

# **Guidelines for Judging Postal Stationery Exhibits**

## **Introduction**

These Guidelines are issued by the FIP Postal Stationery Commission to give practical advice on how to apply the GREV and the Special Regulations for the Evaluation of Postal Stationery Exhibits (SREV) which were approved by the 54th FIP Congress in 1985 in Rome (Revised at the 61st FIP Congress in 1992 in Granada and in Jakarta 2012).

The guidelines have been developed to assist exhibitors in the preparation and judges in the evaluation of postal stationery exhibits. They are intended to provide guidance regarding:

1. The definition and nature of postal stationery
2. The principles of exhibit composition, and
3. The judging criteria of exhibits of postal stationery.

## **1. The Definition and Nature of Postal Stationery**

The FIP Postal Stationery Commission definition of postal stationery is:

“Postal Stationery comprises postal matter which either bears an officially authorised pre-printed stamp or device or inscription indicating that a specific face value of postage or related service has been prepaid”

### **1.1. The Physical Form**

The physical form of the paper or card on which the stamp etc. has been printed depends upon the specific purpose for which a particular item of postal stationery is intended. The earliest stamped items of postal stationery were usually letter sheets (termed covers) and envelopes. The other forms of postal stationery commonly include postcards, wrappers (newspaper bands), registration envelopes, certificates of posting, letter cards, and air letter sheets (aerograms), but other types of documents bearing impressions of postage stamp designs have been produced by a number of countries.

### **1.2 The availability and usage**

Postal Stationery can be grouped into the following classes according to the manner of its availability and usage:

1.2.1 Post office issues: Stamped stationery prepared to the specification of and issued by Postal Administrations for public use. It is important to distinguish the unofficial private modifications of normal Post Office issues made for philatelic purposes

1.2.2 Official service issues: Stamped stationery produced for the use of Government Departments only. Imprinted stamps may be similar to those found on Post Office issues or of a special design. Alternatively, Post Office issues may be adapted for Official Service by overprinting etc.

1.2.3 Forces (military) issues: Stamped stationery produced for the use of members of the armed forces. Imprinted stamps may be similar to those found on Post Office issues of special design.

1.2.4 Stamped to Order/Printed to Private Order issues: Stamped stationery bearing stamps of Post Office design applied with Postal Administration approval and within specified regulations to the order of private individuals or organisations. Imprinted stamps may cover a wider range of denominations and hence designs to those found on Post Office issues. It is important to distinguish within the stamped to order class between those items which were produced for genuine postal usage and those produced for philatelic purposes.

1.2.5 Local post issues: Stamped stationery produced by private postal agencies with varying degrees of Postal Administration recognition or support.

It is also possible to classify postal stationery according to the type of postal or associated service for which it is intended. Examples of such services include the following:

1.2.6 Postage: Surface/airmail - local, inland, foreign, - letters, post cards, parcels, newspapers, etc.

1.2.7 Registration: Inland, foreign.

1.2.8 Telegraph: Inland, foreign, etc.

1.2.9 Receipt: Receipt of posting - letters, parcels.

1.2.10 Miscellaneous fees etc: Postal orders, money orders, other documents bearing impressions of stamp designs etc.

### 1.3 Other accepted forms of Postal Stationery

Although not strictly falling within the definition of Postal Stationery set out in 1., the following are also accepted forms of Postal Stationery:

1.3.1 Formula stationery. A number of countries issued so called "formula" items which were sold to the public bearing adhesive stamps, as fore-runners to the issue of postal stationery items with impressed stamps. These formula items can be included in postal stationery exhibits.

1.3.2 Non value indicators. More recently a growing number of Postal Administrations have introduced postal stationery which, while sold to the public at a specific price, merely indicates that a particular service/postage rate has been prepaid without indication of value - termed "non value indicators" (NVI). Such material is of course appropriately included in exhibits of postal stationery.

1.3.3 Telegraph Forms can be exhibited as postal stationery.

1.3.4 Money Orders/Postal Orders/Postal Notes can be exhibited as either postal stationery or revenues.

1.3.5 International Reply Coupons have traditionally been accepted as part of postal stationery and can be exhibited in this class

### 1.4 Not accepted as Postal Stationery

1.4.1 Unstamped formula items (others than those mentioned in 1.3.1), unstamped military stationery, unstamped postal administration stationery, official franks, meter post impressions and privately generated 'Postage Paid Impressions' are all considered outside the definition and should not be exhibited in the postal stationery class.

### 1.5 Cut-outs (cut squares) in postal stationery exhibits

Postal stationery exhibits should normally be of entire items. Where certain items are very rare in entire form or are only known to exist in cut-down (cut square) form they would be acceptable as part of an exhibit, as would a study for example of variations in the imprinted stamp dies used or those with rare cancellations etc. The use of postal stationery imprinted stamps as adhesives would also properly form part of an exhibit of postal stationery.

## 2. Principles of Exhibit Composition

### 2.1 The Exhibit Composition

An exhibit of postal stationery should comprise a logical and coherent assembly of unused and/or used items of postal stationery (as defined in 1.0) to illustrate one or more of the categories set out below.

- a) The issues of a particular country or associated group
- b) The issues of a particular chronological period
- c) The issues of a particular class of postal stationery (1.2.1-1.2.5)
- d) The issues of a particular type of postal or associated service (1.2.6-1.2.10)
- e) The issues relating to a particular physical form of the paper or card (1.1).

In a postal stationery exhibit the exhibitor tells a story with the exhibit. Normally it is the story about the development of the postal stationery items themselves. It can begin with the reason why the postal stationery was issued following with the possible essays and/or proofs. It can then describe the development of the items, different printings, colours, perforations, papers, errors etc. The usage of the items, the rates, routes, cancellations and other aspects are a secondary part of the story and may not be a dominant part of the exhibit.

The exhibits may be planned chronologically, geographically (e.g. by local/national districts), by mode of transport/service, or by any other way that the exhibitor may feel appropriate to employ.

The subject chosen needs to be appropriate in scope for both the initial and also the potential size of the exhibit.

## 2.2 One Frame Exhibits

A One Frame exhibit of Postal Stationery is intended to be an exhibit within the categories mentioned in 2.1 with a very narrow theme that fits into one frame. If a theme can be shown in more than one frame, it is not suitable as a theme for a one frame exhibit.

A selection of items from a multiframe exhibit may be suitable only if the selection can completely treat a natural sub-theme of the exhibit within one frame. An extract of a multiframe exhibit showing only the best items ("cherry picking") from a multiframe exhibit is not appropriate as a one frame exhibit.

As with multi-frame exhibits One Frame Exhibits should have primary focus on the postal stationery itself. Exhibits with a heavy emphasis of usage are unlikely to succeed.

## 2.3 The Introductory Sheet (or the Title Page)

All Postal Stationery exhibits must include an introductory sheet. This introductory sheet should consist of:

- The title of the exhibit
- Short, precise and relevant general information on the subject
- A description of the purpose of the exhibit
- A description of the scope of the exhibit (What is included in the exhibit and what is omitted)
- A plan of the structure of the exhibit – chapters or sections etc.– rather than a "frame by frame" or "page by page" description
- A list of personal research by the exhibitor within the subject (with references to articles or literature)
- A list of the most important literature references

## 3. Judging of Postal Stationery

In agreement with Articles 5.7 of the General Regulations of the FIP Exhibitions (GREX), General World and International Exhibitions should provide for a specific Postal Stationery Class to be exhibited as an entity in one part or room of the exhibition.

In other exhibitions where no separate class has been designated it is desirable that postal stationery exhibits be grouped geographically within the Traditional Philately Class.

In judging a postal stationery exhibit the jury will use the following general criteria (ref. GREV, Article 4.2):

1. Treatment - ref. GREV, Article 4.5
2. Philatelic Importance - ref. GREV, Article 4.6
3. Philatelic and related Knowledge, Personal Study and Research - ref. GREV, Article 4.7
4. Condition - ref. GREV, Article 4.8
5. Rarity - ref. GREV, Article 4.8
6. Presentation - ref. GREV, Article 4.9.

Exhibitors should be aware of the need to consider carefully the various aspects which combine together to maximise the award an exhibit can attract.

Some indications are given below of the basic elements underlying each individual criterion.

### 3.1 Treatment (20 points)

Treatment of the exhibit reflects the degree to which the exhibitor is able to create a balanced exhibit characteristic of the chosen subject. A logical progression that is easy to follow and a clear concise write up will help the jurors to appreciate the exhibit. In assessing treatment jurors will check that the statements made in the introduction and plan are adequately represented in the display.

The exhibit is evaluated on whether:

- The completeness of the material shown in relation to the scope of the exhibit
- The subject has been chosen to enable a properly balanced exhibit to be shown in the space available

- The primary focus is the stationery itself and secondarily the usage
- The content reflects the title, purpose, scope and plan
- There is a logical flow in the exhibit
- The headlines of each page support the understanding of the treatment
- There is a good balance between the different parts of the exhibit
- There is a natural start and ending point of the exhibit
- There is no duplicated material (For instance: Two similar items postmarked in two different cities are in a postal stationery exhibit duplication)

The Introduction Page is evaluated on whether if it:

- Introduces the purpose of the exhibit
- Defines the scope of the exhibit
- Explains the structure of the exhibit
- Has a plan of the exhibit
- Mentions the most important literature/references

The selection of material for a postal stationery exhibit involves a compromise between the many pages of material the exhibitor may wish to show and the number of pages that will fit in the frames allotted by the exhibition management. This selection is an important factor not only in assessing treatment, but also knowledge. Providing a clear indication is given, the exhibitor may omit material that is of lesser significance. In general, the common items of an issue may be represented by a token showing, while the better material of the same issue should be shown in depth. The judges will appreciate that this treatment shows the exhibitor's knowledge of the material.

### 3.2 Philatelic Importance (10 points)

The "importance" of an exhibit is determined by both the significance of the actual exhibit in relation to the subject chosen and the overall significance of that subject.

In assessing the importance of the exhibit consideration is given to:

- How difficult is the selected area?
- What is the significance of the selected area relative to world philately?
- What is the significance of the selected area relative to the national philately of the country?
- What is the significance of the material shown in the exhibit relative to the selected area?

### 3.3 Philatelic and related Knowledge, Personal Study and Research (35 points)

Philatelic and related knowledge is demonstrated by the items chosen for display and their related comments. Personal study is demonstrated by the proper analysis of the items chosen for display. Personal research is presentation of new facts related to the chosen subject.

Philatelic and related knowledge:

- The choice of items reflects knowledge of the chosen area
- The exhibit should demonstrate a full and accurate appreciation of the subject chosen
- The existing literature within the area has been used
- The items are well described

Personal study - descriptions of:

- The postal stationery type, name and location of printer, issuing date, earliest recorded use & numbers printed (where known)
- Watermarks, paper, perforations etc. of the postal stationery
- Postal stationery printings and varieties
- Rates and usage
- Rarer added stamps to a postal stationery item
- Scarce destinations and unusual routes
- Distinctive cancellations and/or added markings affecting the rate and those not affecting the rate

Personal research:

- Research carried out by the exhibitor
- Research and new discoveries should be given full coverage in accordance with their importance.

Where appropriate references should be given to the exhibitor's own or other previously published information. Where the exhibitor has extended such information a reference can be placed either in the introductory statement or on the exhibition page to which the research refers.

It is unrealistic to require a collector to develop new findings in a heavily studied and researched area. For this reason, such exhibits will not be penalised for a lack of personal research, but will be given additional consideration if, in spite of previous research that has taken place, the exhibitor has managed to come up with new findings.

The proper evaluation of philatelic and related knowledge, personal study, and research will be based on the relevant description of each philatelic object shown. A well thought-out plan may avoid otherwise lengthy descriptions later in the exhibit.

If using rarity statements ("One of X recorded") it is important to mention the source of this recording. Do not use expressions like "Unique" or "Very rare".

Only the knowledge, study and research documented by the items in the exhibit can be judged. Furthermore exhibitors should bear in mind that the information given should not overwhelm the philatelic material shown.

#### 3.4 Condition (10 points)

The postal stationery items should be in the best possible condition. The condition of the items is evaluated as if they were stamps: No tears, no missing corners, no bends, no stains, no missing perforation (if present) etc.

Exhibitors are encouraged to show unique or very rare material that does not occur in fine condition, but are cautioned from including other items in a condition that may reduce the perceived overall condition of the exhibit. The condition of common material should be impeccable.

It is important to remember that the actual condition obtainable will vary according to the country and period.

Commercially used items are to be preferred to philatelic produced ones.

Additional franking should also be in best possible quality and postmarks should be as clear as possible with all essential wording complete.

If an item has been restored or manipulated it must be described as such.

Unless a postal stationery item is of extreme rarity, is unknown as entire, or the exhibit is primarily concerned with variations in the stamp impression only, it is desirable that only entires be shown.

#### 3.5 Rarity (20 points)

Rarity is directly related to the philatelic items shown and to the relative scarcity of this material (however, not the value).

The jurors will primarily be looking for:

- The rarities (postal stationery types) within the area
- Essays, proofs (approved and rejected) and specimens
- Unused items, items used at intended rate and with additional franking (express, registered etc)
- The difficulty of obtaining relevant and interesting postal stationery material for the exhibit.
- How easy it will be to duplicate the exhibit

- If there is philatelic produced material in the exhibit
- The jurors will also be looking for
- Scarce stamps used as additional franking on a postal stationery item
- Scarce postmarks, markings, rates, routes and destinations

### 3.6 Presentation (5 points)

The method of presentation should show the material to the best effect and in a balanced way. With entire it is important to avoid unduly uniform arrangements, and variation in mounting is therefore preferred.

The exhibit is evaluated on:

- Good balance in the frames and the individual pages
- Good use of the page - with not too much white space on the pages
- The write-up is clear, concise and relevant to the material shown and to the subject chosen for the exhibit
- Sufficient write up - but not too much text
- Illustrations are not too dominating. Any photocopies must be a minimum of 25% different in size from the original
- Careful mounting

Overlapping of items is accepted but obscuring important features should be avoided.

No advantage or disadvantage shall apply as to whether the text is handwritten, typewritten or printed. Brightly coloured inks and coloured album pages should be avoided.

## 4. Relative Terms of Evaluation

Postal Stationery will be judged by approved specialists in this field and in accordance with GREX Section V Articles 40 – 42 and GREV, Article 5:

1. Treatment (20) and Philatelic Importance (10)	30
2. Philatelic and related Knowledge, Personal Study and Research	35
3. Condition (10) and Rarity (20)	30
4. Presentation	5
<hr/>	
Total	100

## 5. Concluding Provisions

In the event of discrepancies in the text from translation, the English text shall prevail.