



UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

List of prohibited articles

2004 Bucharest Convention, Letter Post Regulations,
articles 15, including commentary, and RL 144

2004 Bucharest Convention, Parcel Post Regulations,
articles 15, including commentary, and RC 132

BERNE

INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

General information

1. Division of the list

This list consists of three parts.

Part I includes general information, namely:

- General information;
- Postal administrations contained in the List of prohibited articles
- General list of UPU member countries and territories included in the Union;
- Excerpt from the general provisions of the 2004 Bucharest Acts, with mention of prohibitions or insertions prohibited in postal items.

Part II consists of information sent to the International Bureau by postal administrations on the basis of a model referring to the World Customs Organization (WCO), the *Harmonized Commodity Descriptions and Coding System*, which consist of 21 sections and 97 chapters.

Part III contains, in accordance with article RL 144 of the Detailed Regulations of the Convention, the information given by the United Nations about:

- a narcotics placed under international control (yellow sheets);
- b psychotropic substances under international control (green sheets).

Part IV contains the list of definitions of 9 classes of dangerous goods in the IATA Dangerous Goods Regulations (pink sheets).

2. Supplement

The date of publication appears at the bottom of each odd-numbered page. Amendments to this list should be notified to the International Bureau, which will inform member administrations of the Union by means of updates.

Postal administrations contained in the List of prohibited articles

Argentina	Malaysia
Armenia	Mali
Australia	Mauritius
Austria	Mexico
Azerbaijan	Moldova
Bahrain	Monaco (same as France)
Belarus	Mongolia
Belgium	Morocco
Benin	Mozambique
Bolivia	Myanmar
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Namibia
Botswana	Nauru
Brazil	Nepal
Brunei Darussalam	Netherlands
Bulgaria (Rep)	– Netherlands Antilles
Canada	New Zealand
Cape Verde	Nicaragua
Central African Rep	Nigeria
China (People's Rep)	Norway
– Hongkong, China	Oman
– Macao, China	Pakistan
Comoros	Panama (Rep)
Croatia	Paraguay
Cuba	Peru
Cyprus	Philippines
Denmark	Portugal
Dominican Republic	Qatar
Ecuador	Romania
Egypt	Russian Federation
Estonia	Rwanda
Ethiopia	Saint Christopher (St Kitts) and Nevis
Fiji	Saint Lucia
France	Saudi Arabia
Gabon	Senegal
Georgia	Serbia
Germany	Singapore
Ghana	Slovakia
Great Britain	Spain
Greece	Sudan
Hungary (Rep)	Swaziland
Iceland	Sweden
India	Switzerland
Indonesia	Syrian Arab Rep
Iran (Islamic Rep)	Tajikistan
Iraq	Tanzania (United Rep)
Ireland	Thailand
Israel	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Italy	Turkmenistan
Japan	Uganda
Jordan	Ukraine
Kazakhstan	United Arab Emirates
Kenya	United States of America
Korea (Rep)	Uruguay
Kuwait	Uzbekistan
Lao People's Dem Rep	Vanuatu
Latvia	Viet Nam
Lebanon	Yemen
Lesotho	Zambia
Liechtenstein (same as Switzerland)	Zimbabwe
Lithuania	
Luxembourg	
Madagascar	
Malawi	
	Total: 122 administrations

General List of UPU member countries and territories included in the Union

Afghanistan	Finland (including the Åland Islands)
Albania	France
Algeria	– French Overseas Departments:
Angola	– – French Guiana
Antigua and Barbuda	– – Guadeloupe (including St Barthélemy and St Martin)
Argentina	– – Martinique
Armenia	– – Réunion
Australia	– Territorial Community of Mayotte
– Norfolk Island	– Territorial Community of St Pierre and Miquelon
Austria	– French Overseas Territories coming within the Union's jurisdiction by virtue of article 23 of the Constitution:
Azerbaijan	– – French Polynesia (including Clipperton Island)
Bahamas	– – French Southern and Antarctic Territories (St Paul and Amsterdam Islands, Crozet Islands, Kerguelen Islands, Terre Adélie)
Bahrain	– – New Caledonia
Bangladesh	– – Scattered islands (Bassas da India, Europa, Juan de Nova, Glorieuses, Tromelin)
Barbados	– – Wallis and Futuna Islands
Belarus	Gabon
Belgium	Gambia
Belize	Georgia
Benin	Germany
Bhutan	Ghana
Bolivia	Great Britain:
Bosnia and Herzegovina	– United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Botswana	– Guernsey
Brazil	– Jersey
Brunei Darussalam	– Isle of Man
Bulgaria (Rep)	Overseas Territories (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland):
Burkina Faso	– Anguilla
Burundi	– Ascension
Cambodia	– Bermuda
Cameroon	– British Indian Ocean Territory
Canada	– British Virgin Islands
Cape Verde	– Cayman Islands
Central African Rep	– Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
Chad	– Gibraltar
Chile	– Montserrat
China (People's Rep)	– Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands
– Hongkong, China	– South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
– Macao, China	– St Helena
Colombia	– St Helena (Dependencies) (Islands)
Comoros	– Tristan da Cunha
Congo (Rep)	– Turks and Caicos Islands
Costa Rica	Greece
Côte d'Ivoire (Rep)	Grenada
Croatia	Guatemala
Cuba	Guinea
Cyprus	Guinea-Bissau
Czech Rep	Guyana
Dem People's Rep of Korea	Haiti
Dem Rep of the Congo	Honduras (Rep)
Denmark	Hungary (Rep)
– Farøe Islands	Iceland
– Greenland	India
Djibouti	Indonesia
Dominica	Iran (Islamic Rep)
Dominican Republic	Iraq
Ecuador	Ireland
Egypt	Israel
El Salvador	Italy
Equatorial Guinea	
Eritrea	
Estonia	
Ethiopia	
Fiji	

Jamaica
 Japan
 Jordan
 Kazakhstan
 Kenya
 Kiribati
 Korea (Rep)
 Kuwait
 Kyrgyzstan
 Lao People's Dem Rep
 Latvia
 Lebanon
 Lesotho
 Liberia
 Libyan Jamahiriya
 Liechtenstein
 Lithuania
 Luxembourg
 Madagascar
 Malawi
 Malaysia
 Maldives
 Mali
 Malta
 Mauritania
 Mauritius
 Mexico
 Moldova
 Monaco
 Mongolia
 Montenegro
 Morocco
 Mozambique
 Myanmar
 Namibia
 Nauru
 Nepal
 Netherlands
 Netherlands Antilles and Aruba
 – Aruba
 – Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten)
 New Zealand (including the Ross Dependency)
 – Cook Islands
 – Niue
 – Tokelau
 Nicaragua
 Niger
 Nigeria
 Norway
 Oman
 Pakistan
 Panama (Rep)
 Papua New Guinea
 Paraguay
 Peru
 Philippines
 Poland
 Portugal
 Qatar
 Romania
 Russian Federation
 Rwanda
 Saint Christopher (St Kitts) and Nevis
 Saint Lucia
 Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Samoa
 San Marino
 Sao Tome and Principe
 Saudi Arabia
 Senegal
 Serbia
 Seychelles
 Sierra Leone
 Singapore
 Slovakia
 Slovenia
 Solomon Islands
 Somalia
 South Africa
 Spain
 Sri Lanka
 Sudan
 Suriname
 Swaziland
 Sweden
 Switzerland
 Syrian Arab Rep
 Tajikistan
 Tanzania (United Rep)
 Thailand
 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
 Timor-Leste
 Togo
 Tonga (including Niuafu'ou)
 Trinidad and Tobago
 Tunisia
 Turkey
 Turkmenistan
 Tuvalu
 Uganda
 Ukraine
 United Arab Emirates
 United States of America
 – Territories of the United States of America coming within the Union's jurisdiction by virtue of article 23 of the Constitution:
 – – Guam
 – – Puerto Rico
 – – Samoa
 – – Virgin Islands of the United States of America
 – Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands:
 – – Mariana Islands including Saipan and Tinian, but not the United States Possession of Guam

Uruguay
 Uzbekistan
 Vanuatu
 Vatican
 Venezuela
 Viet Nam
 Yemen
 Zambia
 Zimbabwe

UN member countries whose situation with regard to the UPU has not yet been settled:

Andorra
 Marshall Islands
 Micronesia (Federated States of)
 Palau

Special provisions and Customs matters

Article 15

Items not admitted. Prohibitions

- 1 General
 - 1.1 Items not fulfilling the conditions laid down in the Convention and the Regulations shall not be admitted. Items sent in furtherance of a fraudulent act or with the intention of avoiding full payment of the appropriate charges shall not be admitted.
 - 1.2 Exceptions to the prohibitions contained in this article are set out in the Regulations.
 - 1.3 All postal administrations shall have the option of extending the prohibitions contained in this article, which may be applied immediately upon their inclusion in the relevant compendium.

- 2 Prohibitions in all categories of items
 - 2.1 The insertion of the articles referred to below shall be prohibited in all categories of items:
 - 2.1.1 narcotics and psychotropic substances;
 - 2.1.2 obscene or immoral articles;
 - 2.1.3 articles the importation or circulation of which is prohibited in the country of destination;
 - 2.1.4 articles which, by their nature or their packing, may expose officials or the general public to danger, or soil or damage other items, postal equipment or third-party property;
 - 2.1.5 documents having the character of current and personal correspondence exchanged between persons other than the sender and the addressee or persons living with them.

- 3 Explosive, flammable or radioactive materials and other dangerous substances
 - 3.1 The insertion of explosive, flammable or other dangerous substances as well as radioactive materials shall be prohibited in all categories of items.
 - 3.2 Exceptionally, the following substances and materials shall be admitted:
 - 3.2.1 the radioactive materials sent in letter-post items and postal parcels mentioned in article 16.1;
 - 3.2.2 the biological substances sent in letter-post items mentioned in article 16.2.

- 4 Live animals
 - 4.1 Live animals shall be prohibited in all categories of items.
 - 4.2 Exceptionally, the following shall be admitted in letter-post items other than insured items:
 - 4.2.1 bees, leeches and silk-worms;
 - 4.2.2 parasites and destroyers of noxious insects intended for the control of those insects and exchanged between officially recognized institutions;
 - 4.2.3 flies of the family Drosophilidae for biomedical research exchanged between officially recognized institutions.
 - 4.3 Exceptionally, the following shall be admitted in parcels:
 - 4.3.1 live animals whose conveyance by post is authorized by the postal regulations of the countries concerned.

- 5 Insertion of correspondence in parcels
 - 5.1 the insertion of the articles mentioned below shall be prohibited in postal parcels:
 - 5.1.1 documents having the character of current and personal correspondence;
 - 5.1.2 correspondence of any kind exchanged between persons other than the sender and the addressee or persons living with them.

- 6 Coins, bank notes and other valuable articles
 - 6.1 It shall be prohibited to insert coins, bank notes, currency notes or securities of any kind payable to bearer, travellers' cheques, platinum, gold or silver, whether manufactured or not, precious stones, jewels or other valuable articles:
 - 6.1.1 in uninsured letter-post items;
 - 6.1.1.1 however, if the internal legislation of the countries of origin and destination permits this, such articles may be sent in a closed envelope as registered items;
 - 6.1.2 in uninsured parcels, except where permitted by the internal legislation of the countries of origin and destination;
 - 6.1.3 in uninsured parcels exchanged between two countries which admit insured parcels;
 - 6.1.3.1 in addition, any administration may prohibit the enclosure of gold bullion in insured or uninsured parcels originating from or addressed to its territory or sent in transit à découvert across its territory; it may limit the actual value of these items.

VIII

- 7 Printed papers and literature for the blind
- 7.1 Printed papers and literature for the blind:
- 7.1.1 shall nor bear any inscription or contain any item of correspondence;
- 7.1.2 shall not contain any postage stamp or form of prepayment, whether cancelled or not, or any paper representing a monetary value, except in cases where the item contains as an enclosure a card, envelope or wrapper bearing the printed address of the sender of the item or his agent in the country of posting or destination of the original item, which is prepaid for return.
- 8 Treatment of items wrongly admitted
- 8.1 The treatment of items wrongly admitted is set out in the Regulations. However, items containing articles mentioned in 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 3.1 shall in no circumstances be forwarded to their destination, delivered to the addressees or returned to origin. In the case of articles mentioned in 2.1.1 and 3.1 discovered while in transit, such items shall be handled in accordance with the national legislation of the country of transit.

■ Commentary

15.2.1.1 The list of narcotics and psychotropic substances placed under international control (abbreviated list) is given in part III of the List of Prohibited Articles.

In an inquiry conducted by the IB among adms on smuggling narcotics and psychotropic substances by post, a number of difficulties emerged, particularly as regards the attitude to be adopted by the intermediate country having regard to the freedom of transit when closed mails are suspected of containing such arts. Congress adopted in this connection formal opinion C 54/Washington 1989, the operative part of which is given below:

“Congress invites postal administrations:

- i – to cooperate in combating the traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances whenever they are legally required to do so by their national authorities responsible for this matter;
 - to ensure respect for the fundamental principles of the international Post, in particular, the freedom of transit (art 1 of the Constitution and of the Convention);
- ii to make all appropriate arrangements with the relevant authorities of their countries to ensure that bags of mail in transit suspected of enclosing items containing narcotics or psychotropic substances are not opened, but to advise:
 - a by the quickest means, at the request of their customs authorities the administration of destination so that the suspected bags can easily be identified on arrival;
 - b by verification note, the administration of origin of the mail;
- iii to approach the legislative authorities, in consultation with the customs services, to ensure that laws and regulations do not prevent the use of the technique known as ‘controlled delivery’; the Customs of the transit country, if necessary with the agreement of the competent authorities, must take appropriate measures to inform the customs authorities of the country of destination and, possibly, of the country of origin of the suspect mails.”

15.2.1.2 It is at the discretion of each adm to decide what is meant by the term “obscene”.

15.2.1.3 Non-admission for conveyance or transit of correspondence items should be notified to the adms so that the public may be informed of the prohibition in good time.

Information about current prohibitions in Union member countries is communicated to the IB, which updates the List of Prohibited Articles on that basis. Each adm must ensure that, wherever possible, the information about current prohibition in its country and sent to the IB is set out in clear, precise and detailed terms and that it is kept up-to-date.

15.3 In addition to explosive or flammable substances, compressed gases, corrosive liquids, oxidizing and toxic substances and any other substances which could endanger human life or cause damage are to be considered dangerous.

The “List of definitions of dangerous goods prohibited from conveyance by post”, drawn up by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is given in part IV of the List of Prohibited Articles (pink sheets).

With regard to the safety of staff involved in handling items presumed to be dangerous (mail bombs), Congress issued recommendation C 76/Rio de Janeiro 1979, recommending to adms that they:

“a As preventive measures:

- i establish permanent liaison with the competent authorities of their countries (police, customs, national security committees, etc) in order:
 - to be informed of any threats or of signs indicating the dispatch of dangerous items;
 - to settle questions concerning the examination of items and the destruction of dangerous arts;
 - ii issue directives for their services based in particular on the information contained in the CCPS study on the measures to be taken to detect mail bombs and to protect staff against the risk of explosion when such items are discovered in the mail;
 - iii ensure that the examination of items presumed to be dangerous is carried out by the most appropriate methods;
 - iv have their national legislation adapted or supplemented, if necessary, with a view to authorizing operations enabling mail bombs to be detected;
 - v in conjunction with the competent authorities, alert the public with as much information as possible, subject to any security restrictions, so that they can take all necessary precautions for their personal safety;
- b As soon as dangerous items are reported or their presence presumed:
- i give the staff concerned full particulars concerning the external appearance of these items and the need to handle them with particular caution;
 - ii inform immediately and as fully as possible, by telecommunication, the IB of the UPU and the foreign postal administrations directly threatened.”

It also instructed the IB to inform immediately the adms of all member countries of the Union and to send them any information which may be of interest to them.

Congress also passed resolution C 39/Seoul 1994 urging postal adms, with the assistance of the IB, to:

- a strengthen measures aimed at preventing and detecting the insertion of prohibited and dangerous arts in postal items;
- b develop to this end educational measures suited to the local situation, for the benefit of postal customers and staff;
- c ensure wide dissemination of these measures and appropriate training for the staff, using the most effective modern technical methods.

15.6 By "currency notes" are meant notes issued by governmental, regional or municipal authorities as legal tender, as opposed to those issued by banking houses under the control and with the authorization of the government.

Cheques, securities payable to bearer and generally speaking any negotiable instruments which can easily be cashed at a bank shall be considered as "securities payable to bearer". Papers "representing a monetary value", such as lottery tickets, postage stamps and transport vouchers, may be enclosed in unregistered priority items and in unregistered sealed letters, while still prohibited in reduced-rate items.

Information about the admission in registered items under sealed cover are given in the Letter Post Compendium.

Part II

List of articles prohibited as imports or admitted conditionally by post in the countries concerned