

# AIR FRANCE, SAIGON - HANOI - HONG KONG

5 October 1938

On 5 October 1938 Air France made the first official flight from Saigon to Hong Kong via Hanoi



**First flight**

October 1938  
from Saigon

18 centimes per 1oz  
surface letter rate, plus  
20 centimes air fee



**First flight**

October 1938  
from Hanoi

Overpaid by  
10 centimes

## QANTAS EMPIRE AIRWAYS 'COORONG' INCIDENT

12 December 1938

On the evening of 12 December 1938 Qantas Empire Airways flying boat 'Coorong', VH-ABE, was blown ashore in Darwin Bay, after its heavy anchor chain had been snapped, by an 80 m.p.h. gale.



**Only cover from Hong Kong salvaged recorded**

December 1938 to Australia

15¢ per 1/2oz air letter rate



# AIR FRANCE, HONG KONG - HANOI - SAIGON

10 March 1939

Permission for Air France to carry mail out of Hong Kong was not given until 1939, when Imperial Airways were given reciprocal rights in Indo-China. The first flight carrying mail left Hong Kong on 10 March 1939



## First despatch

March 1939  
to Hanoi

25¢ per 1/2oz.  
air letter rate

Arrived in Hanoi  
on 11 March



## First despatch

March 1939  
to Iran

80c per 1/2oz.  
air letter rate, plus  
25¢ registration fee

Backstamped  
Bouchir 14 III 39,  
18 III 39

**AIR FRANCE, HONG KONG - HANOI - SAIGON**

Airmail rate period: 10 March 1939 - 4 July 1940

From 10 March 1939 mail could be carried out of Hong Kong by Air France



January 1940  
to Haiphong

Adhesives perfined  
"BI" for "Banque  
de l'Indo-Chine"

50¢ for 1oz

Backstamped  
Hanoi 25 1 40,  
Haiphong 26 1 40



February 1940  
to France

\$1.20 per 1/2oz  
air letter rate,  
plus \$1 wartime  
surcharge



# IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED, WARTIME SURCHARGE

Airmail rate period: 4 September 1939 - 14 April 1940

With the outbreak of World War II, a surcharge of \$1.00 was imposed. Imperial Airways Limited was renamed British Overseas Airways Corporation on 1 April 1940



**SKODA WORKS**  
FAR EASTERN BRANCHES  
P.O.Box 1637, Hongkong.



By Imperial Airways.

Messrs. Skoda Works Ltd.,  
P. O. Box 98,  
B a n g k o k  
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registered



October 1939 to Bangkok

2oz at \$1.30 (30¢ plus \$1.00) per 1/2oz air letter rate, plus 25¢ registration fee

IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED, WARTIME SURCHARGE

By Imperial Airways

English language used.

10 Feb. 1940

Mr. U. Spalinger,  
Bühlstrasse 51  
ZÜRICH - HOENGG  
Switzerland.

BY AIR MAIL  
PAR AVION  
VIA AEREA

REGISTERED



January 1940 to Switzerland

Civilian censor handstamp  
applied in Hong Kong

1 1/2oz at \$2.20 (\$1.20 plus \$1.00)  
per 1/2oz air letter rate,  
plus 25¢ registration fee

Backstamped Milano 9 2 40,  
Zurich 10 II 40

March 1940 to Italy

\$1.50 (50¢ plus \$1.00) postcard rate,  
plus 25¢ registration fee





## BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION, WAI CHOW INCIDENT

8 November 1939

On 8 November 1939 British Overseas Airways Corporation's DH86 'Dardanus' was forced down on the island of Wai Chow by the Japanese. The mail was impounded but released later



**Impounded by the Japanese on Wai Chow**

November 1939 to United Kingdom

\$1.15 per 1/2oz air letter rate

**IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED, REGULAR SERVICE**

Airmail rate period: 15 April 1940 - 15 October 1940

From 15 April 1940 the surcharge of \$1.00 on mail to Europe was removed, the air letter rate returning to \$1.20 per 1/2oz



May 1940 to Switzerland

Opened by censor in Hong Kong

\$1.20 per 1/2oz air letter rate



June 1940 to Switzerland

Opened by censor in Hong Kong and Egypt

1oz at \$1.20 per 1/2oz air letter rate



## PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

Airmail rate period: 13 June 1940 - 1 August 1940

Due to World War II, uncertainty regarding the Imperial Airways westbound service to the United Kingdom and Europe led to the Hong Kong Post Office publicising that mail could be accepted for transmission to and across the United States by air, and then on by sea from 13 June 1940

THE CHASE BANK  
HONG KONG



Via Pan American Airways Plane To London

The Chase National Bank of The City of New York,  
6 Lombard Street,  
London, E. C. 3.  
England.

大通銀行

CORREO AEREO  VIA AIR MAIL

VIA PAN-AMERICAN AIRWAYS.



Miss E. M. Collins,  
111 Rochester Avenue,  
Rochester,  
Kent,  
ENGLAND.

July 1940 to United Kingdom

11/2oz at \$2.80 per 1/2oz	\$8.40
Surface letter rate, 15¢ per 1oz	\$0.30
Total	\$8.70

Overpaid by 15¢

Although endorsed "Plane To London", it went by sea from the U.S.A. to the U.K.

June 1940 to United Kingdom

\$2.80 per 1/2oz air letter rate, plus  
15¢ per 1oz surface letter rate

## PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

Airmail rate period: 18 June 1940 - 30 November 1941

In addition to its air/sea service to the United Kingdom and Europe started on 13 June 1940, Pan American Airways introduced an air throughout service via Lisbon



April 1941  
to Portugal

Air throughout

Censored in Hong Kong

\$5.00 per 1/2oz  
air letter rate, plus  
25¢ registration fee

Backstamped  
Lisboa 22 MAI 41

Jusqu'a marking  
applied in Hong Kong  
unnecessary



September 1941 to  
United Kingdom

Air throughout

1oz at \$5.00 per 1/2oz  
air letter rate



## BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION, "HORSESHOE ROUTE"

Airmail rate period: 23 June 1940 - 10 July 1940

With the fall of France and Italy's entry into World War II, British Overseas Airways Corporation's Australia-United Kingdom service was suspended on 10 June 1940. So the Hong Kong Post Office retained mail until the "Horseshoe Route" was inaugurated on 23 June 1940. The "Horseshoe Route" was by air via Bangkok and Alexandria to Durban, and then by sea to the United Kingdom



**This cover was cancelled on 11 June 1940, but held until 23 June**

June 1940 to United Kingdom

\$1.15 per 1/2oz air letter rate

Backstamped Brechin, Angus, Scotland 25 JY 40 on redirection

# BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION, "HORSESHOE ROUTE"

Airmail rate period: 15 July 1940 - 15 October 1940

The British Overseas Airways Corporation feeder service to Bangkok was suspended on 10 July 1940; restarted twice weekly on 15 July; suspended again on 2 October, as two flights had to be cancelled due to unrest in Indo-China; restarted again on 5 October; and finally suspended on 15 October



15/7/40-2/10/40

July 1940 to  
United Kingdom

\$1.15 per 1/2oz  
air letter rate



5/10/40-15/10/40

October 1940 to  
United Kingdom