



National Postal Forum

International Letter Mail – Still a Thing

May 5, 2026

Session Speakers



Kate Muth, Executive Director, International Mailers Advisory Group (IMAG)



Michelle Lassiter, Classification Specialist, U.S. Postal Service, Product Classification



Jason Kiefer, Director Postal Affairs and Mailing Operations, Clev Systems



Christy Hulsart, Vice President, Sales, TMG Worldwide (The Mail Group)

IMAG Mission: Reduce the barriers to the efficient movement of goods and information across borders.

- IMAG is a member of
 - The UPU's Consultative Committee and its thematic chapters
 - The State Department's International Postal Operations and Delivery Services advisory committee
 - The Postmaster General's Mailers Technical Advisory Committee
- IMAG is a regular presenter/moderator at industry events, including at:
 - World Mail and Express Americas
 - Connect2Posts
 - The National Postal Forum
 - Parcel+Post Expo



Visit us at Booth 1124 or
www.internationalmailers.net

Our Session's Focus

- International Mail – rules, requirements, and formats are different from domestic
- Direct Mail works in many countries – but know your audience
- It's a competitive market – you have options for mailing globally
- Let the experts do the work – service providers can make it easier to go global
- Q&A – time at the end for your questions



International Mail Standards

Michelle Lassiter, Classification Specialist, U.S. Postal Service

UPU Classification System Based on Formats

- **Universal Postal Union (UPU):** An inter-governmental organization within the United Nations, serves as the primary forum for cooperation between governments, Posts and worldwide postal sector stakeholders.
- **Letter Post:** UPU service classification for postcards, aerograms, small letters, large letters, bulky letters, and small packets weighing up to 2 KG (7 KG for Free Matter for the Blind).
 - Exchange of letter post items exceeding 2 KG is optional. Postal operators may bilaterally agree to set weight limits up to 5 or 10 KG based on content (Article 17-103)
- **Parcel Post:** UPU service classification for the movement of packages up to 20 KG.
 - Postal operators are entitled to accept parcels exceeding 20 KG provided they give notice to the UPU. (Article 17-203)
- **Express Mail Service (EMS):** Optional UPU service – run by the EMS Cooperative – provides express services between 176 economies worldwide.

Letter-Post Format Classifications

- **Postcards:** a card designed to be mailed without an envelope.
 - **Aerograms:** a folded sheet of paper, gummed on all sides, such that the outside acts as its own envelope.
 - **Small Letters (P-format):** Smallest document-only service for items requiring an envelope.
 - **Large Letters (G-format):** Document-only service for “flat” shaped items.
-
- **Bulky Letters (E-format):** Document-only service for larger items such as catalogues.
 - **Small Packets (E-format):** Service for small items containing goods.
 - Letters, postcards, printed papers (other than books), correspondence and items for the blind, which are not subject to customs duties are exempt from providing electronic advance data (EAD).
 - **Note:** TSA regulations result in the requirement for U.S. mailers to provide Advance Electronic Data (AED) for items weighing 16 ounces or more, including documents.

Size and Weight Limits Based on Format

Mail that exceeds the max length, height, or thickness of one shape, automatically gets classified as the next largest shape.

Shape		Length - longest side (inches)	Height (inches)	Thickness/Depth (inches)	Weight
Postcards	Minimum	5-1/2	3-1/2	0.007	n/a
	Maximum	6.0	4-1/4	0.016	n/a
Small letters (P format)	Minimum	5-1/2	3-1/2	0.007	n/a
	Maximum	11-1/2	6-1/8	1/4	3.5 oz.
Large letters (G format)	Minimum	11-1/2	6-1/8	0.007	n/a
	Maximum	15.0	12.0	3/4	15.994 oz.
Bulky letters (E format)	Minimum	6.0	4.0	Max dims combined:	n/a
	Maximum	24.0	--	(L+H+D) = 36.0	4 lbs.
Small Packets (E format)	Minimum	6.0	4.0	Max dims combined:	n/a
	Maximum	24.0	--	(L+H+D) = 36.0	4 lbs.

Size and weight limitations reflect USPS standards which may be more restrictive than UPU limitations.

Comparing International Letter-Post Services

	First-Class Package International Service (FCPIS)	First-Class Mail International (FCMI)	Airmail M-Bags	International Priority Airmail (IPA)
Best For	Small packets containing goods or documents weighing over 1 lb. Max value \$400	Envelopes of documents or cards weighing under 1 lb. (15.994 oz)	Large sacks of printed matter going to one addressee. (Max 66 lbs.)	Commercial service designed for volume mailings FCMI postcards, letters, & flats, and FCPIS small packets
Customs Forms	Customs form (with electronic data) is required	No customs form required	Customs form (with electronic data) is required	IPA M-Bags: Always require a customs form. All other IPA items: Customs form requirement is based on bag content.
Max.	Weight: 4 lbs. Value: \$400	Weight: 15.994 oz	Gross Sack Weight: 66 lbs. Weight per item: not defined Value: not defined	Gross Sack Weight: 66 lbs. Weight per item: Letter: 3.5oz, Flat: 17.6oz, Package 4.4 lbs. Value: \$400 / item

International Addressing

- Addressing formats vary by country
- Check the placement of the ZIP Code
- Verify if the country requires or recommends non-traditional elements:
 - Geocoded address
 - Email address or telephone number
 - See “Observations” in the Individual Country Listings section of the IMM
- UPU Downloadable Addressing Guides
<https://www.upu.int/en/Postal-Solutions/Programmes-Services/Addressing-Solutions/>

Djibouti

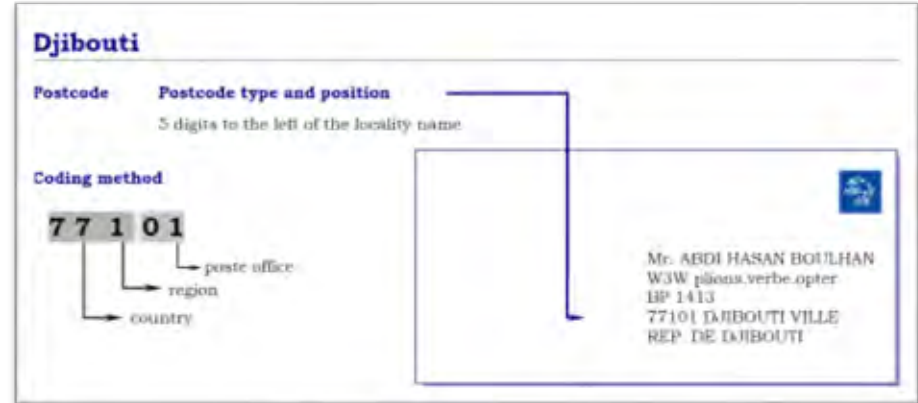
Postcode **Postcode type and position**
5 digits to the left of the locality name

Coding method

7 7 1 0 1

country region poste office

Mr. ABDI HASAN BOULHAN
W3W pilions.verbe.opter
BP 1413
77101 DJIBOUTI VILLE
REP. DE DJIBOUTI



Canada

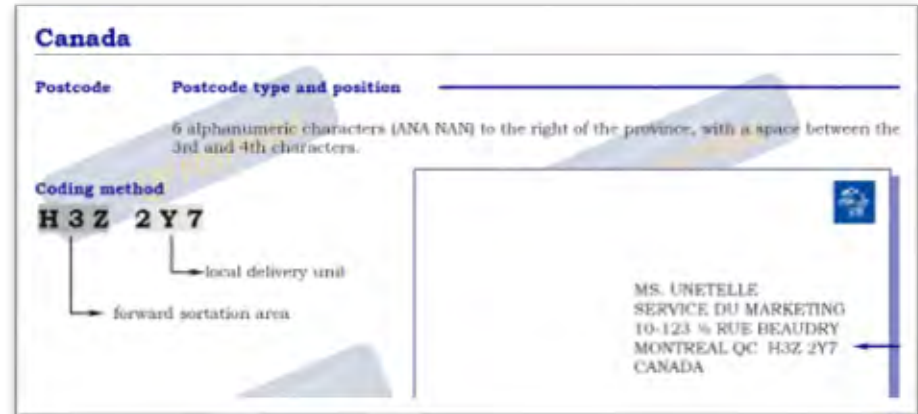
Postcode **Postcode type and position**
6 alphanumeric characters (ANA NAN) to the right of the province, with a space between the 3rd and 4th characters.

Coding method

H 3 Z 2 Y 7

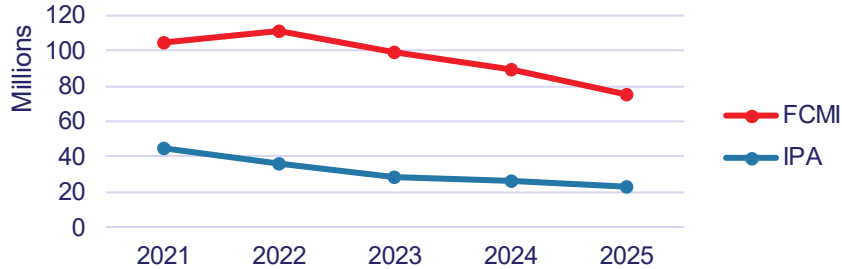
forward sortation area local delivery unit

MS. UNETELLE
SERVICE DU MARKETING
10-123 % RUE BEAUDRY
MONTREAL QC H3Z 2Y7
CANADA

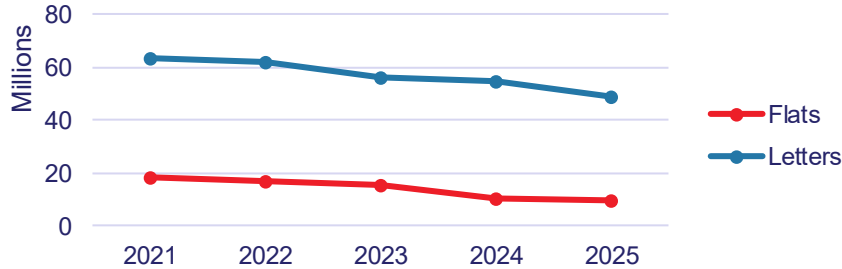


Volume Trends

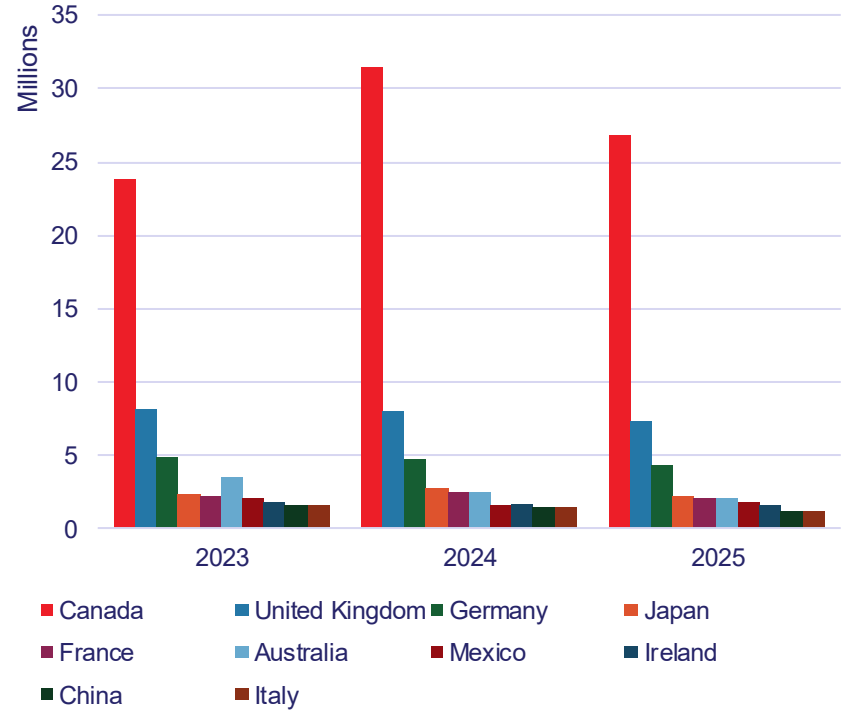
Outbound Letter-Post (Worldwide)



Inbound Letter Post (Worldwide)



FCMI – Letters, Cards & Flats Top 10 Countries





Direct Mail Without Borders

Jason Kiefer, Director Postal Affairs and Mailing Operations, Clev Systems

Why Every Mail Owner Should Include International Direct Mail



- **Physical Mail Gets Noticed**

98% of consumers check their physical mailbox every day. (USPS)

- **Consumers Prefer Direct Mail**

73% of consumers prefer direct mail for brand communications. (Canada Post)

International Direct Mail by the Numbers

Metric	Detail
180+ Countries	Reachable via international mail through USPS.
4.4% Response Rate	Direct mail response rate vs. 0.12% for email. (DMA/ANA)
2.5 Billion Households	Addressable worldwide. (UN Global Estimate)

The Digital Noise Problem Volume & Fatigue

- **Overwhelmed by Digital Content**

Consumers are bombarded across every screen, every hour of the day.

- **High Message Volume Causes Disengagement**

Audiences have learned to tune out repetitive digital messaging.



More Than a Mail Piece

Digital Integration & Measurable Trust

- **Integrates with Digital**

Pair mail with QR codes, personalized URLs, and retargeting to create a seamless journey from mailbox to website to conversion.

- **Builds Measurable Trust**

Consumers rate physical mail as the most trustworthy marketing channel — trust translates directly into higher engagement and loyalty.

- **Know your audience**

When designing the piece keep the recipient in mind.

More Than a Mail Piece Know the Audience

- **United Kingdom**

Design a straightforward message, showing clear value & obvious call-to-action.

- **Germany**

Design should be detailed, logical in structure.

- **France**

Create an art piece, visually striking, a piece that tells a story.



More Than a Mail Piece Know the Audience

- **Australia**

Australian audiences respond well to practical, benefit driven messaging.

- **Latam**

In LATAM markets, bold visuals and strong promotional messaging tend to drive engagement.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE:
Direct Mail Preferences Around the World

AUSTRALIA

- Practical & Offer-Driven
- Strong Call to Action

LATAM (LATIN AMERICA)

- Visual & Promotional
- Bold Call to Action

AUSTRALIA

- Clear Value (Discounts, Savings)
- Benefit-Focused Messaging
- Balanced Design

LATAM (LATIN AMERICA)

- Bright & Eye-Catching Design
- Strong Promotional Messaging
- Clear, Direct Language

TOP PERFORMERS:

Print & Mail In-Country

Benefits

- **Speed to Market**

Mail enters the local postal network and delivers on domestic timelines.

- **Piece Quality**

Local printing reduces damage during international transit.

- **Personalization to Target**

Easier to adapt language, currency, and offers for the local market.

Print & Mail In-Country

Key Considerations

Consideration	Detail
Local Postal Regulations	Each country has its own mail prep, addressing, and delivery standards.
Vetting Local Partners	Quality control, data security, and production standards vary by region.
Data Privacy Laws	GDPR and other regional laws govern how recipient data can be handled.

International Mail Postal Markings

Delivered by



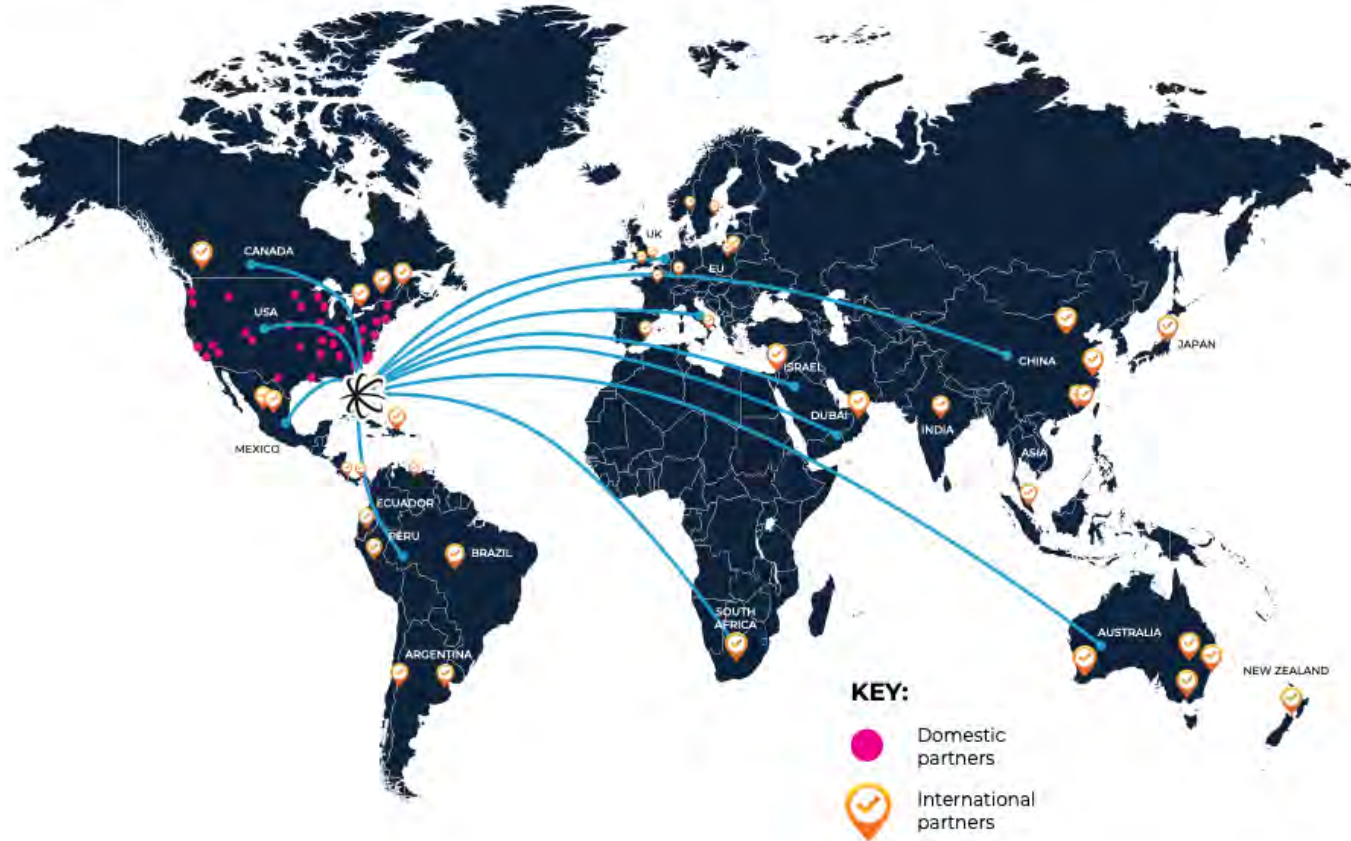
IMEX
Station A
PO Box 54
Windsor, ON
N9A 6J5



INT'L PRIORITY AIRMAIL
PAR AVION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CHICAGO, IL
PERMIT NO 7027

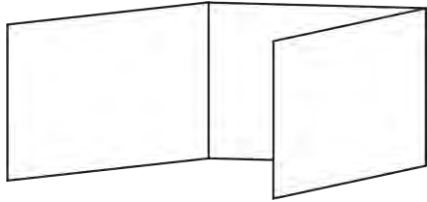


Calev Systems International Printing & Mail Capabilities



International Mail Formats

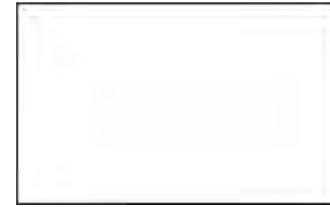
Choosing the Right Format for Your Campaign



- **6pg Tri-fold Landscape**

Folds to a 9(w) x 5.125(h)

.03307lbs / 15g



- **Postcard**

9(w) x 6(h)

.01984lbs / 9g

Recommended Trim Sizes by Country

Design for Compliance & Efficiency



UK

210mm x 148mm
8.26" x 5.83"

Large Letter Format



Germany / EU

235mm x 125mm
9.25" x 4.92"

EU Standard Size



Australia / NZ

230mm x 130mm
9.05" x 5.12"

AU/NZ Letter Size



LATAM / Brazil

210mm x 148mm
8.26" x 5.83"

LATAM/Brazil Format



Optimize Postage, Speed & Delivery Performance





Jason Kiefer

Director, Postal Affairs & Mailing Operations

M: 802.989.3125

calevsystems.com



Simplifying Cross-Border Mail

Christy Hulsart, Vice President, Sales, TMG Worldwide

Why International Mail Is Different



Sending mail outside the United States involves several additional factors that domestic mail does not, including:

- Country-specific addressing formats
- Customs and export compliance
- International transportation
- Local postal regulations

Without the right partner, international mail can become expensive and difficult to manage.

Why Partner with an International Mail Consolidator

While International mailing does involve additional logistics, the right partnership makes it easier than most businesses expect.

Choose a partner that will:

- Offer a range of delivery service options
- Partner with multiple leading worldwide postal operators
- Handle the complexity of worldwide logistics on your behalf
- Put their customers first



USPS Postal Qualified Wholesaler (PQW) Program



To qualify for the program, wholesalers must:

- Meet volume requirements and commitments
- Demonstrate the ability to prepare manifests and transmit electronic data for USPS acceptance facilities

USPS PQW's have access to bulk mailing services, which require workshare and can deposit directly at International Sorting Centers (ISCs)

USPS International Priority Airmail (IPA)



Ideal for business mailers looking to send urgent items overseas; typically for invoices, statements, financial documents, etc.

- Must be sorted by destination and size/format
- Minimum volumes per destination and mailing
- USPS Permit Indicia
- USA return address

Local Country Direct Posting

- Ideal for Larger Identical Mailings
- Marketing Mail or Transactional Mail
- Consolidators can help you with local post office requirements, clearance and transportation
- Canada Post Smartmail Marketing Services
 - Personalized Mail
 - Postal Code Targeting
 - Neighbourhood Mail
- Royal Mail Advertising Mail Service (UK)



International Multi-Carrier Networks



- Consolidators partner with worldwide postal operators and agents
- Customize mail services to achieve affordability and service standards
- Manage all transportation to either destination country or agent
- Pass postage savings onto clients

The TMG Difference

Global Reach

Access to postal networks in 200+ countries and territories

Volume & Technology

Our combined volume, postal relationships, and technology deliver reliability and savings you can measure.

Compliance

TSA-certified facilities and strict chain-of-custody protocols ensure all shipments meet security requirements.

Experience

Over 40 years in global mail and parcel logistics; Dedicated teams that understand your business and timelines

End-to-End Solutions

From pickup to final delivery — preparation, routing, customs, tracking, and reporting all managed by TMG.

Built Around Your Needs

We design distribution plans around your specific volume, timeline, budget, and destination. No one-size-fits-all.

TMG International Services



USPS International Priority Airmail

Priority mail service using 100% USPS International network.



Priority Mail

Fast and economical priority delivery for time-sensitive international mailings.



Standard Mail

Cost-effective delivery for international mailings.



Publications & Catalogs

Specialized handling for publishers, associations, and marketers ensuring delivery worldwide.



Parcels & Packets

Affordable international parcel delivery with tracking and optimized carrier selection for each client's needs.



Fulfillment

Flexible automation performed in-house and managed by our web-based system for inventory, file management and auto-alerts.



Come Visit Us
At the National Postal Forum
Booth #435



NATIONAL POSTAL FORUM | PHOENIX, AZ

