



FastLane International highlights concerns over state of the world's postal systems

The rise of e-mail and social media means some countries' post services are now unsustainable

The long-established UK international courier FastLane International is today highlighting the poor state of many countries' internal postal systems. This is due to the steady decline in letters being sent.

FastLane's David Jinks MILT says: 'The non-stop growth of emails and social media has seen a proportional decline in the sending of letters and cards right across the globe. A number of countries' aging postal infrastructures are simply unable to cope with this collapse in income. Many countries' post services are still obliged to deliver daily mail to all households, six days a week; but with the collapse in letter volumes, this is proving financially unsustainable.'

David adds: 'In our nearly 30 year history, we've never seen a situation like this.' He cites as an example America's crisis-riddled US Postal Service: 'A US report has found "The Postal Service's current financial condition is dire and continues to deteriorate". The US workforce has been reduced from 788,000 to 491,000 since 2000 and nearly 300 mail processing facilities have been closed since 2006, cutting the number of such facilities in half. It's been running in the red since 2007 and is unable to invest in its creaking infrastructure.'

In neighbouring Canada, the postal system faces similar pressures. Minister of Transport Lisa Raitt admitted to problems with Canada Post delivery earlier this year, saying the Crown Corporation's denials don't reflect the reality of many Canadian households that have experienced inconsistent service.

'My sons play hockey so I'm in the hockey rinks on the weekend,' said Raitt, whose duties include overseeing the arms-length carrier. 'That is the one issue that people come up to me and talk about. It's, "Hey, I haven't received my mail in a long time, what's going on?"'

However, David, a member of The Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport, believes there is no cause for concern for those of us wishing to send documents and parcels into those countries most affected by the collapse in letter volumes.

Says David: 'The best idea is to avoid many countries' domestic postal infrastructure wherever possible. Try using international courier services for both documents and parcels. For example FastLane has been delivering into the US for very nearly thirty years. Our services don't touch the US Postal Service's infrastructure.'

David also points out that this is not just a problem for North America. 'In Australia a similar crisis is playing out. Australia's Communications Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, announced recently that Australia Post lost \$328 million in letter profits during the 2013-14 financial year and recorded a \$106 million overall loss between January and June. And New Zealand faces similar issues. In 2013 it was proposed that NZ Post actually reduce letter delivery to three days a week.'

Nearer to home, France's Postal operator La Poste Group saw its profits slump last year, but was bailed out by a major tax credit from the French government, and in Norway the State has had to step in this year to entirely subsidise the letter delivery service.

Small wonder the Italian government has just approved plans to sell stakes of up to 40 percent in Poste Italiane, the national post office.

David says: 'International parcel delivery couriers are a sensible alternative to run-down domestic post office services in most countries. FastLane, for example, delivers to 220 countries across the globe. We advise that anyone intending to send any item overseas uses an established and well-trusted courier service.'

For more information see www.wedelivertheworld.co.uk/international-delivery/

ENDS

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Leading international online courier FastLane International strategically partners with the world's leading, logistics companies, including DHL, UPS and DPD to provide a flexible, cost-effective range of parcel delivery services to over 220 countries worldwide. Huge bulk purchasing power allows FastLane to offer highly

competitive pricing with no compromise in service quality.