International Post Corporation

Royal Mail announces additional action to protect customers and tackle counterfeit stamps

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Royal Mail has today announced a new package of measures to protect customers and tackle counterfeit stamps. Since the introduction of barcoded stamps, Royal Mail has seen counterfeit stamps in its network reduce by around 90%. This is due to the added security measures, active detection and partnerships with online marketplaces, retailers, law enforcement and trading standards. As a result of this activity, counterfeit stamps now account for a fraction of a percent of the c.450 million stamps used in the UK each year.

The company is now taking additional steps to help to build customer confidence, while maintaining pressure on the criminals who seek to profit from mass producing counterfeit stamps. These include:

The development of a new counterfeit stamp scanner in the Royal Mail app: Customers will be able to scan stamp barcodes and check for themselves whether it is a recognised counterfeit stamp. The stamp scanner enhancement is in development and will be added to the Royal Mail app which has already been downloaded to more than 14 million phones.
The introduction of a new, independent, stamp expert in addition to Royal Mail's highly trained team of specialists: The independent expert will verify whether a stamp is genuine as part of Royal Mail's escalation process for customer complaints. The decision will be fully independent of Royal Mail and the judgement binding.
Increased partnership working with retailers and online marketplaces to jointly stop the sale of counterfeit stamps.
Increased activity to raise public awareness about counterfeit stamps, including revised guidance and advice to help customers protect themselves. Customers can find advice and report cases of the sale of counterfeit stamps online or in stores at the new dedicated section of the Royal Mail website: www.royalmail.com/counterfeitstamps.
Whilst the new counterfeit stamp scanner is in development, Royal Mail will temporarily pause the collection of the surcharge for recipients until the app is fully deployed. During this intervening period, stickers will be applied to items to advise the recipient that the stamp used has scanned as counterfeit.

At the same time, Royal Mail will increase efforts to charge the sender of items posted

with a counterfeit stamp, rather than the recipient, wherever possible.

Action to tackle counterfeit stamps at source

Working with law enforcement agencies, Royal Mail has seized 1.5 million counterfeit stamps stopping these from entering the supply chain and helped to take down thousands of listings selling counterfeit stamps online. Royal Mail also conducts test purchases in hotspot areas where customers have reported suspected sales of counterfeit stamps. Royal Mail will continue to work with law enforcement agencies to disrupt the manufacture and wholesale distribution of counterfeit stamps and to prevent such stamps entering the market.

Nick Landon, Chief Commercial Officer, said: "The combination of new barcoded stamps with added security features and Royal Mail actively working with retailers, online marketplaces and law enforcement authorities, has led to a 90% reduction in counterfeit stamps.

"We want our customers to buy stamps with confidence and always recommend that customers only purchase stamps from Post Offices and other reputable High Street retailers, and not to buy stamps online – unless from the official Royal Mail shop."

Source: Royal Mail

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