

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACCOUNTING AND USE OF PUBLIC POSTAGE  
METHODS FOR OFFICIAL MAIL BY RAF FORMATIONS IN THE  
UNITED KINGDOM**

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1. Whenever possible official mail is to be sent by the van services operated by the MOD, Service formations or the PSA. When these services do not exist or their use is not feasible official mail is to be sent by public posting methods in accordance with the instructions given below (AP 3392, Vol 1 Leaflet 708 also refers).

**Classified Correspondence**

2. Detailed instructions on the despatch and carriage of classified correspondence are contained in AP 3086.

**Unclassified Correspondence**

3. Unclassified correspondence and other mail which may be sent through Post Office channels is to be despatched using public posting methods and in accordance with the instructions in pages 1-1 to 1-3 paras 1 to 16.

**Public Posting Methods**

4. The main postal services available for use by RAF units are:

(a) **Printed Postage Impression (PPI).** For posting points that make regular large dispatches each day, generally of 500 or more items.

(b) **Franking Meter Machines (FM).** For posting points dispatching approximately 100-500 items each working day.

(c) **Postage Stamps (PS.)** This method is used by those posting points dispatching less than 100 items each working day.

(d) **Business Reply (BR).** For correspondence to the public which requires a reply, the cost of which must be borne by the MOD.

(e) **Data Post (DP).** A point-to-point overnight delivery service.

(f) **Registration and Recorded Delivery.** Under these services the progress of items is recorded by the Post Office (PO) and compensation is payable for loss.

**Limitations On Size**

5. All official mail must conform to the limits of size and weight, and any other conditions which apply to private mail. Full details are contained in the "Post Office Guide", held at all POs.

**Postage Rates**

6. Information regarding postage rates on letters and parcels is obtainable from:

(a) UK—The Post Office Guide.

(b) Abroad—Orders issued by the appropriate postal authority or Command Organization Instructions.

Official mail on which postage is prepaid is to be dispatched using the 2nd class service except where there are clear and overriding reasons which justify the extra expense of the 1st class service. The decision as to whether an item warrants 1st class postage should normally be made by the originator personally.

**Posting Points**

7. In order to reduce the number of separate postage accounts for units dealing direct with the PO, and to increase the number qualifying for bulk posting rates and/or franking machines, units are grouped into Central Posting Points (CPP) which are based upon locality and known van services. Where it is not practical for a unit to be part of a CPP, that unit is designated an Independent Posting Point (IPP). The main methods of postage for CPPs and IPPs, based on the volume of official mail transmitted, are determined by MOD and requests to modify or extend Posting Points or their methods of postage should be forwarded to MOD O2(RAF). Where a small or isolated unit despatches very little mail a

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parent CPP or IPP may issue a stock of PS/PPI to enable the small unit to operate independently. Such issues are to be accounted for in accordance with para 32.

**Equipment**

8. Those CPPs which have sufficient volume of mail to justify the allocation of a franking machine, which is supplied by HMSO, will also be issued with a parcel scale for weighing up to 10 kilograms and a letter/packet scale for weighing up to 900 grammes. Each CPP licensed to use PPI for letter mail will receive a platform scale for weighing up to 20 kilograms.

**Accounting**

9. Accounting procedures are based upon the 184 Head PO regions throughout the UK and payment for all transactions with the PO will be made by means of Giro Transfer Forms (see para 11). MOD has an account with the National Girobank and will authorise regular payment into this Central Account based upon information provided by the National Girobank to MOD (F4d(AD)) in the form of a daily Giro Statement. These statements will identify each transaction by unit and type of postal service provided. The Giro Transfer Forms—to transfer funds from the Central Account to the Head PO account in the area concerned—are the only methods of payment for all PO services; money is not to be provided from imprest or cash accounts for this purpose.

10. Units should aim to make all payments to the PO monthly although it is accepted that this will not always be possible for PS purchases (see para 29) or additional requirements which must be met as necessary.

**The Giro Transfer Form**

11. The initial issue of Giro Transfer Forms will be made by MOD (A) DPCS on transfer to Public Posting Methods. The forms are to be regarded as accountable documents and the appropriate physical custody and records are to be maintained. (The arrangements for re-ordering will be notified later.)

12. **Completion of Forms.** The transfer form and counterfoil are to be completed by the officer i/c Registry (or his duly authorised Deputy) for each postal service required. The officer completing these forms will be held responsible for ensuring that the postal service obtained and recorded on the counterfoil agrees with the supporting postal documents.

<p style="font-size: small;">* (1) ..... 19 .....</p> <p style="font-size: small;">credit account number</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>		<p style="font-size: small;">* (1) ..... 19 .....</p> <p style="font-size: small;">credit account number</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 20px; margin: 0 auto;"></div>		<p style="font-size: small;">by transfer from Girobank a/c no.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; font-weight: bold; font-size: large;">512 6029</div>	
reference number	reference number	reference number	amount		
123	123	123	£	* (3)	* (4)
* (2)	* (2)	* (2)	* (3)	* (4)	
amount		amount		* (5)	
£	* (3)	* (4)			
<p style="font-size: x-large; font-weight: bold; border: 2px solid black; padding: 5px;">20W</p>		<p style="font-size: small;">AMOUNT IN WORDS</p> <p style="font-size: small;">NAME OF PAYEE - THE POST OFFICE</p>			
* (6)		* (6)		* (6)	
SIGNATURE	COUNTER SIGNATURE		FACSIMILE SIGNATURE		
RANK		APPOINTMENT		MINISTRY OF DEFENCE	
PLEASE LEAVE THE SPACE BELOW CLEAR FOR USE AT THE NATIONAL GIROBANK					
NAME BLOCK CAPITALS					

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SPECIMEN GIRO TRANSFER FORM

13. The form is to be completed at each asterisk as follows:

- \* (1) Date
- \* (2) Postal Point Reference Number (see para 14 below)
- \* (3) £ in figures
- \* (4) Pence in figures
- \* (5) Amount in words
- \* (6) Signature of Officer *i/c* Registry

14. **Postal Point Reference Number.** The Postal Point Reference Number on the Giro transfer form is a 7 digit number which gives a clear indication of the complete Giro transaction. The first 3 digits, which show the postal region and Head PO, will already be printed on the forms when they are received. The next 3 digits, which identify the Postal Point and are allocated by MOD, must be entered by the unit concerned. The 7th digit details the service used (see para below) and must also be entered by the unit. To ensure that services are properly recorded, a separate transfer form must be used for each postal service; the PO will not accept transfer forms bearing more than one service code at digit 7.

**Service Codes**

Code	Service
0	Postage Stamp Purchase
1	Franking Machine Credit
2	PPI Contract Credit—Letter Mails
3	Business Reply/Freeport
4	Datapost
5	Selectapost
6	International Reply Coupons Purchase
7	PPI Contract Credit—Parcels
8	Surcharges
9	Special Services authorised by MOD (A) (PCS 4)

15. Completed Giro Transfer Form counterfoils are to be retained by units for 2 years from the date of the last transaction for audit purposes; they are to be filed together with all supporting documents eg. purchase records, licence fee receipts, etc. Auditing officers will require access to these records which may also be called for by MOD (F4d(AD)).

**Postage Register**

16. A Postage Register (F97) in which details of all postal charges against public funds are to be recorded, is to be maintained by CPPs and IPPs. The officer *i/c* registry is to ensure that entries in the Postage Register represent public expenditure actually and properly incurred. The daily certificate is to state that 'x' value has been used in sending 'y' envelopes or packages for official purposes.

17. **Scrutiny of Out-going Mail.** The officer *i/c* Registry (or an officer of a supervisory grade specially detailed) is to scrutinize the out-going mail at frequent intervals to ensure

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that postage is being used economically and for official purposes only. The daily entries in the Postage Register are to be countersigned by the officer i/c Registry or an authorised deputy.

**Printed Postage Impressions**

18. A Printed Postage Impression (PPI) is a MOD "postage paid" impression on an envelope or label.

19. **Conditions of Use.** PPI is available for inland and overseas letters, packages and inland parcels. Posting Points must be authorised to use the PPI facility by, initially, the Postal Implementation Team. When the transfer to Public Posting Methods has been completed, F4 (AD) will be responsible for giving such authority. In general authority will be given to units posting a minimum of 500 items daily of the Post Office Preferred Size or regular daily postings of mixed weight letter items comprising of at least 10 Kg of A class (1st or 2nd). Packets and Parcels may be posted in addition. The 1st Class rate should be used only when absolutely essential.

20. **Demands for PPI Envelopes.** Envelopes with the "postage paid" imprint are to be demanded on a Posting Point basis by the secretarial officer deputised by the Stn. Cdr. Demands are to be submitted in accordance with the instructions contained in AP 113A (Regulations for the Supply and Maintenance of Publications and Forms). The envelopes available for use by RAF units are:

MOD 564	120 x 235 mm	1st Class	}	For general purpose use.
MOD 565	120 x 235 mm	2nd Class		Largest PO preferred size.
MOD 569	235 x 292 mm	2nd Class		General purpose envelope.
MOD 570	140 x 190 mm	1st Class		Specialist envelope for Passports only.
MOD 571	305 x 406 mm	2nd Class		Largest size general purpose envelope.

21. **Custody, Issue and Recording of Stock.** The officer nominated in accordance with para 20 above is to hold the main stock of PPI forms in safe custody, under lock and key and is to keep, in a manuscript book, a record of receipts and issues under the separate categories of the forms demanded. This record is to be used to control stock, and provide evidence of any considerable variation in consumption. Particular care is to be taken of envelopes not already addressed:

(a) The officer nominated in para 20 is to issue unaddressed envelopes to officers i/c registries, and is to record such issues in the manuscript book referred to in para 21 above, obtaining receipts from the individuals to whom issues are made. At least once a quarter he is to check the main stock of envelopes held and record the result of the check in the manuscript book. The records book and vouchers are to be produced for audit when required.

22. **Payment.** Payment to the PO for PPI will be by monthly credit in advance and will be effected by Giro transfer form. The PO will advise the Posting Point monthly of actual expenditure and credit remaining. Separate accounts are required for both mail and parcel services.

23. **Entries in Form 97 (Postage Register).** Entries in the postage register are to reflect payments made under para 22 above in addition to details of the actual expenditure as billed by the PO. Daily entries are to record the number of envelopes/labels dispatched under each class of service and, in the case of parcels, the total amount of postage is to be shown.

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24. **Parcels.** A national PPI parcel contract has been negotiated with the PO. All units who post parcels will be supplied with a rubber stamp. When not in use the rubber stamp is to be retained with the "working stock" of PPI envelopes, the FM or with the bulk stock of PS. Full details of the parcels together with the Contract No 1615214, the unit address, calculation of total weight and postage due etc are to be recorded on forms supplied by the PO. The average price entry on the parcel contract form is to be calculated as follows:

- (a) Assess the total weight of the parcels ready for posting.
- (d) The total weight should then be divided by the total number of parcels to obtain an average weight.
- (c) Using the Post Office Contract Ready Reckoner obtain the price of the average parcel weight.
- (d) The price obtained from the average weight should be multiplied by the number of parcels to obtain the postage due:

E.G. (1) Total weight of parcels = 6 Kg

(2) No of items = 2

<u>TOTAL WEIGHT OF PARCELS</u>	6	=	3 Kg per parcel
NUMBER OF ITEMS	2		

(3) From Post Office Parcel Ready Reckoner the average price of a parcel weighing

3 Kg = 168.4p

(4) Average cost	×	Number of item
168.4p	×	2
	=	336.8p

(5) POSTAGE DUE = £3.37

(6) **DISCOUNT.** The PO will reduce the Postage Due by 10% and the abated total due will be deducted monthly from the total credit purchased by the unit in accordance with paragraphs 11 to 15 above. It is therefore important that units should use the Parcels Contract and not use PS, unless a PPI rubber stamp is not held. Units are reminded that there is an additional Area Rate Reduction for parcels posted and delivered within certain groups of postal counties. These areas are detailed in the PO Postal Rates Inland Compendium. Such reduced rates are to be used whenever possible.

### Franking Meter Machines

25. Franking meter machines (FM) print, on mail passed through them, a date stamp together with the amount of postage paid.

### 26. Conditions of Use

Postage credit is bought from the PO who set the machine with the appropriate credit units. A recorder on the machine shows the number of units used and another the number of units remaining in credit. Franked mail must be segregated from other mail and transferred to the PO at a previously agreed point.

### Security of Franking Machine

27. Access to FMs are to be denied to all but the registry staff who are required to use them. At cease work the machine is to be locked and the key secured in an appropriate container.

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### Payment

28. The machine (or in the case of the larger machines the meter itself) is to be taken to the Head PO and an estimated one month's units is to be set on the meter. Payment is made by Giro transfer form. The number of units obtained and their purchase price are to be entered in the Postage Register. The register is also to show the number of enveloped dispatched daily and the number of units expended.

### Postage Stamps

29. **Purchase from PO.** Postage Stamps (PS) are to be purchased from the PO. Normally, one month's supply is to be obtained at a time. Units wishing to make purchases in excess of £5 must apply to the Head Postmaster for a PO Cheque Authority Card (P843). This card stipulates the maximum purchase value, which will vary from unit to unit, and it to be agreed locally with the Head Postmaster. Units with PPI or FM facilities may also require PS.

30. **Payment.** Payment for PS will be by Giro transfer form at the time of purchase. Units possessing a Cheque Authority Card must produce the card together with the Giro transfer form at the time of each such purchase.

31. **Custody and Issue.** PS are to be retained under lock and key by the officer i/c Registry. He is to issue to his staff daily only sufficient stamps for the disposal of the outgoing official mail.

32. **Entries in Postage Register.** Entries in the Postage Register are to record:

- (a) Purchases made under para 29 above, and
- (b) the total number of envelopes and the value of the stamps dispatched daily.
- (c) Total number of parcels and value of stamps dispatched daily.
- (d) Daily details and cost of registration fees, recorded delivery and certificate of posting mail.

### Business Reply

33. The Business Reply (BR) service is for use by Posting Points which correspond with members of the public and require a reply for which the MOD must pay.

34. **Conditions of use.** Each Postal Point requiring to use this service—the criteria is a normal weekly usage of approximately 100 return envelopes per week—must obtain special authorisation from MOD (F4(AD)) through O2 (RAF) before purchasing a licence from the Head Postmaster. On initial transfer to Public Postage Methods authority for units to obtain a Business Reply Licence will be given by MOD (A) DPCS.

35. MOD use only labels for BR purposes and these are normally at the 2nd Class postage rate. Units who have a special requirement for the 1st Class rate or for special labels/cards/envelopes should give full justification in their initial request to MOD for authority to use the system.

36. In addition to the postage for the Class of service afforded, each returned item will be subject to a levy of  $\frac{1}{2}$ p. Neither charge will be raised for items not returned.

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37. **Licensing.** A central BR licence number PHQ3 has been allocated to MOD. Units authorised to obtain a BR licence are to contact their Head PO and make formal application for licensing, quoting this central licence number.

38. **Demands.** Demands for BR labels are to be submitted by the secretarial officer deputed by the Stn. Cdr. A copy of the licence together with the full postal address, including the special BR post code of the licence holder allocated by the PO are to be forwarded to MOD (CS(Rep)) who will arrange for the initial printing and issue of one year's label requirements. Future demands should be submitted to MOD (CS(Rep)) as required, based on annual usage. Re-ordering of labels is to be carried out by the licence holder, on behalf of all user units.

39. Where units share the use of a BR licence it will be the responsibility of individual user units, after agreeing a unit coding system with the licence holder, to enter the unit code on the labels identifying themselves to the CPP.

40. **Custody, Issue and Recording of Stock.** The officer nominated in accordance with para 6 above is to hold the main stock of BR labels in safe custody, under lock and key and is to keep, in a manuscript book, a record of receipts and issues. Receipts are to be obtained from the individuals to whom issues are made. This record is to be used to control stock and provide evidence of any considerable variation in consumption. At least once a quarter he is to check the main stock of labels held and record the result of the check in the manuscript book. The record book and vouchers are to be produced for audit when required.

41. **Entries in Postage Register.** Entries in the Postage Register are to show:

- (a) Assessed expenditure pre-payments, and
- (b) total number of envelopes returned, with resultant postage and handling charges as billed by PO.

42. **Payment.** A monthly pre-payment of assessed expenditure is to be made by Giro transfer form. Actual charges at the appropriate postage rate plus  $\frac{1}{2}$ p handling charge per item will be raised monthly by the PO.

#### **Data Post**

43. The Data Post (DP) is a point-to-point overnight delivery service in which the package/bag is collected by the PO at an agreed time and delivered the next working morning at an agreed time. It is a secure service suitable for the transmission of documents with a security classification not higher than Secret.

44. **Conditions of Use.** Units which require this service are to apply to the appropriate higher authority, who will in turn seek approval from F4 (AD) through O2 (RAF). A special contract with Head Postmaster is required. Charges are negotiated individually, taking into account weight, frequency of service and customer requirements.

45. **Payment.** The Head Postmaster will submit a monthly account which will be paid by Giro transfer form. Details of charges and payment are to be entered in the Postage Register.

#### **Registration and Recorded Delivery**

46. Items transmitted via the Registered and Recorded Delivery Services are separated from the ordinary post. Compensation is payable for loss. Registered Post should be used

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for items of value, items whose tracing is essential in the event of loss or delay and mail of certain security classification. The Recorded Delivery service should be used for documents where proof of delivery is required.

**47. Conditions.** Registered Letters and Packets must be handed to the PO separately and a receipt obtained on PO Form P1022B.

**48. Payment.** Payment is to be made by postage stamps or a meter machine impression to the value of the postage plus the Registration/Recorded Delivery fee affixed to the package. Postage Register entries are to show the number of items dispatched and their combined cost.

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