

Applying for a licence

The Postal Services Act 2000 requires companies planning to carry mail “in the licensed area” – that is, most types of mail weighing less than 350 grams and costing less than £1 to post – to be licensed by Postcomm, the independent regulator for postal services in the UK.

Other postal operators, for example those carrying heavier or more expensive mail, are not required to have licences.


As regulator, Postcomm must make sure that mail is carried safely and securely and must therefore ensure anyone planning to set up as a postal operator in the licensed area can provide the necessary guarantees, and meet the minimum standards we set down in our:

- **mail integrity code**, which covers safety and security of the mail, and
- **common operational procedures code**, which sets out agreed standards for dealing with mail that has entered the systems of the wrong postal operator and needs to be redirected.

The licence application procedure includes a series of checks by Postcomm on the suitability of applicants. All applications are put out to consultation for a minimum of 28 days, so that mail operators, mail customers and any other interested parties can comment on them.

There is an application fee of £50 and, for licensees with a licensed area turnover in excess of £10m per annum, there is also an annual licence fee based on market share.

If you are planning to apply for a postal licence, please contact Postcomm’s licensing team for further information and advice, including a copy of our guidance for applicants.



If you are planning to carry mail that you think will be exempt from the licensing rules – prepaid access mail, for example – you may wish to contact us to discuss your plans. **Criminal offences may be committed by unlicensed operators who do not qualify for exemption from the licensing system.**

Useful links

- www.psc.gov.uk - Postcomm's website, for further information on all aspects of the mail market, including more information on the licensing application procedure

Please contact Postcomm for a full list of titles available in this series.

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Postcomm is the independent regulator for postal services in the UK. This is one of a series of fact sheets designed to provide background information on key issues in the postal services sector. Contact us at 6 Hercules Road, London, SE1 7DB. **Tel** 020 7593 2100, **Email** info@psc.gov.uk

A large print version is available.
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