

# MALTAPOST SERVICE ON BOARD M.V. JEAN DE LA VALETTE

by  
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On 4th November 2011, MaltaPost announced that it had installed a letterbox on board the M.V. Jean De La Valette a vessel operated by Virtu' Ferries Ltd.

The full text of the notice reads as follows:

*“MaltaPost Service on board M.V. Jean De La Valette*

*MaltaPost announces that it has installed a letterbox on board the M.V. Jean De La Valette. Mail posted on board the vessel will be marked “PAQUEBOT” and postage stamps cancelled accordingly. Mail posted during voyages to Malta will be collected and processed upon arrival at Malta.*

*Service of this letterbox will commence on Monday 7th November 2011.”*

For the benefit of all those interested in the subject of Maritime Mail, below one may find an extract of current procedure as stipulated by the UPU Convention.

Extract from Letter Post – Conv Art 8; Article RL 119  
*UPU Letter Post Manual Berne 2009*

*“Prepayment and stamping of items posted on board ship*

*1. Items posted on board ship at the two terminal points of the voyage or at any intermediate port of call shall be prepaid by means of postage stamps and according to the rates of the country in whose waters the ship is lying.*

*2. If the items are posted on board on the high seas, they may be prepaid, in the absence of special agreement between the designated operators concerned, by means of the postage stamps and according to the rates of the country to which the ship appertains or is under contract. Items prepaid in this way must be handed over to the post office at the port of call as soon as possible after the arrival of the ship.*

3. *The stamping of items posted on ships shall be the responsibility of the postal official or the officer on board charged with the duty, or, failing those, of the post office at the port of call at which these items are handed over. In that case, the office shall impress the correspondence with its date-stamp and add the word “Navire”, “Paquebot” or any other similar note.*

\* *Commentary*

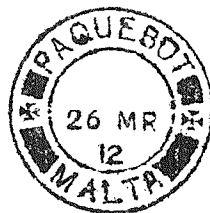
119.2 *An application of maritime practice according to which any ship on the high seas is “part of the territory” of the country whose flag it flies.*

*The country issuing the postage stamps is considered as the country of origin, even when the stamps, having been affixed on the high seas, are cancelled at the next port with the date-stamp of another country.”*

In this regard MaltaPost explained the procedure.

*When establishing the procedure to be adopted in respect of such mail, MaltaPost followed the UPU guidelines on Paquebot (or Ship’s) Mail. In this regard, given the relatively short and frequent voyages MaltaPost considered it more practicable to limit its Paquebot Mail service to the voyage between Sicily & Malta (that is , not on the Malta to Sicily voyage). Consequently, (and as per UPU guidelines) the on-board letterbox is only open on the Sicily to Malta voyage and mail is franked with Malta stamps - also because the vessel is Malta-registered.*

*The handstamp marked “PAQUEBOT” is not applied on board the vessel but at MaltaPost Central Mail Room in Marsa. It is not a new handstamp but one that has been in use for a number of years.*



*Note: we understand that in cases where a passenger purchases a postage stamp or postcard from the onboard shop (run by the vessel operators), then the shop assistant there marks the postcard with a rubber stamp that reads ‘**Mailed on Board MV Jean De La Valette**’.*

Hopefully the above points answer the queries raised, clarify the situation and also dispel uncertainties regarding the details and procedures that have been adopted for the processing of mail posted on board this magnificent ferry. We also take this opportunity to thank MaltaPost for its cooperation and input to help us inform our readers about the service.