



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR

Royal Gibraltar Post Office

Postal Headquarters
104 Main Street
Gibraltar



Telephone: +(350) 50846 - Fax: +(350) 72476 - Email: postoffice@gibnynex.gi

PRESS RELEASE

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The Royal Gibraltar Post Office would like to inform all its customers that, as a result of an industrial dispute, 4 out of the 13 delivery walks were not carried out today together with minor fractions of the areas within the remaining 9 walks. All sorting, however, was successfully completed by close of business today after all staff returned to duties.

The dispute centres on the action to be taken whenever there is a variance in the flow of inbound airmail (reasons can be bad weather, mail not being loaded onto aircrafts or even foreign industrial disputes!) and how all inbound airmail regardless is sorted and delivered. The RGPO continues to abide by the terms and conditions laid out in the March 2003 Collective Agreement and on international practices, which have been in place and successfully effected for the past five years. The RGPO will not entertain any digression from the Collective Agreement that will cause undue delays in the local delivery of foreign backlogs of mail arriving in Gibraltar, other than that provided by the Collective Agreement and management's discretion.

The Government feels that the Collective Agreement and management's discretion provides enough safeguards for both the service provided to the public and the postal grades who perform it and will not consider any dilution of the existing provisos in this context. A request by the postal grades to only sort and thereafter deliver mail just by dated mail number from foreign administrations is completely unworkable, as it is impossible to secure the chronological arrival of this mail from all foreign postal administrations. The mail from individual countries may have more than one despatch point and different routes are utilised for its transport depending on factors such as type of mail, day of the week, outlets available and flight / overland transport plans. Moreover, when mail is stored in transit, it is not afterwards necessarily despatched by date; invariably first in is last out.

The RGPO regrets any inconvenience to our customers and hopes that the Postal Service continues its business as normal tomorrow, as it was at midday today after all staff returned to normal duties prior to a meeting involving the TGWU/ACTS, Union Reps and RGPO management held at 1pm. It has also been agreed with the TGWU /ACTS that, in accordance with the Postal Grades Agreement entered on the 17th December 2004, any further dispute, on this or any other matter, will be referred to ACAS. The RGPO will keep its customers advised of any further developments.