

POSTAL NEWS

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1. Cameroon: Minpostel Against Illegal Postal Services

Brenda Yufeh

7 January 2010

The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has signed a communiqué informing the public about illegal operators in the sector. The Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Jean Pierre Biyiti bi Essam has signed a communiqué drawing the public's attention to the existence of an illegal postal service in Yaounde named "Poste Urbaine du Cameroun". The postal service which does not have the legal right to operate is also using the brand name of the public postal operator, CAMPOST. Given the dubious manner in which people's items are handled during posting, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications has taken steps to inform the public against those operating in illegality so as to avoid confusion and public disorder.

It is said that postal service is like other commercial activities such as banking, transportation or insurance. But postal activities are organised by the State in accordance with certain treaties and conventions signed by the government. The Sub-Director of Postal Regulation at the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Mr Tchiefa, says they must preserve the public postal service and the main characteristics of the postal service such as equal access, quality service and permanent adaptation to customer's needs. That is why the ministry came up with the Law No 2006/019 of 29 December 2006 regulating postal activities in Cameroon. Mr Tchiefa says CAMPOST is executing the postal public service of the State. Private individuals have been given the authorisation to execute in the domain of Cameroon's postal service. According to Mr Tchiefa, the services have been organised in such a way that there are big and small operators to deliver the postal services to the lowest class in the society. The Sub-Director of Postal Regulation explains that the Ministry took time to make publicity on the postal service laws in the country so that people could legalise their business. While the documents of 30 postal services are pending legalisation, some people have decided to go against the law by operating the postal business without the legal authorisation to do so. Mr Tchiefa says "Poste Urbaine du Cameroun" have never deposited a file to legalise its business and was using the brand name of another public enterprise. Worst still, it is noted that Poste Urbaine du Cameroun" had gone to the African Organisation of Intellectual Property (OAPI) to protect its name which is

already the name of a public postal service operator. Postal authorities say this is dangerous as it could create public disorder and confusion. Mr Tchiefa says instead of dragging "Poste Urbaine du Cameroun" to court, according to article 43 of the postal law which punishes those running illegal postal operators with two to five million or an imprisonment from one to five years, they have decided to call them to order by reminding them to comply to the law.

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2. Got USPS mail? There's an app for that!

Mobile application helps users find post offices, track mail

By Doug Beizer

Jan 12, 2010

A new iPhone application that helps users find post offices and mail collection boxes is now available at Apple Computer's App Store, U.S. Postal Service officials announced.

The free app for the iPhone and iPod Touch uses Global Positioning Satellite capabilities to locate USPS facilities. It can also provide maps and directions—driving, walking or mass transit—to the locations.

The app's Track and Confirm feature lets users track mail using a tracking code number and stores the number so that, when the user checks again, it's a single click.

The app also has a ZIP code finder that provides the user with the ZIP of the user's current location using GPS.

USPS applications for other internet-enabled mobile devices are in development, according to the USPS.

“We want to continue our 234-year tradition of serving every American community, whether it's in a Post Office, online or even over the phone,” said Robert Bernstock, the USPS' president of mailing and shipping services.

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Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

E-mail address : chairulanwar49@operamail.com, uyungchairul@plasa.com.