

## Sending Goods by Post

Many everyday items - which we take for granted when we use them in our house, garage or garden - fall under the heading of “dangerous goods” when carried on board an aircraft. On the ground, such items pose little danger but in the confines of an aircraft the situation is very different; for example, whereas it is relatively straightforward to deal with a leaking bottle of bleach in the kitchen, if this were to occur in flight the crew’s ability to deal with such an incident would be severely limited. Even if not sent as “air mail”, letters and parcels sent in the post will often be carried on aircraft not only to worldwide destinations but also for relatively short domestic journeys, particularly with “next day” services.

Consequently, to ensure the highest levels of passenger safety, the regulations addressing the safe transport of dangerous goods by air include a prohibition on such items in air mail. Accordingly, to minimise the likelihood of dangerous goods being carried on an aircraft, Royal Mail Terms and Conditions do not allow such items in the post. Examples of items which are not permitted are as follows:

- Matches.
- Lighters.
- Aerosols.
- Batteries of the following type (including when contained in equipment):
  - Lithium ion;
  - Lithium metal;
  - Sodium;
  - Potassium hydroxide;
  - Wet acid (non-spillable) (e.g. for cars); and
  - Wet alkali (non-spillable).

**Note:** Alkali-manganese, zinc-carbon, nickel-metal hydride and nickel-cadmium batteries may be sent by post providing they are protected against short-circuit and any equipment in which they are contained is protected against inadvertent operation.

- Mercury (including when contained in thermometers and barometers).
- Gallium.
- Fireworks (including “indoor” fireworks).
- Petrol-fuelled equipment.
- Fuel for radio controlled models (e.g. aircraft, cars).
- Flammable paint.
- “Chinese lanterns” containing solid fuel.

Please note that these are only some of the items that must not be sent by post.

The attention is drawn particularly to sellers of goods on online auction sites such as “eBay”, where it has been noted that many items offered for sale are not permitted in the mail but dispatch by post is nonetheless provided.

It should be noted that apart from the very real danger to flight safety, the maximum penalties for sending prohibited items in air mail, which would be a breach of the Air Navigation (Dangerous Goods) Order, are an unlimited fine and up to two years in prison.

Royal Mail provide guidance on the [Post Office website](#).

Further advice can be obtained from the CAA at [dgo@caa.co.uk](mailto:dgo@caa.co.uk).