

DIRECTION

To: the Postal Services Commission

DIRECTIONS UNDER SECTION 41 OF THE POSTAL SERVICES ACT 2000

The Secretary of State, in exercise of his powers under section 41(1) of the Postal Services Act 2000 (“the Act”), after consultation with the Postal Services Commission (“the Commission”) and the Consumer Council for Postal Services, gives the Commission the following direction:

1. The Commission shall impose, as a condition of a relevant licence¹, a requirement that the licence holder provide the free postal services² specified below to the descriptions of blind and partially sighted persons specified below.

Free postal services

2. As regards destinations in the United Kingdom, the free postal services are services in connection with the delivery of postal packets³ containing the items set out in Annex A and weighing no more than 7 kg which aim for delivery no later than the next working day after posting or which, if such a service is not provided by the licence holder, provide the nearest equivalent service.
3. As regards surface mail to all destinations other than in the United Kingdom, the free postal services are services in connection with the delivery of postal packets containing the items set out in Annex A and weighing no more than 7kg.
4. As regards airmail, the free postal services are
 - (a) services in connection with the delivery to destinations in the countries set out in Annex B of postal packets containing the items set out in Annex A and weighing up to 1 kg;
 - (b) all other services in connection with the delivery of postal packets containing the items set out in Annex A and weighing no more than 7 kg.
5. The services referred to in paragraph 4(b) in connection with the delivery of postal packets by airmail will be considered to be free services if either no tariff is applied or, where the standard airmail tariff for the packet concerned exceeds the standard surface mail tariff for that packet, a tariff is applied which does not exceed that difference.
6. Descriptions of blind and partially sighted persons
7. The descriptions of blind and partially sighted persons are:

¹ “Relevant licence” is defined in section 41(4) of the Act.

² “Postal services” are defined in section 125(1) of the Act.

³ “Postal packet” is defined in section 125(1) of the Act.

- persons registered as blind under the provisions of the National Assistance Act 1948; and
- partially sighted - persons whose standard of close-up vision, with spectacles, certified by an ophthalmologist, doctor or ophthalmic optician, is N12 (print size) or less.

This direction to the Commission does not include a direction under section 41(2) that the requirement shall come into force.

Date

Signed by

Items which can be sent free of charge

- a) books, papers and letters which are specifically prepared for use by blind people;
- b) papers sent to anyone to be specially prepared or impressed so blind people can use them;
- c) relief maps;
- d) machines, frames and attachments for making impressions for blind people to use;
- e) writing frames and attachments;
- f) Braille instruction manuals;
- g) games (including card games);
- h) mathematical appliances and attachments;
- i) 'talking books' and 'talking newspapers', which are recordings of readings from printed sources, such as books, journals, newspapers, periodicals or similar publications;
- j) equipment used to play talking books and newspapers;
- k) metal plates impressed or sent for impressing for use by blind people;
- l) supplies of covers, envelopes and labels for sending articles for use by blind people;
- m) watches, clocks, timers, tools and measuring equipment designed for blind people to use;
- n) walking sticks adapted for blind people;
- o) harnesses for guide dogs; or
- p) computer disks and CDs which are specifically prepared for blind people.

European countries

Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Azores, Balearic Islands, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canary Islands, Corsica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Faeroe Islands, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Greenland, Hungary, Iceland, Irish Republic, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madeira, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Spitzbergen, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vatican City State.