



CPC International Postal Update

By: **Ethan Shapiro**

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In the quarter ending December 31, there were many significant operational changes at posts and notable work actions. This included Elon Musk filing a lawsuit against the Swedish Transportation Agency related to postal workers' actions, a price hike for Japanese postage for the first time in 30 years, and employees at Nigeria's NIPOST locking its new Chief Executive Officer out of the building. These issues and more are covered in our quarterly postal update below.

Operations and Technology

Japanese Post Announces Major Stamp Price Hike

With deteriorating finances due to a recent decline in deliveries, Japan Post announced that it planned to increase the price of stamps for standard-size letters from ¥84 to ¥110 (\$0.77). According to the [Japan Times](#), the post suffered an operating loss of ¥21.1 billion in Fiscal Year 2022, marking the first time it had failed to break even since the privatization of postal services in 2007. The move would also raise the cost of stamps for non-standard-size envelopes and packages by roughly 30% and would be the first price hike in 30 years. It could take effect as soon as this fall.



An image of a rare Japanese postage stamp. Source: StampPhenom.com

Germany Unveils New Consumer Assistance Program

In mid-December, the German Consumer Center (*Verbraucherzentral*) launched a website that allows citizens to file complaints and better understand their rights as postal customers. Julia Gerhard, a representative for the Federal Network Agency (*Bundesnetzagentur*), told news outlet [Tagesschau](#) that the new complaints tool comes as a response to growing dissatisfaction with the German postal service. Gerhard said that she hoped implementing the website would improve service.

United Kingdom's Royal Mail Offering Parcel Lockers

After losing £319 million in the first half of its 2023-24 fiscal year, the UK's Royal Mail is preparing to implement the use of parcel lockers in an attempt to become profitable

again and retain its market share against competitors like Amazon. According to [BNN Breaking](#), Royal Mail recognized a need for change to keep up with the rapid shift in industry dynamics. The move to add parcel lockers addresses an overreliance on postal employees amidst hiring shortages.

Australia Post Ends Daily Mail Services

After the Australian government relaxed requirements for five-day-a-week deliveries, Australia Post announced it would reduce letter deliveries in 2024. Australia Post plans to deliver ordinary mail every other business day to address its first year of losses and nearly a decade of declining finances. According to [The Guardian](#), Postal employees will continue on their usual routes, but only half of their round will receive mail on a given day. Australia Post's shift in policy came after a \$200 million loss in 2022-23 led to a search for alternatives to closing full-service post offices and raising business mail rates.

Worker Actions and Related

Nigerian Postal Service Workers Protest New CEO

According to the [Heritage Times](#), Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST) employees organized a protest against newly appointed CEO and Postmaster General Tola Odeyemi. On October 16, workers shut down NIPOST headquarters in Abuja to prevent Odeyemi from entering the headquarters. The workers, who said they preferred to work under former Postmaster General Adeyemi Adepoju, staged the protest to demonstrate their discontent to President Bola Tinubu.



NIPOST employees protesting the appointment of Tola Odeyemi in October. Source: Trust Radio Nigeria

Tesla Sues Swedish Government Over Worker Protest

According to CNBC, Tesla sued the Swedish Transportation Agency in November after postal employees blocked Tesla license plate deliveries to show solidarity with striking workers. Workers' unions in Sweden have recently put pressure on Tesla after it failed to sign a collective bargaining agreement with technicians and mechanics. In response to a story about the protest, Tesla CEO Elon Musk took to X (formerly Twitter), writing, "This is insane." According to BNN Bloomberg, Tesla lost an appeal in December, effectively banning the automotive giant from delivering vehicles to Sweden. The Swedish court of appeals ruled that Tesla cannot receive license plates for new electric vehicles, meaning that any new Teslas sold in Sweden will not be street legal.



A photo of Tesla CEO Elon Musk. Source: The New York Times

Overworked Postal Employees On Strike In Cyprus

In response to an uptick in job insecurity, overtime demands, and widespread burnout among postal employees, 300 Branch Council of Postal Distributors members went on strike in Cyprus. According to Cypriot news outlet [Kathimerini](#), Antonis Panagi, President of the Branch Council, stated that members unanimously agreed to halt overtime work indefinitely starting on January 2. Panagi added that the agreement to strike was partly due to frustration over a lack of discourse between postal workers and the General Directorate of Cyprus Postal Services, who largely ignored employees' calls for reform.

Assorted Postal News

Australia's Last Riverboat Postman

Australia's expansive geography and sparse population create unique problems for its domestic postal service, Australia Post. An [Australia Broadcasting Corporation](#) article outlined the story of Justin Pigneguy, who runs the Riverboat Postman with his brother and wife and has been embraced by the local community of Hawkesbury for delivering mail by boat. In remote areas like Hawkesbury, Pigneguy's mail route is the only way locals can connect with the outside world daily. Australia



Justin Pigneguy delivering mail on the Hawkesbury River. Source: Australia Broadcasting Corporation

Post has recently contracted planes to deliver mail to roughly 32 remote properties around the Broken Hill area.

Cambodia Post Digitalizes Postal Services With New Website

Cambodia Post reached a significant milestone in digitalizing its postal operations by launching a new website and mobile app to help facilitate small-package trading. The app and website were launched in collaboration with Swisscontact as part of the Global Alliance of Trade Facilitation's Improving Small Package E-Trade for SMEs (SeT4SME) Project. In an interview with [B2B Cambodia](#), Cambodia Post's Director General, Then Samvisoth, said, "The new website makes it much easier for customers to get all the information they need."

Egypt Opens First "Drive-Thru" Post Office

According to the [Egypt Independent](#), Egypt's Communications and Information Technology Minister Amr Talaat announced the opening of the first "drive-thru" post office in Nasr City. The new post office allows Egyptians to access government, financial, and postal services from the comfort of their driver's seat. Talaat believes the new system demonstrates the Egyptian government's commitment to providing its citizens with better and more efficient services.

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