayed even if a request to that effect appears upon the cover. It must be forwarded to its address, and cannot be diverted to any other address at the request of the sender. Similarly, applications to enclose articles inadvertently omitted from a postal packet cannot be entertained; nor can search be made for a letter, postcard or printed papers packet on which postage has not been fully paid.

## REFUND OF POSTAGE

Full information regarding articles that can and that cannot be sent by post is published, under the proper heads in this Guide. No application will be entertained for the refund of the value of postage stamps on correspondence which is discovered, after the postage stamps have been obliterated, to contain any prohibited article, or which exceeds the limit of weight, or which for any other reason cannot be forwarded and has consequently to be returned to the sender, and any loss resulting from a non-observance of the rules by the sender of an article must be borne by him.

## SECRECY OF THE POST

Post Office staff have no discretionary powers to supply information respecting letters, or any kind of postal packet to persons other than those to whom they are addressed. They are not allowed to make public any official information of a private character.

## UNPAID AND UNDERPAID MAIL

The Post Office is not obliged to forward to local addressees or to the countries of destination unpaid or underpaid items on which the sender is not indicated or whose sender cannot be identified.

An unpaid or underpaid unregistered letter or other postal packet from abroad is charged on delivery with the amount of the deficiency plus a handling charge of \$4. Insufficiently paid packets must be either accepted and the postage due paid, or forthwith refused. In the case of local items the charge is double the deficiency. Postmen are not permitted to allow a prior inspection of the contents.

No one to whom a letter or other postal packet is tendered for delivery should pay any charge demanded in respect of unpaid postage unless a date-stamped postage due label (or labels) to the face value of the amount demanded is affixed to the cover of the packet.

Enquiries respecting surcharges should be addressed to the Postmaster General, Hongkong Post Headquarters, 2 Connaught Place, Central, Hong Kong. In some cases it will suffice to enclose the cover, but if the packet was forwarded in an unsealed cover, the cover and its contents must be sent. The whole packet, before being opened if sealed, must also be produced if the surcharge is questioned on the ground of weight, and no question on this point can be entertained in respect of a closed packet which has been opened. If more convenient, the packet may be taken to any post office for the weight to be verified unless it was posted abroad, in which case it should be taken to General Post Office.

The unit of weight for letters from countries using the metric system is 20 grams (less than 3/4 ounce), and not 1 ounce as in the case of countries using the avoirdupois system; and surcharges may frequently be explained by the difference in the units of weight.