

Postal service curbing mail contraband



BASED ON the trend of unscrupulous persons using mail to transport many types of contraband, the postal service is now even more vigilant in its analysis of mail items to detect such infringements and contain them.

An electronic-wave security scanner – dubbed an ‘X-Ray’ machine in normal parlance – was recently put into service by Jamaica Post. It was acquired to facilitate the security forces in their scrutiny of mail items to boost the customary security screening operations.

Postmaster General/CEO Michael Gentles was quite upbeat when queried about the latest addition to the Postal Security Corps’ stock of detection equipment, and insisted that the acquisition cost – stated to be “in the thousands of U.S. dollar” was “worth every penny”, given its tremendous detection capabilities.

He also stated that there was an immediate positive effect in terms of expedited mail processing speed, in that screening via an electronic apparatus drastically reduced processing time versus manually inspecting mail items.

LESS INTRUSIVE

Additionally, Gentles said that this methodology was less intrusive as most mail items do not now need to be opened for scrutiny. On this matter, he said, “I am sure that every customer will prefer to have us deliver their precious mail item intact, with all the original wrapping preserved. This is just what we wish to accomplish, but as we all know, some deviant individuals attempt to use us as an annex to their evil schemes.

“This is not likely to ever stop, thus we are now enhancing our customer service capability for faster mail delivery while preserving, or rather, augmenting our capability to detect contraband in the mail.” The term ‘contraband’ includes items such as narcotics, but also applies to items that may attract customs duties and prohibited articles.



GENTLES

This high-tech machine is apparently one of the types that can scan many types of materials, including a variety of metals, but on this and other aspects of the equipment’s capabilities, Gentles was silent.

He commented: “I am certain the public will understand that this topic must involve a level of confidentiality, and thus such details will be restricted.” Given the level of detection thus experienced by the police, the Jamaica Post CEO is extremely optimistic regarding the potential impact of ongoing police investigations into illegal activities involving mail infringements, but would not elaborate.

He would only state: “Our allies include the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the Island Special Constabulary Force, Air Jamaica – the national airline – and other airlines, the Port Security Corps as well as Airports Authority, Jamaica Customs and AJAS. As a group, we are cognisant of the potential for expediting investigations to thwart those persons intent on unlawful activity now available by utilising this new equipment.”

Lance Hylton, chairman of the Postal Corporation of Jamaica (Post Corp), expressed his pleasure at the fact that the equipment acquisition project was fully supported by the Ministry of Industry, Technology, Energy and Commerce, being part of the Post Corp board’s mandate to modernise the postal service.

Hylton added: “The board commends the security forces for their support of mail contraband interdiction efforts.”



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Drugs hidden in mail items detected by the new security scanning equipment used by the police at Jamaica Post to expedite the processing time for customary security screening operations. Postmaster General/CEO Michael Gentles stated that security checks are now faster, with enhanced precision.

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This is to facilitate a scheduled all-island staff meeting

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The Jamaica Library Service apologises for any inconvenience this closure may cause.

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