



# CPC International Postal Update

By: John Cicchitti

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The quarter ending June 30 saw several important international postal developments. Ukraine's postal service is standing strong through the Russian invasion. Other posts continue to use new technologies in expanding operations, while some face labor or pandemic challenges. This and more are covered in our quarterly update below.

## [Ukrposhta Updates](#)



*A Ukrainian post office. Source: Wikimedia.org.*

International support for Ukrposhta, Ukraine's postal service, is strong. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) reports that 27 postal services around the world are providing help, through aid donations, reduced shipping rates, or other steps. For more information click [here](#). In addition, a [UPU fund](#) has been established through which countries can contribute to help rebuild Ukrposhta's infrastructure. More than 500 post offices have been destroyed since the war began.

Ukrposhta deeply appreciates the support. [Post & Parcel](#) reported that Ukrposhta CEO Igor Smelyansky said that he is "grateful to the postal operators that ship mail to Ukraine free of charge. This is the example of humanity prevailing over business decisions. The support we are receiving from posts from all over the world is very important for Ukraine and for every Ukrainian."

Ukrposhta is issuing stamps to commemorate Ukrainian resistance to Russian aggression. In late June, the service [announced](#) the winner of a stamp design contest was Anastasia Bondarets. Bondarets' design features a Ukrainian tractor towing a Russian tank. The tractor's Ukrainian flag flutters in the wind, while the tank's main gun and antenna are bent.

Another Ukrposhta-issued stamp [depicts](#) the defiance of Ukrainian fighters, showing a soldier flipping off a Russian warship. The stamp commemorates the Ukrainian defense of Snake Island, where a small band of Ukrainian troops were protecting it against a much larger Russian force. During the first issuance, lines to purchase the stamp

stretched for over a quarter-mile. Ukrposhta issued the stamp twice more, in mid-May and in early June.

## **Technology and Innovations**

### **Royal Mail Uses Drones to Create New Routes**

While many postal services are using drones on existing routes, the United Kingdom's Royal Mail is creating entirely new routes for drones. Mail will be delivered to remote locations in the British Isles like "the Hebrides, the Isles of Scilly, the Shetlands, and the Orkney Islands," according to [Sky News](#). Over the past year-and-a-half, delivery drones have successfully reached the Isle of Mull and the Isles of Scilly.

Royal Mail anticipates using 500 drones to cover the United Kingdom. Each drone can carry up to 100kg (approximately 220 lbs.) of mail.



*Drone delivery to the Isles of Scilly. Source: Royal Mail.*

### **Poste Italiane Invests in Digital Payment Startup**

Italy's postal service group invested \$27 million in Scalapay, a digital payment company, [altfi](#) reported in early May. With "ecommerce transactions soaring 60 per cent" in Italy in 2020, and increasing revenues on its digital payment side, Poste Italiane has looked "to expand its remit into the digital sphere." Scalapay has raised \$727 million in capital.

## Nigerian Postal Service Employs Spanish Company to Develop E-Mail Infrastructure

Nigeria’s postal service has hired Lleida.net, a Spanish internet access company, “to send all its registered electronic communications,” according to a [press release](#) from the company. The service will facilitate use of its patented technology, “registered e-mail containing an electronic signature.”

Lleida estimates that revenue from the project in Nigeria could exceed four million euros.

## Germany Expands Electric Vehicle Fleet

Deutsche Post reached an electric vehicle fleet of 20,000 in May, according to [Post & Parcel](#). Germany’s postal operator has committed to using a greener fleet. “Deliveries in over 50% of our delivery districts are now carbon-free...If conditions allow, sustainable, carbon-neutral post and parcel services can become a reality Germany-wide in the course of the next few years,” the company’s CEO said, according to Post & Parcel.



*A Deutsche Post electric vehicle. Source: Deutsche Post/DHL.*

## Assorted

### Strikes Likely to Hit Royal Mail

Royal Mail managers will strike in mid-to-late-July, [Reuters](#) reported. Royal Mail has been planning to cut the number of its managers and these cuts prompted the labor action. Unite, the union that represents managers, said that they “are determined to force the business to take a different path.” The strike will not be a full stoppage, but a “work to rule” action.

Meanwhile, lower-level workers at Royal Mail are also considering a strike, [The Guardian](#) reported. The Communication Workers' Union (CWU) polled workers beginning on June 28 on labor action after Royal Mail offered a pay increase of 2%. CWU alleged that the increase did nothing to offset the cost of inflation. The union will announce the results of the strike ballot on July 19.

### **Antarctica Looking for Postal Workers**

An island in Antarctica is looking for workers to manage the British-owned post office/museum for five months. [The Washington Post](#) reports that the duties include not only postal sorting, but monitoring the population of penguins and “environmental data collection.” Workers are also expected to entertain “the thousands of tourists who come by boat during the season.” Each year, thousands apply to fill just four positions.

*About the author: John Cicchitti is a Research Fellow with the Consumer Postal Council.*