



Welcome to

Royal Mail's

Technical Website Guide

## Guide Summary

The purpose of this guide is to enable you to electronically pre-sort your data ready to access any of Royal Mail's International services, to be able to then complete the necessary mailing documentation and, for International Destination Sort, to be able to produce the necessary bag labels. It serves as a copy of the information contained on the International Mail technical website.

Royal Mail is the leading international supplier of overseas postal services to firms based in the UK. We offer:

**Excellent value for money –**

- *no* hidden charges
- *no* VAT
- *no* fuel surcharges

**Trust:** A respected and renowned brand, whose recognition and unique UK postmark will add to the value of your offer.

**Customer Support:** Support from all areas of Royal Mail, including a dedicated international team, so you will always get the right person to handle your query

**Market-leading Quality of Service** and the *only* company with independently measured service levels.

**Did you know?**

Royal Mail sends 9% of all of the international mail in the world.

We have invested £450m in Heathrow Worldwide Distribution Centre, the most advanced international mail sorting facility in UK.

We fly mail direct to over 240 destinations worldwide.

We use Radio Frequency Identifier technology to maintain reliability and improve quality of service.

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## Overview of Royal Mail's International Services

Our range of services have been established to meet all customer needs, from those who wish to do minimal preparation and despatch their mail quickly, to those who have full sortation capability and want to avail themselves of the lowest cost. We offer:

**No Sort** – The easiest & quickest way to despatch your mail requiring minimal input from you. Put the items into a bag and we'll do the rest. With No Sort Plus, we will even apply Royal Mail's franking mark (ppi), airmail markers, and your UK return address for you!

**International Unsorted** – Earn a discount by simply separating your international mail from your inland mail, then decide on the delivery speed you require. Additional discounts are available for high volume mailings.

**Format Sort** – Earn further price reductions by sorting mail for Western Europe into letters, flats and packets. Again, additional discounts are available for high volume mailings.

**International Bulk Mail** – makes overseas postings as easy as UK bulk mailings. Mail is sorted by format and service speed, not country. Can be used as a standalone, or alongside inland bulk mail services. Additional discounts are available for high volume mailings.

**International Destination Sort** – Earn further discounts by sorting your mail by destination (typically most countries have one destination although a handful require multiple sortations for greater speed.) Depending on the profile of your mail, Destination Sort could offer the lowest cost service. For sending large amounts of printed matter to the same address we have the M-Bag service.

For large international mail wholesalers we offer the Chorus scheme, where additional discounts can be obtained.

For full details of these services and ratecards please visit [www.royal.com/international](http://www.royal.com/international) and click on the section for business customers sending [large volumes of mail overseas](#).

## Pricing Comparison Calculator

Royal Mail has produced an International Pricing Calculator. If you need to process and send International items then this is the perfect tool for you to optimise your delivery charges by comparing them across our portfolio of services, so you can see the savings you could make. To download a copy visit this section of the international technical website.

The calculator includes the appropriate volume related discounts for our International Unsorted, Format and Bulk Mail services. However the Chorus scheme discounts, available only to international wholesalers despatching Destination Sort mail, is not featured.

## Electronic Docketing

For simple, no-fuss generation of dockets, we've created the Online Business Account (OBA) data generator. These are to be used with either the International Bulk Mail or International Destination Sort services.

To download a copy of the spreadsheet file, containing full operating instructions please visit the Electronic Docketing section of the [internationalmailtechnical.com](http://internationalmailtechnical.com) website.

Please note that one of the requirements of the International Bulk Mail service is that mailing information is input into OBA.

## Electronic Mail Preparation

These guidelines are for those who wish to save time by electronically sorting their mail. Manual sortation is possible, and many of our customers are happy to sort in this way.

This section will guide you through the stages of preparing your mailing database and electronically pre-sorting it for either the International Unsorted and Format Sort services or International Destination Sort services. With regard to Destination Sort this section will also cover the production of your own final bag labels.

### International Unsorted and Format Sort –

International Unsorted and Format mailings require sorting to one of two destinations:

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Zone Identifier</b>
Western Europe	WEU
Rest of World	ROWIncludes Rest of Europe (ROE)

To do this, you will need to run your address file against the ISortA database (found in the Downloadable Databases section) which will generate a six-digit code for each address, comprising the first 3 digits as a zone identifier and the last 3 digits as a country identifier.

International Unsorted requires your items to be printed and presented together.

To access **Format sort**, your mail items for Western Europe (WEU) will need to be physically sorted by format into letters, flats and packets and presented separately from those items with ROE & ROW codes. Guidelines for the dimensions of these can be found in the User Guide located at [royalmail.com/formatsort](http://royalmail.com/formatsort). The ROW/ROE coded items can then be sent as International Unsorted.

### International Bulk Mail

Guidelines for International Bulk Mail can be found on [www.mailsorttechnical.com](http://www.mailsorttechnical.com) in the 'Know How' and Mailsort Users Guide manuals.

### Destination Sort

#### Data Sortation:

The International Destination Sort service requires selection of delivery speed, sortation to country and the receiving office of exchange within that country, known as the 'Destination' Eg: There is only one sortation to France for all speeds but there are five to USA, by the priority speed. The minimum bag weight to a single destination point is 1.5kgs, anything lower than this will need to be sent via the Bundle Sort service (this does not apply to the M-Bag service).

To produce software to electronically sort your data into Destination Sort order, you will need to take the following steps:

1. Sort your data by appending to each address a nine-digit code, reflecting the world zone, country, and locality of that address.
2. Match the sorted address data with our destination data (which includes service speed.)
3. Produce a mailing report, indicating the number of items for each destination. This will aid automated docket completion by supplying the information to be input for electronic docketing which requires the total weight and total number of items by format (where appropriate) by country.

#### International Destination Sort Coding:

The International Destination Sort Database provides a system of codes, called International Selection Codes (ISCs) which identify specific geographical zones, countries and localities. These codes will need to be appended to your mailing list of international addresses.

The coding system has been designed to simplify the computer sorting processes for International Destination Sort. Using these services may require a particular address to be grouped for one of several different Destinations depending upon the service being used. However, the address will have only one International Destination Sort code.

#### Coding Structure:

The International Selection Code (ISC) is nine digits long and is split into three parts: Zone, Country and Locality.

The first three digits of the Code are the **Zone Identifier**. Currently there are three zones: WEU (Western Europe), ROE (Rest of Europe) and ROW (Rest of the World).

The next three digits of the Code is the **Country Identifier** and contains alphabetic characters only. Wherever possible, Country Identifiers correspond with ISO country codes. This coding is derived from the ISortA file.

The last three digits of the International Selection Code are the **Locality Code**, which represents a geographical region or locality within each country. Locality Codes are numeric in the range 000-999. Files ISORTC AND ISORTD contain the locality codes based on postcodes or areas within a country.

An example of a full International Selection Code would be: ROWAUS003, in which "ROW" represents "Rest of the World" zone, AUS represents the country Australia and "003" represents the Queensland locality.

#### Determining International Destination Sort Codes:

To determine a code for a particular address:

1. Match the country name from the address to a record in the ISORTA table. ISORTA contains country names and their associated Country Codes. The table includes common alternative representations for country names and so a particular Country Code may appear in several records of ISORTA. Some countries may be grouped together for International Sortation purposes and so these countries will share the same Country Code. This should generate a six digit code ROWAUS – for an Australian address.

If it is not possible to determine a Country Code, then the address is not eligible for Destination Sort mailings. We recommend applying a Country Code of "000000000" (nine zeros) to the address. If the Zone can be determined with certainty then a Country Code of "ROW000000", or

"ROE000000" or "WEU000000" should be applied - this will enable the address to be mailable using the International Unsorted and Format services.

2. Assign a locality code. If the address contains a Postcode, attempt to determine the Locality Code from ISORTC using both the derived Country Code and the Postcode from the address. ISORTC contains Country Codes, partial Postcodes and their associated Locality Codes. The partial Postcodes in this table provide only enough of the Postcode to determine the correct Locality Code - for example, if a record in ISORTC for a particular Country code carries the postcode "4" then any address which has already been matched to this Country Code and which has a Postcode beginning with the digit "4" belongs to the Locality referred to in this record of ISORTC.

If it is not possible to determine a Locality Code from the Postcode it will be necessary to attempt to match the town or district from the address to the Locality Code using ISORTD. ISORTD contains Country Codes, town/district names and their associated Locality Codes.

If a Country Code has been successfully derived, but it is not possible to determine a Locality Code from ISORTC or ISORTD, then a Locality Code of "000" should be used.

Append the Locality Code to the Country Code to derive the full International Destination Sort Code for the address.

#### Destinations:

Once International Destination Sort Codes have been applied to an address list, addresses should be sorted and grouped by Destination. The Destination will determine which bag and in some circumstances which bundle an item\* should be placed for a particular international service speed. The Destination for a specific Destination Sort Code will vary according to the service being used. Some Codes will not have a valid Destination for all services (for example the Destination Sort - Standard service is not appropriate for European items). Once a mailing has been sorted and grouped by Destination, sorting by format - Letters, Flats and Packets - will be required for Western European destinations only. \*Please note for a direct bag to a destination there needs to be a minimum of 1.5kgs of mail and where format sorting is required there should be 1.5kgs per format per destination.

Currently there are more than 400 possible Destinations for International Destination Sort mailings. The International Destination Sort Database provides lists of Destinations for each service speed in the ISORTB tables. Destinations are referenced by a nine digit code and Service Identifier.

The Service Identifiers are as follows:

P = Priority

S = Standard (Not available to Europe and some worldwide destinations)

E = Economy

To determine the Destination for an item, search for the item's International Destination Sort Code and Service Identifier in the ISORTB table. As not all codes are valid for all Destination Sort services, you may not be able to find a Destination for all items. If a Destination cannot be found then the item is not eligible for the chosen service.

In ISORTB each ISC contains a **Destination Identifier**/Destination Name. The Destination Identifier will determine where the mail item should be sent and so bagged. Several ISCs may have the

same destination identifier. You should use the Destination Identifier to select the appropriate bag label. This can be done manually, alternatively see the final bag labelling section below.

#### Mailing Reports:

A Mailing Report can be produced to aid docket completion when using International Destination Sort. This is in no way mandatory, but can be a useful, time-saving aid.

Mailing Reports should show the following summary information:

- Customer's name and address
- Customer's Royal Mail account number
- Customer's mailing reference
- International Service required (Destination Sort Economy, Destination Sort Standard, Destination Sort Priority, M Bags Priority, Standard, Economy)
- International Destination Sort Database Version Number
- Mailing date

In addition, Mailing Reports should indicate the number of items for each International Selection Code used in the mailing.

Finally, Codes should be grouped by Destination. The following information is required for each Destination:

- Destination Identifier (name)
- Number of items by destination
- Number of bags by destination - if it does not qualify then identified as Bundle Sort
- Weight in grams or kilos by destination. Please state weight classification being used.
- Cumulative number of items
- Cumulative number of bags

For an example of an International Destination Sort Mailing Report see Appendix 2

#### International Destination Sort Bag Labelling & Printing

Once you have prepared your mail file in Destination Sort order this section enables you to then produce the right quantity of labels, in the right order by the right service speed. This

only applies to International Destination Sort direct bags and not the Bundle Sort offering. Full details of these services are available by visiting [www.royalmail.com/destinationsort](http://www.royalmail.com/destinationsort).

There are three options available:

**Option 1** – Stand alone final labelling software. Data is manually keyed into the software program and labels produced. This software program is available from The Barcode Warehouse, contact number 01636 602003 or by e-mailing [joanne.bryan@thebarcodewarehouse.co.uk](mailto:joanne.bryan@thebarcodewarehouse.co.uk).

**Option 2** – Automatic Bag label Production. This requires exporting a bag label file from your Destination Sort mail file either into the software program provided under Option 1 or another Software Supplier who has written a final bag label production program. The file specification is available in Appendix 3.

**Option 3** – Writing your own bag labelling software. To do this you will need to complete option 2 and in addition follow the printing and design specification as described in Appendix 4. The data required to be printed onto the label can be downloaded from this section on the Technical website.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

1. All customers printing labels will require an unique ID from Royal Mail which must also appear on the bag label.
2. All labels produced by unapproved software will need to be approved before going live.
3. Royal Mail will supply blank labels, free of charge so for label approval and blank labels please contact the Customer Liaison team at Heathrow Worldwide Distribution Centre on 01753 484600 or e-mail: [labels@royalmail.com](mailto:labels@royalmail.com).

## Printers

The following types of printers have been shown to print and produce Destination Sort labels of a standard acceptable to Royal Mail:

TEC B series versions: 472, 572, 482, SX4, SX5.

These are available from a variety of sources over the internet including The Barcode Warehouse. Prices vary but are in the region of about £800.

## Software Suppliers

A database is held of all registered companies who have created software for our international mail services. They can be found under the [Software Suppliers section of the mailsorttechnical.com website](#).

If you have written sortation software for Royal Mail's International services and wish to be added to the list of Software Suppliers please e-mail your details and the names of the services that your software covers to [helpline@mailsorttechnical.com](mailto:helpline@mailsorttechnical.com).

In early 2008 we plan to introduce an accreditation and validation process for all international software suppliers.

## Contacts

### Technical Queries & site feedback

Relating to software programming and how we could improve this site for you:

Technical Helpline – 0207 371 6957

Email: [helpline@internationalmailtechnical.com](mailto:helpline@internationalmailtechnical.com)

Fax: 0207 603 5862

Post:

Royal Mail's International Mail Technical Team

CACI (IMS)

CACI House

Kensington Village

Avonmore Road

LONDON W14 8TS

### Products and sales queries:

Contact your Account Handler or call 08457 950950 in the first instance.

Where a query is specifically related to sales, please ask to be put in contact with one of our expert International Sales Consultants for your geographic region.

### Consumable ordering:

Mail bags can be ordered from 08457 950 950

No Sort - To order a book of consignment notes, bag labels and ties contact 08456 000 690.

International Unsorted and Format Sort- To order bag labels & ties call 08456 000 690

Bulk Mail – Bag ties are to be ordered from 08456 000 690.

Cage cards (P6395) are available from your local Regional Distribution Centre.

Bag labels can be printed from your own final labelling machine, or are available from your local Regional Distribution Centre's Bureau service.

Destination Sort – A stores order form can be found at [www.internationalmailtechnical.com](http://www.internationalmailtechnical.com) in the section titled Contacts under the heading Consumables.

For those customers printing/producing their own final labels, email [labels@royalmail.com](mailto:labels@royalmail.com) with you unique customer identifier, delivery address and quantity.

## APPENDIX 1 - Database Information

### **International Unsorted, Format and Destination Sort Database Tables**

The database is made up of a series of tables that users may incorporate into their software. The tables are available for download from [www.internationalmailtechnical.com](http://www.internationalmailtechnical.com)

<b>Table Name</b>	<b>Table Purpose</b>
ISORTA	Primary sortation table used to look up the Country Code that corresponds to the country name from the mailing address
ISORTB	This table is used to determine the appropriate Destination from the Country and Locality Codes for a given mailing service
ISORTC	Secondary sortation table used to look up the Locality Code from a postcode for a given Country Code
ISORTD	Secondary sortation table used to look up the Locality Code from a town or district name for a given Country Code
ISORTF	Printable version of the sorting criteria

### **Data Formats**

#### **ISORTA Field Details**

<b>Field Name</b>	<b>Field Size (Bytes)</b>
Database Version Number	3
Country Name	50
Country Code	6

#### **ISORTB Field Details**

<b>Field Name</b>	<b>Field Size (Bytes)</b>
Database Version Number	3
International Mailsort Code (IMC)	9
Service Identifier	1
Destination Identifier	50
Residue Identifier	50

#### **ISORTC Field Details**

<b>Field Name</b>	<b>Field Size (Bytes)</b>
Database Version Number	3
Country Code	6
Postcode	10
Locality Code	3

**ISORTD Field Details**

<b>Field Name</b>	<b>Field Size (Bytes)</b>
Database Version Number	3
Country Code	6
Town / District	50
Locality Code	3

Field sizes represent the actual field width for Fixed Field Width Format and the **maximum** field width for Comma Delimited Field Format. Field widths for Comma Delimited Field Format may be less than the maximum.

**Fixed Field Width Format**

Each field is of fixed width and therefore occupies the same position within records of the file.

**Example Fixed Field Width Records from ISORTA:**

0.....1.....2.....3.....4.....	5.....
103Adygei Republic	ROERUS
103Afghanistan	ROWAFG
103Aginsk-Buryat	ROERUS
103Albania	ROEALB
103Algeria	ROWDZA
103Altai Krai	ROERUS
103Altai Republic	ROERUS

**Comma Delimited Field Format**

In comma delimited format all trailing spaces are removed from fields, which are then enclosed in quotation marks and separated by commas.

**Example Comma Delimited Records from ISORTA:**

```
"103","Adygei Republic","ROERUS"
"103","Afghanistan","ROWAFG"
"103","Aginsk-Buryat","ROERUS"
"103","Albania","ROEALB"
"103","Algeria","ROWDZA"
"103","Altai Krai","ROERUS"
"103","Altai Republic","ROERUS"
```

**APPENDIX 2 – Destination Sort Mailing Reports****International Destination Sort**

Account Number: 1234567

Mailing Ref: YOURREFERENCE

Mailing Date: 12/10/07

XYZ Company  
123 ANY STREET  
MYTOWN  
AA1 2BB

Service: Destination Sort Priority

International Destination Sort Database Version: 702

Destination	ISC	Items	Destination Items	Bags	Wt. / g.	Cum. Items	Cum. Bags
ABIDJAN	ROWIVC000	150	150	1	9000	150	1
ALGER	ROWDZA000	65	65	1	3900	215	2
AMC KENNEDY NY 00300	ROWCUB001	55					
AMC KENNEDY NY 00300	ROWGTB000	11					
AMC KENNEDY NY 00300	ROWUSA004	25					
AMC KENNEDY NY 00300	ROWUSV000	15	106	1	6360	321	3
AMC MIAMI	ROWUSA006	55	55	1	3300	376	4
BRATISLAVA 090	ROWSLO000	80	80	1	4800	456	5
BUENOS AIRES AVION	ROWARG001	50					
BUENOS AIRES AVION	ROWARG000	103	153	1	9180	609	6
BUJUMBURA	ROWBDI000	123	123	1	7380	732	7

**International Destination Sort**

Account Number: 1234567

Mailing Ref: YOURREFERENCE

Mailing Date: 12/10/07

<b>Destination</b>	<b>ISC</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Destination Items</b>	<b>Bags</b>	<b>Wt. / g.</b>	<b>Cum. Items</b>	<b>Cum. Bags</b>
CAIRO AIRPORT	ROWARE000	110	110	1	6600	842	8
DAMMAN	ROWSAU001	122	122	1	7320	964	9
DAR ES SALAAM DAR ES SALAAM	ROWTZA001 ROWTZA000	55 127	182	1	10920	1146	10
DELHI FWD	ROWIND009	88	88	1	5280	1234	11
DOUALA	ROWURC000	79	79	1	4740	1313	12
DUBAI DUBAI DUBAI DUBAI	ROWUAE002 ROWUAE000 ROWUAE003 ROWUAE004	18 30 15 55	118	1	7080	1431	13
DUBLIN DELIVERY	WEOROI001	53	53	1	3180	1484	14
GABORONE	ROWBOT000	187	187	2	11220	1671	16
GENEVA 2	WEOSWZ001	42	42	1	2520	1713	17

**International Destination Sort**

Account Number: 1234567

Mailing Ref: YOURREFERENCE

Mailing Date: 12/10/07

<b>Destination</b>	<b>ISC</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Destination Items</b>	<b>Bags</b>	<b>Wt. / g.</b>	<b>Cum. Items</b>	<b>Cum. Bags</b>
GRENADA	ROWGAA000	155	155	1	9300	1868	18
GUANGZHOU (KWANGCHOW)	ROWPRC002	202	202	2	12120	2070	20
ISLAMABAD IMC	ROWPAK000	170	170	1	10200	2240	21
JOHANNESBURG FWD	ROWZAF000	52	52	1	3120	2292	22
KUALA LUMPUR	ROWMAL000	23	75	1	4500	2367	23
KUALA LUMPUR	ROWMAL001	52					
LISBON PROVINCE	ROWCPV000	10	81	1	4860	2448	24
LISBON PROVINCE	ROWGUB000	8					
LISBON PROVINCE	ROWSTP000	16					
LISBON PROVINCE	WE0AZR000	32					
LISBON PROVINCE	WE0PTG000	15					
SYDNEY	ROWAUS000	32	75	1	4500	2523	25
SYDNEY	ROWAUS001	11					
SYDNEY	ROWAUS008	20					
SYDNEY	ROWCSI000	12					

## APPENDIX 3 – Import File Specification for Label Production

### Bag Label Specification – V1.0

Software developers who wish to produce an application to analyse and pre-sort mail using the International Mailsort Database may also wish to produce a file containing a list of the bag labels required. This file could be loaded into the standard IDS Final Labelling application (TVLDS).

This is a plain-text format file using Carriage-Return & Line Feed (shown as <CR-LF>, with ASCII value 13 & 10 or Hex value 0D & 0A) to terminate each record.

It comprises 2 parts:

HEADER – This is optional and contains information to confirm the purpose of the Bag File.

DETAIL – containing 1 or more rows describing the bag labels which are required.

#### HEADER

FILETYPE=IDSCFL

During import, this is used to validate that the file is for the correct application – to help clients avoid importing an incompatible file into the labelling application. I propose that a similar identifier should be included in other Bag Labelling file formats, if they are published.

CUSTOMERID=<4 digit number>

To assist customers who may process items for more than 1 Customer ID, this can be provided. This is validated against the approved customer IDs installed into the labelling application.

If not provided, the system default is used during import.

SERVICE=<1 character> - P/E/S

Sets the service level for the labels listed under the Bag Label record. Normally, labels will be for the same service, but as certain destinations do not support all services, this may be over-ridden in the Bag Label record of the.

#### DETAIL

Each column should be separated by a TAB (hex 09) character. Commas are also acceptable. Quotation characters can be included if preferred but are not required.

Purpose / Name	Field Size	Example/Notes
IDC (International Destination Code) Or DC (Destination Code)	9 characters or 3 characters	CUR or ROWABW000 This field can contain either the International Selection Code (9 characters) or the Destination Code (3 characters)
Quantity (optional)	3 digits	Quantity of labels required. If not supplied, defaults to 1
Service (optional)	1 character	P(riority), S(tandard) or E(economy) If not provided, the default (as specified in the header) will be used
Format (optional)	1 character	M (M-Bag Economy) P (Letter) G (Flat) E (Packet)

NB. The IDS Bag Label system has a minimum requirement of a single column of 9 or 3 character codes (the ISC or the DC). Any additional information (included within the file) will be used to the benefit of users by providing other settings or printing additional information on the bag labels.

Multiple labels for the same destination may be requested by providing a 'Quantity' column or simply by listing the destination as many times as needed, creating multiple Bag Label rows.

Example bag files are:

Simple, using Destination Code:

ABJ	<cr-lf>
AJB	<cr-lf>
CUR	<cr-lf>
...	

Using International Selection Code:

ROWROD000	<cr-lf>
ROWROD000	<cr-lf>
ROWSAU000	<cr-lf>
...	

Using Destination Code, including Service and quantity :

ABJ	<tab>	2	<tab>	E	<cr-lf>
CUR	<tab>	1	<tab>	E	<cr-lf>
...					

Using all the optional fields:

FILETYPE=IDSCFL		<cr-lf>					
CUSTOMERID=0001		<cr-lf>					
SERVICE=E		<cr-lf>					
ABJ	<tab>	2	<tab>	E	<tab>	G	<cr-lf>
CUR	<tab>	1	<tab>	E	<tab>	E	<cr-lf>
...							

## APPENDIX 4 – Label Print & Production Specification

### Database Specification

If you plan to write application software to print Final Labels for International Destination Sort, you will need to use the IDSFL.DAT file and follow the label design specification.

If you are using the standard IDS Final Labelling application, supplied through The Barcode Warehouse, you do not need to use the file or this documentation.

The table below is the file layout for the IDSFL.DAT.

Field Name	Size	Type	Comments
Database Version ID	3	Numeric	1 <sup>st</sup> digit represents "Version" 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> digits represent "Release"
International Selection Code (ISC)	9	Alphanumeric	Unique International Selection Code
Service	1	Alpha	Service
Destination Code (DC)	3	Alpha	Destination Code
Full Country Name	50	Alpha	Full Country Name
Full Destination Name	50	Alpha	Full Destination Name
Label Country Name	30	Alpha	Country Name for use on bag labels
Label Destination Name	35	Alpha	Destination Name for use on bag labels
Total record length	181		

The IDSFL.DAT file contains the information that allows printing of International Destination Sort Final Labels.

There are 2 sets of Country & Destination information within each file:

- Full Country Name & Full Destination Name, which may be used to produce line listing reports relating to the destination mail bag.
- Label Country Name & Label Destination Name, which must be used to produce bag labels.

A combination of the ISC (International Selection Code) and the Service will give you the row that contains the necessary text to print onto the bag labels. You will need to use Destination Code (DC), Label Country Name and Label Destination Name.

To obtain a copy of the IDSFL.DAT file and register for future updates please visit the International Mail Technical website at [www.internationalmailtechnical.com](http://www.internationalmailtechnical.com) and select the Mail Preparation option, Destination Sort service, Bag Labelling and click on the link under Option 3.

### Label Specification

International Destination Sort Final Bag Labels must be printed onto the correct stationery which meets the requirements for dimensions, quality and strength. These are ordered from [labels@royalmail.com](mailto:labels@royalmail.com) and are referred to as 'blank Destination Sort labels.'

The normal stationery uses Direct Thermal printing technology and it is therefore usual to utilise a Thermal Printer which correctly handles the stock; typically a TEC B Series (472/482/572) or SX series (SX4, SX5).

To print a bag label, you must use the International Selection Code (ISC) and the Service (P for Priority, S for Standard or E for Economy) to find the correct row in the IDSFL.DAT file. The **Destination Code, Label Country Name and Label Destination Name** must then be printed onto the label.

*Please note - you must **not** print the Full Country Name or the Full Destination Name on the labels.*

You must also generate the Unique Bag ID which comprises the following elements:

Purpose / Name	Field Size	Example/Notes
Customer ID	4 digits	0001 – allocated by Royal Mail to each system
Service	1 Characters	P(riority), S(tandard) or E(conomy)
Destination Code	3 characters	e.g. AFK

Sequential Number	6 digits (zero filled)	e.g. 000001, increasing by one for each individual label printed.
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- For a particular customer ID (allocated by Royal Mail), each Unique ID will always start with the same first 4 digits.
- Label printing systems will need to record the last issued 'Sequential Number' to survive restarts of the labelling application, reboots of the PC, etc.
- When the sequential number reaches 999999, it should reset to 000001.
- If multiple printers or applications are producing bag labels, the sequence numbers must come from a common pool – (e.g. shared network resource) otherwise it will be possible to generate duplicate IDs.

**e.g.**

**0001PAFK000001**

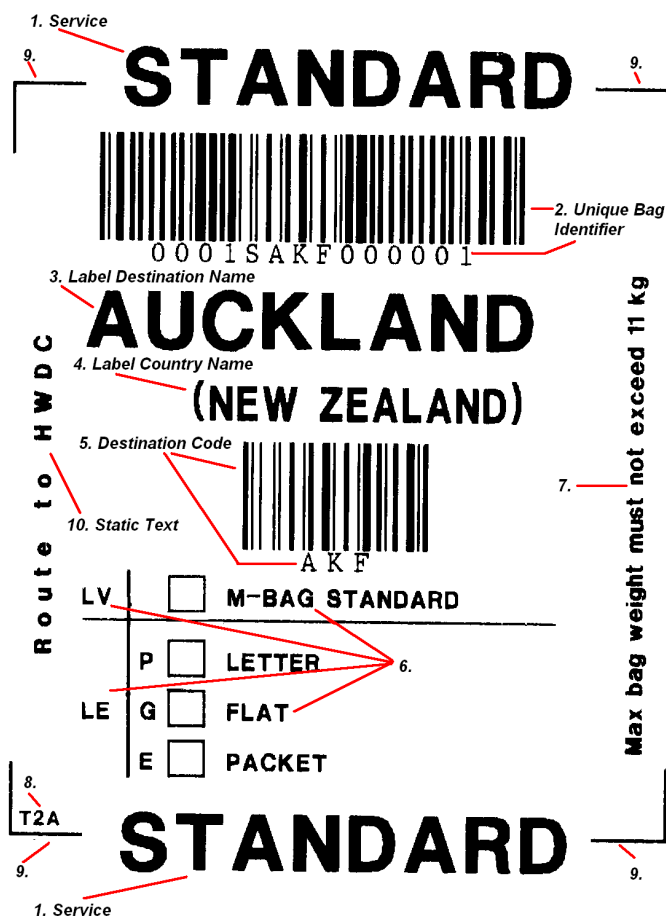
**0001PAFK000002**

**0001EAFK000003**

**0001EAFK000004**

**0001ECUR000005**

Example Label showing elements



No.	Purpose / Name	Font
1	Service	10mm (36pt)
2	Unique Bag Identifier: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barcode Format</li> <li>Human Readable format.</li> </ul>	15mm 3mm (11pt)
3	Destination Name	10mm (36pt)
4	Country Name - please note you must enclose within (Brackets)	6mm (22pt)
5	Receiving Office Code: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barcode format</li> <li>Human Readable</li> </ul>	15mm 3mm (11pt)
	<i>The remainder of the label is fixed text and lines comprising:</i>	
6	LV/LE words, marks and tick-boxes	3mm (11pt)
7	The words "Max bag weight must not exceed 11kg" written along the right-hand edge of the label	3mm (11pt)
8	T2A - this is used to indicate the layout of this particular label	2.6mm (9.5pt)
9	Edge marks - top left / top right / bottom left / bottom right	0.5mm
10	The words "Route to HWDC"	3mm (11pt)

**Note:**

- Text is printed using Arial or Helvetica font
- Service must show the words PRIORITY, STANDARD or ECONOMY
- For some destinations, it will be necessary to use a reduced font size: where the **Label Country Name** and/or **Label Destination Name** are too long to be printed at the indicated size.
- Barcode is printed using Code 128:
  - auto Code Set selection
  - Pseudo 103 check digit
  - Narrow Bar Width
  - Barcode Module Width between 0.38mm and 0.42mm
  - Height 15mm
- Human Readable edition of the barcode is printed in Courier font, 3mm high

**PRIORITY**



0001PCUR000003

**WILLEMSTAD-CURACAO**  
(NETHERLANDS ANTILLES)




CUR

Route to HWDC	LV	<input type="checkbox"/> M-BAG PRIORITY
	P	<input type="checkbox"/> LETTER
LE	G	<input type="checkbox"/> FLAT
	E	<input type="checkbox"/> PACKET

T2A **PRIORITY**


Max bag weight must not exceed 11 kg

**ECONOMY**



0001EABJ000001

**ABIDJAN**  
(COTE D'IVOIRE)



ABJ

Route to HWDC	LV	<input type="checkbox"/> M-BAG ECONOMY
	P	<input type="checkbox"/> LETTER
LE	G	<input type="checkbox"/> FLAT
	E	<input type="checkbox"/> PACKET

T2A **ECONOMY**


Max bag weight must not exceed 11 kg

**STANDARD**



0001SAKF000001

**AUCKLAND**  
(NEW ZEALAND)



AKF

Route to HWDC	LV	<input type="checkbox"/> M-BAG STANDARD
	P	<input type="checkbox"/> LETTER
LE	G	<input type="checkbox"/> FLAT
	E	<input type="checkbox"/> PACKET

T2A **STANDARD**

Max bag weight must not exceed 11 kg

Version 1.4