

# **Jamaica's Mail Tracking Advances Further With Barcoded Labels**

The term 'High-Tech' is usually associated with some element of computer use, so it's not surprising that the new barcoded labels being introduced by the Jamaican Postal Administration for tracking Registered Letters utilise a digital format for data to be captured by a computerised scanner.

"Incorporating technology: that's the only way forward", says Postmaster General/CEO, Michael Gentles. He outlined that the background to this development was the result of on-going negotiations between the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and all member countries for the creation of a single data recording format to be used internationally for tracking specific mail items. Gentles indicated that "We will be implementing this barcoded label format for 'Registered Letters' as an element in advancing the pace of postal service modernisation. This computerised method presents significant advantages for reducing processing time and errors from manual data input, and will boost efficiency in this aspect of our service."

## **USAGE**

The barcode begins with the letters 'RR' followed by nine (9) digits and end with the letters 'JM'. Tracking for parcels being sent overseas has been benefiting from this barcoded label arrangement from 2002. At this time, in concert with many other postal administrations globally, Jamaica has now added the barcode tracking system to registered mail. This major modernisation project for registered items will, however, initially begin with the barcoded labels being utilised only for registered mail being sent overseas.

Gentles explains that "This is a cost-savings strategy and is applied to prevent waste of funds, as we have decided to continue to use the existing non-barcoded labels for local registered mail until such stocks are exhausted. The use of the barcoded labels will be fully integrated for both local as well as overseas registered mail once existing stocks of the previous registered mail label are depleted." He noted that it is more financially prudent to continue to use those traditional labels given the large number still in stock. The postal executive noted that "Throughout this organisation, we pay keen attention to the aspect of cost-savings, and the cost-savings committee is very active in seeking to control costs and reduce expenditure".

## **BARCODED LABEL USES**

The self-adhesive labels are printed with three-parts, each being detachable. The first strip of the label is placed on the registered letter. The second strip is placed on the customer's receipt and the third strip is placed in the Post Office's permanent records.

## **ENVELOPE SIZE**

Gentles noted that there is an additional aspect: "We are also advising the public that this may impact on the type of envelope used, as there MUST be enough space below the sender's address for the barcoded label. This translates to the need for envelopes to be sized at least four inches (100cm) from top to bottom". Envelopes must be wide enough to accommodate all information facets: the destination address, sender's address (return address), barcoded label, indication that the item is intended for airmail, as well as postage stamps. A diagram with a sample of the required envelope size, along with the proposed layout of all required information is shown.

## **INSTRUCTIONS**

Customers must note that the label will be placed on the address side, beneath the sender's name and address which is to be written at the top left hand corner, so this will mean that small envelopes may not be accepted as there will not be enough space to record all the above information. Note too that all writing must be legible (block letters) and in dark ink (preferably black).

Jamaica Post reminds everyone that in accordance with UPU rules:

- registered mail can only be delivered to the addressee
- a signature of acceptance from the recipient is required
- ID is required (Driver's License, Passport or Voter's ID)
- TRN card is required (not required if presenting a Driver's License)

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## **REQUIRED ENVELOPE SIZE FOR REGISTERED MAIL**



The new barcoded label introduced for use on registered mail. Until December 2007, these labels will be used only on overseas registered mail. All registered mail will have barcoded labels come January 2008, but local registered mail will presently remain with the previous (non-barcoded) labels in order to save money by utilising as much of remaining stocks as possible.

Photo showing a sample of the required envelope size, along with the proposed layout of all required information. With the advent of the use of a barcoded label for registered mail, customers will need to use an envelope no smaller than this. The barcoded label is being implemented by Jamaica in compliance with a global standard set by the universal Postal Union (UPU).