



Hongkong Post

High quality postal services have been an important factor in facilitating Hong Kong's development as a leading business, financial and industrial centre. Hongkong Post aims to provide reliable, efficient and universal postal services at reasonable prices to meet the needs of Hong Kong as well as fulfilling its international postal obligations.

Postal Services: The laws of Hong Kong empower Hongkong Post to handle local and overseas mail and mail for transit to other places. The Postmaster General is the head of Hongkong Post.

The exchange of mail between Hongkong Post and other places in the world started as early as 1841. With the growth in population and the development of business activities in Hong Kong, the range and level of services provided by Hongkong Post have multiplied. There were 127 post offices as at December 2015, 32 located on Hong Kong Island, 40 in Kowloon, 52 in the New Territories and the outlying islands, and three mobile post offices. In 2014-15, the Hongkong Post handled an average of 3.32 million mail items daily. With over 90 per cent of the mail handled coming from the industrial and business sectors, it is clear that Hongkong Post has played a significant role in facilitating the development of commerce and industry in Hong Kong.

Hongkong Post changed to a trading fund operation on August 1, 1995. The new status provides Hongkong Post with a high degree of financial autonomy, enabling it to respond more effectively to changing market demand and customer needs, and to pursue new initiatives and improvements. Despite the changes in its financial and accounting framework, Hongkong Post remains a government department.

Letter Mail Services: In 2014-15 Hongkong Post handled 1 037 million local letters. 99 per cent of letters posted locally are delivered on the next working day after posting. Bulk economy items paid at discounted postage rates are delivered within three working days.

Overseas letter mail services include Air Mail, Bulk Air Mail, Surface Mail, Bulk Bag and Direct Agent Bag. A total of 146 million air and surface letters were posted to destinations abroad in 2014-15.

Parcel Services: Both local and overseas parcel services are available. Customers may send parcels by air or surface to around 230 international destinations. In 2014-15, Hongkong Post handled about 1.18 million international and local parcels. The service standard is to deliver local and inward parcels to addressees within two working days for Hong Kong, Kowloon and major commercial and industrial areas in the New Territories, and within 3 working days to other areas.

Speedpost Service: Speedpost is the international courier service provided by Hongkong Post, and is the local brand name of the global Express Mail Service

(EMS) of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Speedpost provides reliable, convenient and value for money express delivery services to our customers. With a global reach of over 210 destinations and 1 900 cities in the Mainland, packages can be delivered to major international cities as fast as the following business day. To provide more convenience to our customers, a pick-up service is available, or they can go to any post office to send their Speedpost items. Customers can also open an account to enjoy the convenience of monthly billing and promotion offers for Speedpost. A track-and-trace service is available via the web site of Speedpost www.speedpost.hk.

e-Express Service: e-Express Service offers senders end-to-end visibility of the items sent, providing them with extra convenience in internet trading. It currently covers Australia, Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, South Korea, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States and Vietnam. Senders can prepare all-in-one shipping label, which include posting information and customs declaration on EC-ship Online portal. It also provides flexible payment by means of online credit card payment, permit mailing deposit account (Require prior application with Financial Services Division of Hongkong Post), or via counter posting by cash, EPS or Octopus (Only available in counters installed with Octopus facility).

Hongkong Post Mobile Apps: The iPhone and Android Apps allow the public to trace the delivery status of mailing items, calculate postage and obtain other postal information of Hongkong Post anytime and anywhere by using mobile devices. Functions of the application include mail tracking, postage calculator, location, major postal services, news and promotion.

Local CourierPost: This service specially caters for both individual and business needs for local express delivery of documents and packages. Local CourierPost Service items can conveniently be posted at all post offices throughout the territory. Customers can choose to register as account holders and enjoy a pick-up service. For major industrial and commercial areas, the service guarantees that items accepted before the cut-off time are delivered by 1:00 pm on the following working day.

Smart Post: This service provides customers an economical local mail delivery solution with basic track-and-trace functions for mail items, along with email notification of their mail acceptance and delivery status, and a choice of mail delivery or counter collection to suit their preferences. Smart Post allows users to prepare their posting document online and both the senders and recipients can check the delivery status of their items online.

EC-Ship online portal: The portal provides a one-stop selling and shipping solution to customers to prepare

shipping labels via the portal and have the option of using four types of international mail service, namely the e-Express Service, Standard Speedpost, Air Registration and Air Parcel service. All mail items prepared via the portal can be posted at 44 designated acceptance counters.

Philatelic Services: Like many postal administrations, Hongkong Post issues two kinds of postage stamps – definitive stamps and special/commemorative stamps. Usually there are around ten or more sets of special/commemorative stamps issued each year. Hong Kong postage stamps, which reflect Hong Kong's history, life and development, are designed and printed to a consistently high standard. The low postage rates prevailing in Hong Kong make philately an interesting and inexpensive hobby. Apart from handling and promoting philatelic services, Hongkong Post Stamps provides a wide variety of philatelic products to meet the needs of local and overseas stamp collectors. It also offers Heartwarming Stamps Customised Service and one-stop service in developing special stamp souvenirs for individuals and corporations. In addition to its extensive post office network, Hongkong Post also makes use of its well-established advance order system and online shopping platform to enable local and overseas philatelists to purchase Hong Kong stamps and philatelic products in a convenient manner.

PayThruPost Service: The PayThruPost Service has provided customers with greater convenience to settle government, utility and other bill payments by cash, cheque and EPS at all post offices (Fixed penalty is not accepted in all mobile post offices).

ShopThruPost: The online shopping mall administered by Hongkong Post provides customers a reliable channel for purchasing philatelic and postal souvenirs as well as selected local and overseas products.

Certification Authority (CA) Service: To enable the development of electronic commerce in Hong Kong, Hongkong Post established a public key infrastructure and began acting as the first public CA in Hong Kong in January 2000. As empowered by the Electronic Transactions Ordinance, the Postmaster General is a recognised CA in Hong Kong. Hongkong Post Certification Authority (HKPCA) issues digital certificates, namely Hongkong Post e-Certs, to individuals and businesses to facilitate the identity verification of the subscribers over the Internet. The operation and services of HKPCA have been outsourced to Certizen Limited since 1 April 2012 for a period of 6 years. By the end of March 2015, HKPCA had issued about 1.82 million digital certificates to businesses, government departments and individuals.

Development of Postal Services: Automation of letter sorting was introduced in July 1990 with the commissioning of the Mechanised Letter Sorting System (MLSS), which was the first in the world using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and Video Coding technology to sort letters by reading the addresses of the letters, without the need of reading post codes or zip codes. To further enhance operating efficiency, the phased installation of a replacement MLSS started in early 2008 and the new MLSS has been put into full operation in June 2009. The new MLSS combines and improves the functioning of Optical Character Reader; Video Coding Machine and Letter Sorting Machine to streamline and optimise mail processing flow. Hongkong

Post is installing a Chinese Character Address Recognition function in the MLSS Letter Sorting Machines in phases to sort letters bearing printed Chinese local addresses. The project is scheduled to be completed by end 2016

The Central Mail Centre is installed with Culler-Facer-Canceller machines to automatically segregate mail items into packets and letters, cancel the postage stamps on letters with a date impression and further segregate them into local/surface mail and air mail.

The Air Mail Centre at the Hong Kong International Airport at Chek Lap Kok is equipped with machines for automating the sorting of packets and parcels, and for handling airline containers. The Track and Trace System, installed at all counter offices, delivery offices and sorting centres, computerises the tracking and tracing of Speedpost and Local CourierPost, as well as registered, recorded delivery and insured mail and parcels. Hongkong Post makes mail tracing information available to customers through an interactive voice response system and on its web page. The computerised Collection and Delivery Management System incorporates the use of mobile devices through the application of General Packet Radio System (GPRS) telecommunication technology to automate operations in the courier service.

Integrated Postal Services System (IPSS) was introduced in Post Offices by phases for completion by early July 2015. Apart from automating counter operations with re-engineered workflow, IPSS facilitates the planning and deployment of manpower and other resources. In parallel with the IPSS project, the Hongkong Post installed 271 additional Octopus card readers in our post offices for the convenience of customers.

International and Regional Involvement: Hongkong Post participates as a member of the delegation of the People's Republic of China in meetings and activities of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Established in 1874 in Berne, Switzerland, the UPU aims to foster the sustainable development of quality and efficient universal postal services in order to facilitate communication among the people of the world, and to guarantee the free circulation of postal items through an interconnected single postal territory. The Universal Postal Union Congress is held once every four years to determine strategic policy issues and to review existing postal working procedures and regulations to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the community. Hongkong Post remains a separate postal administration and effectively exchanges international mail and has bilateral postal agreements with the postal administrations of other countries.

Apart from the UPU, Hongkong Post also participates in the meetings and activities of the Asian-Pacific Postal Union (APPU) as a member of the China delegation. The APPU is a regional postal union which deals with postal matters in Asia and Oceania. It aims at improving postal services through understanding and co-operation among the postal administrations in the region.

Hongkong Post is also a member of the Asia Pacific Post Cooperative (APP Cooperative), which was established in 1998 to improve the quality of postal services in the Asia-Pacific region, enable member postal organisations to enhance their market share; and address operational, commercial, technical and economic issues of postal services in the region. Currently 27 postal organisations are members of APP Cooperative with a governing board of seven members.