



LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
PEACE INDEPENDENCE DEMOCRACY UNITY PROSPERITY

President's Office

No. 39/PO

DECREE
of the
PRESIDENT
of the
LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

On the Promulgation of the Law on Postal Services

Pursuant to Chapter 6, Article 67, point 1 of the Constitution of the Lao People's Democratic Republic which provides for the promulgation of the Constitution and of laws adopted by the National Assembly;

Pursuant to Resolution No. 06/NA, dated 17 May 2003, of the National Assembly of the Lao People's Democratic Republic regarding the adoption of the Law on Postal Services; and

Pursuant to Proposal No. 18/NASC, dated 25 May 2004, of the National Assembly Standing Committee.

**The President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
Decrees That:**

Article 1. The Law on Postal Services is hereby promulgated.

Article 2. This decree shall enter into force on the date it is signed.

Vientiane, 15 June 2004
The President of the Lao People's
Democratic Republic

[Seal and Signature]

Khamtai SIPHANDON



LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
PEACE INDEPENDENCE DEMOCRACY UNITY PROSPERITY

National Assembly

No. 06/NA
17 May 2004

LAW ON POSTAL SERVICES

Chapter 1 General Provisions

Article 1. Objective

The Law on Postal Services defines the principles, regulations and measures to manage and monitor¹ the establishment, operation, and promotion of domestic and international postal services, with the aim of providing the society with services of high quality, convenience, speed and safety [so that postal items] reach the addressees in person, and also to contribute to national construction and development.

Article 2. Postal Services

Postal services refers to[:] the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels by affixing postage stamps and by franking²; postal services for transmitting information by telegram, facsimile and electronic means; postal financial services; and sale of postage stamps and various postal products based on tariffs approved by the government.

Article 3. Definitions

The following terms used in this law shall have the following meanings:

1. **“Letter post item”** refers to smaller postal items such as letters, postcards, documents, newspapers, magazines, printed matter, small packets and other items that do not exceed two kilograms of weight per envelope or packet, with the exception of books, that

¹ In the Lao language, the same word is used to represent all of the following related (but slightly different) concepts: “control”, “inspection”, “supervision”, “audit” and “monitoring”. In this law, the translators have chosen “monitor” (and its variants) as the most appropriate English equivalent but readers should note and bear in mind the other meanings that might have been intended.

² This is a translation of the Lao phrase: “the seal that is used to replace the postage stamp”.

- can be up to five kilograms, and literature for the blind, that can be up to seven kilograms;
2. **“Postal parcel”** refers to bigger items sent through postal services that are over two kilograms, but not over fifty kilograms, of weight per item or packet;
 3. **“Postage stamp”** refers to an authorised seal or symbol that has the value of money for affixing on letter post items and postal parcels to represent a postage charge, or for collecting;
 4. **“Mail bags”** refers to bags or boxes containing letter post items and postal parcels that are closed and sealed with an authorised postal symbol³ for dispatch to the destination post office;
 5. **“Postman”** refers to a person who delivers all kinds of postal items to the addressees;
 6. **“Postal agency”** refers to a person or an organisation that represents or acts on behalf of the post office to provide services, such as acceptance and delivery of postal items, and selling postage stamps and other postal products;
 7. **“Letter-box”** refers to a box provided by the post office for inserting paid letters and postcards and installed in front of a post office or⁴ in a public area;
 8. **“Post office box”** refers to a box with a serial number owned by a subscriber and installed in a post office for inserting letters, postcards, small printed matter and notices to the subscriber.

Article 4. Promotion of Investment in Postal Services

The State promotes both domestic and international individuals and organisations to invest in the development of postal services in accordance with the categories and scope stipulated in this law.

Article 5. Obligations of Citizens

Lao citizens, aliens, foreign individuals and apatrids⁵ in the Lao PDR have the obligation to facilitate and cooperate with the postal organisation in the implementation, use and protection of the postal service system and to assist postmen to carry out their tasks.

Road, water and air carriers have the obligation to sign a contract or agreement for the transport of mailbags upon the request of a postal service provider. Such contract or agreement must be complied with and implemented in order to secure the transport of mailbags to reach the post office of destination on time and safely.

³ It is unclear whether it is the bags and boxes or the seal that must contain the official symbol.

⁴ The Lao original is “and” but the meaning is “or”.

⁵ Readers may wish to refer to the Law on Lao Nationality for the distinction between aliens, apatrids (i.e. persons unable to certify their nationality) and foreign individuals.

Article 6. International Relations and Cooperation

The State promotes international relations and cooperation with foreign countries and international organisations for the purposes of coordinating postal services, exchanging experience, and developing capacity regarding new technology, in order to advance and modernise the postal services.

Chapter 2
Categories and Scope of Postal Services in the Lao PDR

Article 7. Categories of Postal Services

Postal services in the Lao PDR comprise the following four main categories:

1. Services for the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels;
2. Services for transmitting information by telegram, facsimile and electronic means;
3. Postal financial services;
4. Sale of postage stamps and postal products.

Article 8. Acceptance, Dispatch and Delivery of Letter Post Items and Postal Parcels

The acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels must assure that [they] reach the destination safely and on time by five methods: ordinary, registered, express, express mail service and declared value service:

1. Ordinary service refers to the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels through a general service without registration, and is dispatched by normal conveyance;
2. Registered service refers to the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of registered letter post items where the items are guaranteed from the date of posting to the date of delivery to the addressee, and an additional charge will be collected for such service;
3. Express service refers to the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels both in the form of ordinary and registered services but delivery must be the first priority, and an additional charge will be collected for such service;
4. Express mail service refers to the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels in the form of first priority and the items can be tracked and traced at any time, and the postage charge will be more expensive than the charge for other services;

5. Declared value service refers to the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels where the sender has to declare the type of item and value of the postal item.⁶

Ordinary letters and postcards can be posted at the post office counters or by putting them, after affixing postage stamps, into a letter-box.

For the delivery of letter post items and postal parcels to subscribers of post office boxes, the postman will insert the letters, postcards, small printed matter or notices into their [respective] boxes.

Article 9. Postal Services for Transmitting Information by Telegram, Facsimile and Electronic Means

Postal services for transmitting information by telegram, facsimile and electronic means refers to the transmission of information through various telecommunication equipment installed in centres⁷ or post offices, such as: telegraph machines, facsimile machines, computers and other telecommunication devices.

Article 10. Postal Financial Services

Postal financial services refers to[:] services for issuing or paying money orders and postal checks; making money transfers and other payments of public utility bills through postal services; postal item insurance, postal savings services⁸ and the offering of loans to depositors⁹.

Postal savings services and the offering of loans to depositors are required to follow the regulations of the Bank of the Lao PDR.

Other financial services can be implemented based on the approval of the government.

Article 11. Services for Selling Postage Stamps and Postal Products

Services for selling postage stamps refers to selling postage stamps to senders for sending letter post items and postal parcels and also selling to collectors for collecting.

Postal products to be sold are as follows: envelopes, wrapping paper, boxes for containing letter post items and postal parcels, and souvenirs.

⁶ This appears to be a reference to insured services where the sender declares the value of the goods.

⁷ This is a reference to telecommunication centres set up by the postal service.

⁸ In this law, two Lao terms “postal savings services” and “deposits” are used to represent the same phenomenon, namely, the taking of savings deposits by the postal services.

⁹ The literal translation is “members of postal savings”.

Article 12. Scope of Postal Services

The postal services of the Lao PDR provide both domestic and international services. Domestic services are required to follow this law while international services are not only required to follow this law but also conventions or international agreements concerning postal services to which the Lao PDR is a party.

**Chapter 3
Fees and Tariffs on Postal Services**

Article 13. Postal Fees

Postal fees refers to the postal business license fees for the establishment and operation of postal services that is a revenue of the State budget.

The Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction shall, in collaboration with the relevant sectors¹⁰, study the scale of fees to present to the government for consideration and to submit to the National Assembly Standing Committee for further approval, and [such scale of fees] shall be issued by presidential decree.

Article 14. Tariffs

Tariff refers to the postage charge for the various postal categories that are indicated in Article 7 of this law that is the income of the postal service provider.

The Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction shall, in collaboration with the relevant sectors, study the scale of tariffs to present to the government for further approval.

¹⁰ The term “sector” is used in many Lao laws to refer to the cluster of government ministries or agencies engaged in a particular activity.

Chapter 4

Establishment of Postal Service Enterprises

Article 15. Application for Establishment of Postal Service Enterprises

Postal services that relate to postal financial services, or to national strategic defence, security and stability shall only be authorised by the State to Lao State postal enterprises. Furthermore, the State may authorise individuals and organisations that meet the [relevant] conditions to establish postal service enterprises to provide postal services in some of the categories indicated in Article 7 of this law. The application procedure for establishment of postal service enterprises shall be in accordance with the Business Law¹¹ and other relevant laws.

Article 16. Conditions for the Establishment of Postal Service Enterprises

For establishment, a postal service enterprise shall meet the following conditions:

1. Have capital, office, equipment, tools, and vehicles as provided by regulations;
2. Have qualified technical staff, who have higher education in the area of postal services and at least three years of experience;
3. Have technical staff in numbers appropriate to the scale of the business as provided by regulations.

The Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction shall define detailed conditions for persons who may be authorised to establish a postal service enterprise.

Chapter 5

Rights, Duties and Obligations of Postal Service Providers; Rights and Obligations of Postal Service Users

Article 17. Rights and Duties of Postal Service Providers of Acceptance, Dispatch and Delivery

Postal service providers of acceptance, dispatch and delivery have the following rights and duties:

1. To provide users with the acceptance, dispatch and delivery of letter post items and postal parcels with convenience, speed and safety, and without loss, damage, change in form, or deterioration[;] and to ensure that the items reach the addressees;
2. To return to the senders any letter post items or postal parcels refused by the addressees;

¹¹ This is a reference to an older law which has since been replaced by the Enterprise Law.

3. To protect and manage letter-boxes and post office boxes in accordance with the regulations issued by the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction;
4. To retain for up to one year letter post items and postal parcels that cannot be delivered or returned to the sender for the following reasons:
 - Incomplete address of sender or recipient;
 - Unknown sender or recipient;
 - Refused by sender or recipient;
 - Unclaimed by sender or recipient;
 - Sender or recipient has moved from his address without giving notice of his new address;
 - Death of sender or recipient;
 - Force majeure.

For such items, postal service providers need to seek solutions to deliver the items to the addressees or to return them to the senders. The items will become State property when the retention period is exceeded;

5. To study and propose the tariff of postal charges to the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction in conformity with the socio-economic situation in each period;
6. To open and check all postal items in front of senders or addressees and concerned officials, in the event that the packets or envelopes are suspected to contain prohibited articles or illegal items;
7. To collect tariffs in accordance with the laws and regulations;
8. To make contracts or agreements with individuals or organisations to be their representatives to provide postal services to the public;
9. To refuse to accept any letter post item or postal parcel containing weapons, explosives, dangerous chemical or biological substances, narcotics, other prohibited articles or items not fulfilling the postal regulations, such as: items with unpaid, reused or cancelled postage stamps, with incomplete address of sender or recipient, without packaging, or containing items that may soil or damage other items;
10. To retain or confiscate any letter post item or postal parcel that contains prohibited articles or illegal goods and to hand them over to the relevant authorities for further action;
11. To preserve the copyright of postal products;
12. To pay indemnity to senders for items lost due to their mistake. When the damage is due to an event of force majeure, the condition of the item or the failure of the sender or addressee, indemnity is not payable;
13. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 18. Rights and Duties of Postal Service Providers of Transmission of Information by Telegram, Facsimile and Electronic Means

Postal service providers of transmission of information by telegram, facsimile and electronic means have the following rights and duties:

1. To obtain the agreement of the concerned agency for the use of equipment and the telecommunication system to provide the service of sending information;
2. To provide services for transmission of information with high quality, convenience, speed, accuracy, reliability and timeliness;
3. To collect tariffs in accordance with the laws and regulations;
4. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 19. Rights and Duties of Postal Service Providers of Postal Financial Services

Postal service providers of postal financial services have the following rights and duties:

1. To issue and pay on money orders and postal checks; to make money transfers and other payments through postal services;
2. To provide postal savings services and loans to members of postal savings services;
3. To provide insurance services for postal items;
4. To collect tariffs in accordance with the laws and regulations;
5. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 20. Rights and Duties of Postal Service Providers Selling Postage Stamps and Products

Postal service providers selling postage stamps and products have the following rights and duties:

1. To sell¹² postage stamps to postal service users or the public for paying tariffs on letter post items and postal parcels and for collecting;
2. To produce and sell postal products such as souvenirs and other products;
3. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

¹² There is a connotation of selling widely to the public.

Article 21. Obligations of Postal Service Providers

Postal service providers in the different categories referred to in articles 17, 18, 19 and 20 of this law have the following obligations:

1. To be subject to the monitoring of the communication, transport, post and construction sector and to be subject to the monitoring of other relevant sectors;
2. To regularly report on their business activities to the communication, transport, post and construction sector where they belong;
3. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 22. Rights and Obligations of Postal Service Users

Postal service users have the following rights and obligations:

1. Senders are entitled to withdraw their letter post items and postal parcels that are not delivered to the addressee, unless they are illegal items;
2. Senders are entitled to request postal officers to open any letter post item or postal parcel that is returned due to the refusal of the addressee, before accepting it or not;
3. Addressees are entitled to request postal officers to open any letter post item or postal parcel addressed to them, before accepting it or not;
4. Addressees are entitled to refuse to accept any letter post item or postal parcel that is addressed to them;
5. Senders and addressees are entitled to demand or claim compensation through judicial proceedings from the postal service provider for items that are lost or damaged by the fault of the postal service provider;
6. Senders and addressees are entitled to inquire about the regulations and principles governing acceptance, dispatch, delivery and distribution, about the security and scale of risks of letter post items and postal parcels, and about the level of compensation when such items are damaged, deteriorate or are lost;
7. Senders must be responsible for their illegal letter post items and postal parcels;
8. If they agree to accept an item, addressees must pay the postal tariffs for any insufficient postage;
9. Senders must declare valuable items to be posted through the postal services to the postal officers, such as silver, gold, diamonds, precious stones or other valuable items;
10. Subscribers of post office boxes have the right and obligation to use and protect their post office boxes in accordance with regulations issued by the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction;

11. To receive services for the transmission of information with high quality, convenience, speed, accuracy, reliability and timeliness;
12. To receive services of deposit¹³, transfer and payment of money orders and postal checks, and to make money transfers and other payments through the post;
13. To receive services of postal savings deposits¹⁴ and loans in accordance with regulations;
14. To insure items;
15. To buy postage stamps to use as postal tariffs for letter post items and postal parcels, and for collecting;
16. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Chapter 6 Prohibitions

Article 23. General Prohibitions

Individuals or organisations are prohibited to act as follows:

1. To obstruct, detain or prevent any postman or vehicle from transporting mailbags; to confiscate, seize, inspect or open mailbags, letter post items or postal parcels during the course of transport, unless there is solid evidence that there are illegal items contained in the mailbags or vehicles. The inspection must only be done at the nearest post office, except in the case where there is information to prove that the mailbag or the vehicle transporting the mailbag contains dangerous materials that may cause harm to the public, [in which case,] the inspection must be done immediately at the location where such [mailbag or vehicle] is found[;] and such inspection must be done by relevant competent officials;
2. To falsify or counterfeit postage stamps, postal products or franks;
3. To produce or distribute postage stamps or¹⁵ postal products without authorisation;
4. To destroy or damage vehicles, equipment or other postal facilities;
5. To offer postal services without authorisation.

¹³ Here, the money order or postal check is given to the postal service for deposit to one's account, for negotiation, transfer or payment.

¹⁴ See footnote 8. In this point 13, the word deposit is used in the Lao original, rather than postal savings service.

¹⁵ The literal translation is "and" but the meaning is "or".

Article 24. Prohibitions on Postal Service Providers

Postal service providers are prohibited to act as follows:

1. To accept, dispatch or deliver any letter post item or postal parcel that contains illegal items or prohibited items or that does not fulfil postal regulations;
2. To delay the dispatch or delivery of any letter post item or postal parcel without any reason;
3. To open any box, packet or envelope of a letter post item or postal parcel without the presence of the sender or addressee or the concerned official, except in a case provided in paragraph 1 of Article 23 of this law;
4. To cause damage, loss, change in form, or deterioration of any letter post item or postal parcel;
5. To collect from senders higher tariffs than those laid down in the regulations;
6. To accept or transmit information that would have a negative effect on national economy, culture, stability, security or public order;
7. To offer general loans to persons who have no postal savings account¹⁶;
8. To offer services exceeding the categories or scope of approved services;
9. To allow any other person to use or lease, or to transfer [its] business license to another person.

The Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction shall, in coordination with the relevant competent sectors, define the list of prohibited articles in postal services.

Article 25. Prohibitions on Postal Service Users

Postal service users are prohibited to act as follows:

1. To bring illegal items or items not fulfilling the postal regulations as referred to in paragraph 3 of Article 17 of this law to send through postal services;
2. To bring valuable items as referred to in paragraph 9 of Article 22 of this law to send through postal services without declaring [them] to the postal officers.

¹⁶ The loans offered to these people do not have the same favourable terms and interest rates as the loans made to depositors.

Chapter 7 **Management and Monitoring of Postal Services**

Article 26. Objectives of the Management and Monitoring of Postal Services

The objectives of the management and monitoring of postal services are to ensure that the establishment and operation of postal services are conducted in conformity with this Law on Postal Services, relevant laws and regulations of the Lao PDR and regulations of the Universal Postal Union, and to prevent all acts aiming to harm stability, security, public order, the society, the economy, and the fine national culture.

Article 27. The Management and Monitoring Organisation

The management and monitoring organisation comprises three levels, as follows:

- The Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction;
- The communication, transport, post and construction division in each province and city;
- The communication, transport, post and construction office in each district and municipality.

Article 28. Rights and Duties of the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction

In the management and monitoring of postal services, the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction has the following main rights and duties:

1. To study the policies and strategic plans regarding postal services and to submit them to the government;
2. To elaborate on the policies, plans, and resolutions issued by the government regarding postal services and to transform them into programmes, action plans and projects for its own sector;
3. To define¹⁷ regulations regarding various categories of services in conformity with the laws and regulations;
4. To cooperate with concerned sectors to study postal fees, tariffs and forms of postage stamps for submission to the government for consideration and approval. The printing of postage stamps shall be determined by the government;
5. To manage, direct, monitor and solve all problems regarding postal service activities throughout the country;
6. To study and make recommendations on applications for the establishment and operation of postal services as well as for the extension, suspension and cancellation of postal services;
7. To establish plans for training and upgrading postal staff;

¹⁷ The term “define” as used here has the connotation of both determining and issuing.

8. To summarise and evaluate the implementation of programmes, action plans and projects relating to postal services and to report to the government;
9. To liaise and cooperate with foreign countries and international organisations in order to create favourable conditions for the development of postal services;
10. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 29. Rights and Duties of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction Divisions in Provinces and Municipalities

In the management and monitoring of postal services, the communication, transport, post and construction division at each province or city has the following main rights and duties:

1. To elaborate on and implement the postal plan issued by the Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction [in relation to matters] under its responsibility;
2. To motivate the people and all organisations in the province or city to use postal services;
3. To manage, monitor and solve problems regarding postal service activities;
4. To study and make recommendations on applications for the establishment and operation of postal services, as well as for the extension, suspension or cancellation of postal services, under its responsibility;
5. To liaise and cooperate with relevant sectors and to submit proposals to the provincial governor or city mayor for the appointment of a committee to open boxes, packets, letter post items and postal parcels that cannot be delivered to their addressees or returned to the senders, before handing them over to the State;
6. To collect data and statistics regarding the different kinds of use of postal services; to summarise and evaluate the implementation of postal service activities and to report to the higher authority;
7. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 30. Rights and Duties of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction Offices in Districts and Municipalities

In the management and monitoring of postal services, the communication, transport, post and construction office at each district or municipality has the following main rights and duties:

1. To elaborate on and implement the postal plan issued by the communication, transport, post and construction division [in relation to matters] under its responsibility;

2. To motivate the people and all organisations in the district or municipality to use postal services;
3. To manage, monitor and solve problems regarding postal service activities;
4. To liaise and cooperate with relevant sectors and submit proposals to the district or municipal chief for the appointment of a committee to open boxes, packets, letter post items and postal parcels that cannot be delivered to their addressees or returned to the senders, before handing them over to the State;
5. To collect data and statistics regarding the different kinds of use of postal services; to summarise and evaluate the implementation of postal service activities and to report to the higher authority;
6. To exercise such other rights and perform such other duties as defined in the laws.

Article 31. Contents of Monitoring

The main contents of postal service monitoring are as follows:

1. To monitor postal service providers under its responsibility, in their implementation of the postal service plan, the Law on Postal Services and other relevant laws;
2. To monitor the implementation of international agreements or conventions regarding postal services to which the Lao PDR is a party.

Article 32. Types of Monitoring

There are three types of postal service monitoring as follows:

- Regular monitoring;
- Monitoring with advance notice;
- Emergency monitoring.

Regular monitoring is conducted under a regular plan and at specified times.

Monitoring with advance notice is conducted outside the plan when deemed necessary, with prior notice to the monitored person.

Emergency monitoring is monitoring conducted on an urgent basis and without prior notice to the monitored person.

In conducting postal service monitoring, the officers of the monitoring organisation shall strictly comply with laws and regulations.

Chapter 8

Policies Towards Persons with Outstanding Achievement and Measures Against Violators¹⁸

Article 33. Policies Towards Persons with Outstanding Achievement

Postal service providers who have performed and provided high quality services and who conform to the laws and regulations will be rewarded or will receive other policies as appropriate.

A person or an organisation that has cooperated with postal officers, customs officers, and policemen by informing them of the sending of smuggled, prohibited or illegal items shall be considered [for reward] and may be given remuneration according to the case, once the items are seized and confiscated.

A person or an organisation that has assisted mailbag carriers or postmen during the occurrence of an obstacle, such as: road flooding, problems occurring to vehicles that transport mailbags, accidents or other difficulties, or that has assisted mailbag carriers in completing their tasks shall be considered [for reward] and may be given remuneration, as appropriate.

Article 34. Measures Against Violators

A person or an organisation that has violated any provision of this law shall be re-educated, fined or subject to criminal sanction depending on the degree of the violation, including being required to pay compensation for damage caused.

Article 35. Re-Education¹⁹ Measures

A person or an organisation that has violated provisions of this law shall be re-educated, such as²⁰:

- Postal officers who cause inconvenience or who delay in the provision of services without any reason;
- Senders who affix used postage stamps on letter post items or postal parcels or who pay postage charges with lower value than the actual tariff and other minor violations.

¹⁸ The term “policies” is often used as an indirect way of referring to “incentives’ or “privileges” and the term “measures” is often used as an indirect way of referring to “sanctions”.

¹⁹ Here, “re-education” does not mean the same as “re-education without deprivation of liberty” referred to in the Penal Law.

²⁰ The translators are aware that the lead-in language of Article 35 might have been better phrased as “any person or organisation that has violated any provisions similar to the following shall be re-educated:”. Similar observations apply to the lead-in language of Articles 36 and 37.

Article 36. Fines

A person or an organisation that has violated provisions of this law shall be fined, such as:

- Postal officers who collect tariffs higher than the authorised rates;
- Postal service providers that provide services beyond the scope of their authorisation; or that give their business license to another person to use or lease, or to transfer to another person. In addition to being fined, [such persons] may be subject to suspension of service or withdrawal of license;
- Postal service users who send illegal items that violate regulations on postal services; or who illegally send valuable items in boxes, packets, letter post items or postal parcels as provided in articles 17 and 22 of this law;
- [Persons] who have committed violations and undergone re-education but who violate again.

In the case of any violation that causes damage to the property of an individual or organisation, compensation shall be made for such damage.

The Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction, in coordination with concerned sectors, studies detailed measures and rates of fines for violations and submits them to the government for consideration and approval.

Article 37. Criminal Sanctions

A person who has violated provisions of this law shall be subject to criminal sanction, such as:

- To obstruct a postman or vehicle that transports mailbags or to prevent such transport; to illegally confiscate, seize, inspect or open mailbags during the course of transport;
- To falsify or counterfeit postage stamps, postal products, or franks; to produce, or distribute postage stamps or other products without authorisation;
- To damage or cause loss to vehicles, equipment or other postal service facilities;
- To send prohibited or illegal items;
- To illegally open letters, boxes, small packets or postal parcels or to steal items sent through the post;
- To accept, dispatch or deliver prohibited or illegal items;
- Other offences involving postal services.

Chapter 9
Final Provisions

Article 38. Implementation

The government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is to implement this law.

Article 39. Effectiveness

The law shall enter into force 90 days after the date of the promulgating decree issued by the President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Provisions or regulations that contradict this law shall be null and void.

Vientiane, 17 May 2004
President of the National Assembly

[Seal and Signature]

Samane VIGNAKET