PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

Airmail rate period: 2 August 1940 - 30 November 1941

On 2 August 1940 Pan American Airways increased most of its rates of carriage for the mails

September 1940 to Manila

Returned for 5¢ postage, 35¢ was old rate

Civilian censor handstamp applied in Hong Kong

40¢ per 1/2oz air letter rate

Backstamped Manila SEP 13 1940

May 1941 to Hawaii

Civilian censor handstamps applied in Hong Kong

$2.40 per 1/2oz air letter rate
August 1941 to United States

Civilian censor handstamp applied in Hong Kong

7oz at $3.50 per 1/2oz air letter rate, plus 25¢ registration fee

Backstamped Honolulu AUG 23, San Francisco AUG 26 1941, Los Angeles AUG 27 1941

August 1941 to St Lucia

Civilian censor handstamp and red ‘V’ for ‘Victory’ applied in Hong Kong

$5.00 per 1/2oz air letter rate

Backstamped Trinidad AU 29 41, Castries, St Lucia 3 SEP 41
PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

August 1940 to British Guiana
2oz at $6.00 per 1/2oz
air letter rate, plus
25¢ registration fee
Backstamped Honolulu
SEP 6 1940, San Francisco SEP 8 1940,
British Guiana 24 SP 40

October 1940 to Argentina
$6.80 per 1/2oz
air letter rate, plus
25¢ registration fee
Backstamped Honolulu
OCT 17 1940, San Francisco OCT 19 1940
PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

Airmail rate period:
2 August 1940 – 30 November 1941

In addition to air throughout, mail could also be sent by surface to San Francisco and then onwards by air to destinations in the Caribbean, and Central and South America. So on 2 August 1940, in addition to the air throughout rates, Pan American Airways also increased the sea/air rates

August 1941 to Grenada

3½ oz at $1.25 per ½ oz sea/air letter rate, plus 25¢ registration fee

Backstamped San Francisco SEP 17 1941, Miami SEP 19 1941, Trinidad 22 SEP 41, Grenada 3 OC 41
PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

Airmail rate period: 2 August 1940 - 31 January 1941

The rate for the air/sea service to the United Kingdom and Europe was increased in line with the 2 August rate changes

January 1941
to United Kingdom
Air to the U.S.A., then sea to the U.K.
$3.50 per 1/2oz air letter rate, plus 15¢ per 1oz surface letter rate

December 1940
to Portugal
Air to the U.S.A., then sea to Portugal
Red bars indicated the letter was to go by surface from the U.S.A.
Army censor handstamp and civilian censor tape applied in Hong Kong
$3.50 per 1/2oz air letter rate, plus 25¢ per 1oz surface letter rate
Backstamped Lisboa 26 3 41
CHINA NATIONAL AVIATION CORPORATION, HONG KONG - SHIU KWAN

8 October 1940

Following the fall of France in 1940 the Japanese started to put pressure on the French in Indo-China, which led to changes in China National Aviation Corporation routes. Consequently, they started direct flights to Shiukwan on 8 October.

First flight

Only cover on this flight recorded

October 1940 to Shiukwan

35¢ per 1/2oz air letter rate

Backstamped Kowloon 24 OC 40.
BRITISH OVERSEAS AIRWAYS CORPORATION, SEA TO SINGAPORE

Airmail rate period: 16 October 1940 - 5 December 1941

After the British Overseas Airways Corporation feeder service to Bangkok was finally suspended on 15 October 1940, mail could be sent to Singapore by sea to connect with the "Horseshoe Route"

December 1940
to Australia

Sea to Singapore,
then air to Australia

1 oz at $1.15 per 1/2 oz.
air letter rate

November 1941
to Iraq

Sea to Singapore,
then air to Iraq

Backstamped
Baghdad 26 DEC 1941

Note censor handstamp applied in India
PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, REGULAR SERVICE

Airmail rate period: 1 February 1941 - 30 November 1941

On 1 February 1941 the surface letter rates to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, and the rest of the world were increased from 15¢ and 25¢ to 20¢ and 30¢, respectively. Therefore the air/sea service rates to the United Kingdom and Europe were each increased by 5¢.

February 1941 to United Kingdom

Air to the U.S.A., then sea to the U.K.

$3.50 per 1/2 oz air letter rate, plus 20¢ per 1 oz surface letter rate

October 1941 to United Kingdom

Assistant General Manager, (G.I.S.)
Navy, Army & Air Force Institute
Ruxley Towers, Claygate, Esher, Surrey, England

If not delivered please return to Navy, Army & Air Force Institutes, No. 11, Duddell Street, Hong Kong.
On 12 May 1941 Pan American Airways introduced a sea/air service to the United Kingdom and Europe, which was cheaper than the air/sea service.

July 1941 to United Kingdom
Sea to the U.S.A., then air to the U.K.
$2.00 per 1/2oz. air letter rate, plus 25¢ registration fee

October 1941 to United Kingdom
Sea to the U.S.A., then air to the U.K.
Army censor handstamp applied in Hong Kong
CHINA NATIONAL AIRWAYS CORPORATION, VIA RANGOON

Airmail rate period: 15 September 1941 - 5 December 1941

On 15 September 1941 the air letter rate to New Zealand and its dependencies, and the Mandated Territory of Western Samoa for the China National Airways Corporation route via Chungking to Rangoon was increased from $1.50 to $1.85 per 1/2oz, the rate to all other places remaining at $1.50 per 1/2oz.

This letter missed the last flight before the route was suspended due to World War II, hence it was detained until its release after the Japanese surrender in 1945.

December 1941 to New Zealand

$1.85 per 1/2oz air letter rate

A very short-lived rate
PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS, SERVICE SUSPENSION

30 November 1941

The last despatch by Pan American Airways before the route was suspended due to World War II left Hong Kong on 30 November 1941. The next despatch should have left Hong Kong on 8 December, but early in the morning S-42-B 'Hong Kong Clipper II' was strafed by Japanese planes and consequently destroyed by fire while standing at her moorings.

Letter carried on the last Pan American Airways flight prior to the commencement of hostilities with Japan during World War II

November 1941 to United States

Civilian censor handstamp applied in Hong Kong

$3.50 per 1/2oz air letter rate, plus 25¢ registration fee

Backstamped Honolulu DEC 4 1941, New York 12-7 1941, 12-8 1941
The last despatch by China National Airways Corporation before the route was suspended due to World War II left Hong Kong on 5 December 1941

Letter carried on the last China National Airways Corporation flight prior to the commencement of hostilities with Japan during World War II

December 1941 to Australia

$1.50 per 1/2oz air letter rate
DETAINED BY JAPANESE
6 - 12 December 1941

The last airmail despatches by Pan American Airways and China National Airways Corporation left Hong Kong on 30 November and 5 December 1941, respectively. The Japanese attacked Hong Kong on 8 December and Hong Kong surrendered on 25 December. Mail posted after the last despatches was retained until after the Japanese surrendered in 1945. All the mail received "RETOUR" and "NO SERVICE" cachets in December 1941. Before release in 1945, all mail was stamped with a special cachet reading DETAINED IN HONGKONG/BY JAPANESE/FROM DECEMBER 1941 TO SEPTEMBER 1945.

December 1941 to United Kingdom
Should have gone by sea to United States, then air to United Kingdom
1oz at $2.00 per 1/2oz air letter rate

December 1941 to Australia
Should have gone by CNAC to Rangoon, then BOAC to Australia
$1.50 per 1/2oz air letter rate
POST-LIBERATION
Late-August 1945 - 27 September 1945

All civilian mail from liberation in late-August 1945 to the reintroduction of adhesives on 28 September (1 October in Kowloon) was accepted free of charge. All such mail received an octagonal framed handstamp reading:

HONG KONG
1945
POSTAGE PAID

Although the handstamp included the words "POSTAGE PAID", no payment was necessary.

PAR AVION

1945 to France

This "BY AIR TO LONDON ONLY" cachet, applied in Hong Kong, very uncommon in red

Non-Commonwealth destinations
uncommon

September 1945
to United States

Arrived in Boston
on 10 October 1945

Air Mail.

The Scissors.
Christian Science Monitor
1 Norway Street
Boston, Mass.
U.S.A.
FORCES AIR MAIL

4 September 1945 - 30 April 1947

From liberation to 30 April 1947, members of the armed forces could send mail by air free of charge. Initially such mail was handled by field post offices, but at the beginning of 1947 the Hong Kong Post Office took over

December 1945
To United Kingdom
Handled by an RAF postal unit

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

Mrs Mary McEwen
Trevoon
14 Russell Ave
Hartley
Plymouth
Devonshire
ENGLAND

January 1947
To India
Handled by Hong Kong Post Office

By AIR MAIL
FORCES MAIL

The Secretary,
The Secunderabad Club,
Secunderabad,
Deccan,
INDIA.