Ministério do Equipamento Social (Ministry for Social Equipment)

Decree-Law

(This is not an official translation of the law)

The Postage Stamp Statutes approved by Decree-Law no. 42 417 of 27 July 1959 contains all material related to postage stamps in their diverse aspects from their design and production to their use.

Since the said law was published profound transformations have occurred both in CTT (Correios e Telecomunicações de Portugal) as in the social and cultural context, with special emphasis for the fact that the General Administration for Postal Services, Telegraphs and Telephones became a public state company called "Portuguese Post Office and Telecommunications" by way of Decree-Law no. 49 368 of 10 November 1969.

Furthermore, the postage stamp, although exercising the basic function of franking mail and under increasing competition from other mechanical franking methods, has today assumed an artistic, cultural and philatelic value of greater importance.

All this imposes the approval of a new Postage Stamp Statutes, adjusted to the present reality and relieved of the exaggerated existent load of norms.

Under these terms:

The Government decrees the following under the terms of section a), no. 1 of article 201 of the Constitution:

Article 1

The postage stamp may have the following purposes:

a. To document the prior collection of fees of post office services for which no other form of payment has been expressly determined - ordinary or special postage stamp

b. To constitute a receipt of the payment made by addressees or senders of mail that is delivered to them under special conditions settled by postal legislation - postage stamp for collected fee (prepaid).

Article 2

In addition to the stamps indicated in article 1, the CTT may issue stamped postcards whose sales price to the public shall be equivalent to the postage and other forms of stamps.

Article 3

The issuing of stamps, stamped postcards and other stamped forms is incumbent exclusively upon CTT within the scope of their powers.

Article 4

The determination of the postal fee and the decision to introduce new issues, as well as the establishment of the characteristics of other forms of stamps shall be put into effect by way of an Administrative rule signed by the minister of tutelage.

Article 5
Apart from the stamps in force issued by CTT as postal values or documents, no others can be used to allow, in any way, hinder or restrict the free circulation of post.

**Article 6**

1. The stamp in the form of a postal value or document is only valid for a single utilisation that is proved by its obliteration with special symbols (marking of day or special rubber stamp) which hinders its use again.

2. Any used stamps that, by lapse or accident, have not been marked can not be reused.

**Article 7**

Stamps can not be used as postal value or document that, although belonging to prevailing CTT issues, are found in the following state:

a. Dirty, faded, worn, ripped, cut or incomplete;

b. With a protective covering which hinders the direct, lasting and easy placing of the postmark;

c. By revealing any hand-written or printed text or drawings, or signs of having already been used to frank mail objects;

d. Attached to mail without displaying the whole surface for postmarking or in a way whereby one part of the stamp is on the front and the other in the back of the mail object;

e. Perforated in a different way from that specified in article 27.

**Article 8**

The revenue of sales of postage stamp, postcards and other stamped forms issued by CTT shall always constitute their integral revenue.

**Article 9**

The issues shall correspond to the necessities of the mail service, being possible to use them to pay homage personalities, commemorate facts or publicise motives of great national or international interest.

**Article 10**

1. Ordinary issues include stamps of amounts which do or do not correspond to postal tariff fees, with sufficient price differentiation to allow the effective carrying out of the mail service.

2. The issues of stamps referred to in the preceding number are unlimited and sufficient to meet public requirements during their circulation life as a postal value or document.

3. The rejected stamps during printing or stamping must be destroyed.

**Article 11**

1. Extraordinary issues of postage stamps generally include a small number of fees, the stamps being manufactured as a single edition, limited to the quantities announced in the Administrative rule referred to by article 4.

2. Stamps that are manufacturing surplus, as well as rejections must be destroyed.

**Article 12**
In June of every year CTT shall submit their plan of postal issues for the following year to the approval of the tutelage minister.

**Article 13**

1. It is incumbent upon CTT to define and have carried out those tasks necessary for the stamp manufacturing process and determine the amount of the fees to be issued.

2. The stamp models or originals shall carefully balance artistic effects with the philatelic and postage requirements of the issues.

3. Printing or stamping as well as any other subsequent stamp manufacturing operations shall preferably be carried out by the Royal Mint (INCM). However, it is possible for CTT to decide to entrust these tasks to other bodies specialised in this type of work provided that the price, quality and delivery date conditions are more advantageous.

**Article 14**

1. The property and lifetime rights to copy the specimens of their issues, as well as those rights related to the masterpieces undertaken to obtain the specimens shall belong to CTT and the said masterpieces must be presented by their authors in durable material and suitably packaged.

2. In the same way, all drawings, originals and other basic objects used in the manufacture of issues are property of CTT that will be archived in CTT Museum.

3. All copper plates, mats and other basic objects used in the manufacture of special issues shall be marked or destroyed after manufacture in such a way that makes further editions impossible.

**Article 15**

1. The supply and sale of postage stamps and other philatelic values shall be regulated by CTT.

2. CTT shall have their own services for the sale of stamps and other postal values for philatelic purposes, being possible, however, to make their sale in another site which proves suitable for this purpose.

**Article 16**

The sales services are forbidden from buying postage stamps from private individuals.

**Article 17**

CTT may withdraw postage stamps from circulation should their stocks have been almost consumed and whenever the fees do not correspond to the prevailing tariff, being possible for the post office to maintain complete series of these issues on sale, even withdrawn from circulation, but only for philatelic purposes.

**Article 18**

1. The withdrawn stamps from circulation owned by any user may be exchanged for other valid ones within a time period defined by CTT but of no less than 30 days.

2. The exchange referred to in the preceding number shall be made at any post office station.
3. In towns with more than one post office station CTT may designate one or more to carry out this function.

4. Perforated stamps may not be exchanged nor those designated in sections a), b) and c) of article 7.

**Article 19**

Should the date set for the withdrawal of an issue from circulation be exceeded, the corresponding stamps cease to have any postal validity.

**Article 20**

1. CTT shall take all necessary steps to ensure that postage stamps are marked in a way that will minimally affect its collectors value.

2. CTT can not place overburdens (legend or change) on stamps or other stamped forms belonging to ordinary and special issues which may gain philatelic values.

**Article 21**

1. It is forbidden postage stamps reproduction without CTT authorisation, including the current stamps, those which have not circulated and the withdrawn from circulation.

2. The copy can only be made when authorised and it is possible for CTT to demand that the copies have the following reference printed on their lower edge: "Copy authorised by CTT".

**Article 22**

CTT shall be responsible for the sponsorship of initiatives which aim to develop philatelic taste and culture and shall participate in meetings, congresses and exhibitions of a philatelic nature.

**Article 23**

CTT shall, whenever they deem it necessary to do so, consult the Portuguese Philatelic Federation about specific aspects of philatelic collecting in order to obtain advice on this matter.

**Article 24**

The "fee to pay" stamps shall obey to the following requirements:

a. They shall be easily distinguishable from ordinary and special stamps; 
b. In addition to an indication of the fee, they shall contain the words "to pay".

**Article 25**

The "fee to pay" stamps not yet marked may only be sold to the public for philatelic purposes.

**Article 26**

The "fee to pay" stamps and those that have been cut out from stamped postal forms can not be used for the purposes foreseen by section a), article 1 of the present law.

**Article 27**
1. CTT may authorise the perforation of postage stamps once they have been purchased by the users for the purposes of private control of their use provided that this perforation does not jeopardise neither the price indication nor in any way the recognition of the stamps validity nor its legitimate use.

2. The authorisation depends on the presentation of a perforated copy, of its approval and pre-payment of the corresponding fee of the current tariff.

**Article 28**

1. Stickers for charitable ends or advertising may be attached to mail or parcel posts since previously authorised by CTT.

2. In order to avoid confusion during postage handling operations, the stickers shall be easily distinguishable from the postage stamps and shall be attached on the opposite side to the one that contains the address and the postage stamp.

3. No fee shall be made for stickers used for charitable ends.

4. The use of stickers for advertising purposes shall be only permitted by the payment of a fee fixed in the tariff for each type of sticker.

5. No stickers or labels other than the service ones may be affixed on the outside of those objects whose value is declared.

6. The hand carried mail entrusted to the post office and the parcel posts with unauthorised stickers shall be refused in the act of acceptance.

7. The mail found in the state referred to in the preceding number at any other mail handling stage shall be disposed if it is not possible, previously, to return it.

**Article 29**

Decree Law nr. 42 417 of 27 July 1959 is hereby revoked.

Seen and approved by the Cabinet of 1 August 1985. Mário Soares - Rui Manuel Parente Chancerelle de Machete - Ernâni Rodrigues Lopes - Carlos Montez Melancia.

Enacted on 20 August 1985.

Let the present be published.

The President of the Republic, António Ramalho Eanes.

Countersigned on 22 August 1985.

The Prime Minister, Mário Soares.