

# SUSTAINABLE ADVERTISING MAIL®

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## DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE ADVERTISING MAIL

To use Sustainable Advertising Mail, your items must meet the following criteria:

- Comprise of a largely uniform message to all addressees, with the purpose of promoting the sale or use of products or services, or to encourage contribution to, or support of a cause.
- Meet the Sustainable specifications which are aligned to PAS 2020 – the environmental standard for direct marketing developed by the direct marketing industry.

There are two levels of specification: Entry and Intermediate which are listed below.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

To qualify for Sustainable Advertising Mail you must satisfy the Entry level criteria as a minimum. For the Intermediate Level, you must meet both the Entry level and the Intermediate level specifications.

### Sustainable Advertising Mail - Entry Level

To comply with the Entry level specification, your mailing must fulfil the following 12 requirements:

#### Improving targeting

1. Where data is not from a consent-based file, you must maintain a documented procedure for suppressing customer and prospect data against the Mail Preference Service (MPS), including MPS deceased. This must be in place and files checked 30 days or less before you post the item that uses the data.

A consent-based file is defined as a data list where it can be proved that all customers and prospects have consented to receive direct marketing.

2. You must keep and maintain an internal suppression file to ensure that customers and prospects who request to opt out of your mailings are properly logged. For mail produced overseas where the transit time to the UK is greater than 30 days, your mailing files should be checked for recency 30 days or less before the items are despatched to Royal Mail and transit time to UK should be no longer than 90 days.

A suppression file is defined as a list of names and associated personal details of individuals and organisations that have requested not to receive direct marketing communication.

3. All items must be fully and accurately addressed and postcoded in accordance with Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF<sup>®</sup>) and to the levels determined in the User Guide (currently 90% address accuracy against PAF<sup>®</sup>).

### Sustainable resources and materials

4. All paper products used in your mailing must contain recycled fibre from recovered waste paper and/or virgin fibre sourced under a certified chain of custody conforming to a certification scheme approved by the Defra funded Central Point of Expertise on Timber Procurement (CPET). Recycled wood fibre is that recovered from pre-consumer waste paper and post-consumer waste paper but excluding mill broke (i.e. waste paper generated during the production of paper). Virgin fibre is wood fibre that has not been used before.

Currently five certification schemes have been approved as satisfying the UK Government's requirements for sustainable and legal timber:

- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)
- Canadian Standards Association (CSA)
- Malaysian Timber Certification Council (MTCC)
- Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)
- Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)

5. All paper products in your mailing must be produced using non-chlorinating bleaching methods.

Chlorinating bleaching methods are those that use elemental chlorine (Cl<sub>2</sub>). Non-chlorinating bleaching methods include Elemental Chlorine Free (ECF), Processed Chlorine Free (PCF) and Total Chlorine Free (TCF) including oxidizing and reductive bleaching.

6. All paper products used must be sourced from paper mills that operate an environmental management system conforming to BS EN ISO 14001 and/or the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS).

Most Western European paper mills conform to these standards and paper suppliers should be able to provide supporting documentation upon request. ISO 14001 specifies the actual requirements for an environmental management system. It applies to those environmental aspects over which an organisation has control and over which it can be expected to have an influence. Further information regarding ISO 14001 can be found at [www.bsigroup.co.uk/en/Assessment-and-Certification-services/Management-systems/Standards-and-Schemes/ISO-14001](http://www.bsigroup.co.uk/en/Assessment-and-Certification-services/Management-systems/Standards-and-Schemes/ISO-14001).

EMAS is a voluntary initiative designed to improve companies' environmental performance. Its aim is to recognise and reward those organisations that go beyond minimum legal compliance and continuously improve their environmental performance. In addition, it is a requirement of the scheme that participating organisations regularly produce a public environmental statement that reports on their environmental performance. Further information regarding EMAS can be found at [www.ems.iema.net/emas](http://www.ems.iema.net/emas).

7. The printers, mailing houses or in-house mailing facilities you use to produce the mailing must have:

- i) A documented commitment to environmental management and a baseline for environmental performance
- ii) Identified appropriate environmental legislation and other environmental requirements (e.g. standards, codes of practice and/or guidance) and have controls in place to ensure compliance to them; and
- iii) Developed environmental objectives, targets and programmes.

Any organisation that has or is working towards an ISO 9001 (quality) or ISO 14001 (environment) or Investors in People accreditation should already be aware of what is required regarding the above. Alternatively, the above criteria can also be met by conforming to BS8555; 2003, Phases 1, 2 and 3.

An example of the requirements above at a basic level would be;

- writing an environmental policy statement
- defining core processes and their interactions
- formally documenting the processes e.g. in a flow chart
- identifying the environmental impacts that are associated with each process (repeat for legislation)
- recording what controls are in place to comply with legislation and minimise environmental impact including training, relevant paperwork etc
- identifying key targets and objectives including how they will be measured, reviewed and communicated
- undertaking document reviews – what was reviewed, results, actions taken etc

The above information should be retained as we reserve the right to audit customers to ensure adherence to the specification.

## Recyclability

8. All paper elements of your mailing, including window and padded envelopes, must be recyclable.

This means all paper elements must be able to be captured and separated from a waste stream for conversion or reuse and be recovered by the majority of local authorities at household level.

9. You must not use any plastic envelopes (including polywrap) in the mailing.

Currently, standard polywrap cannot be recycled at household level (only a few local authorities will accept it). This includes biodegradable plastic and polywrap. Because there is not an easy way for households to recycle these items it is more likely to end up in general waste and landfill.

10. You must not use any laminate finishes in the mailing.

Lamination is defined as the application of a polypropylene or acetate based film to a print item to provide protection and/or achieve a matt or a gloss finish. Lamination can render a product unrecyclable and the lamination process emits high levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

This provision means that laminate finishes must not be used in any part of the mailing, i.e. it is not just the outer elements of the mailing but the contents as well.

11. The item must have less than 90% ink coverage.

Ink coverage is expressed as an average percentage of the sum of the percentage coverage of each individual ink used, for example:

Cyan 20% + magenta 30% + yellow 60% + black 10% =  $120/4 = 30\%$  ink coverage

Several software tools exist for measuring total ink coverage such as APFill, PressPercent Pro, Phantasm and Ink coverage.

This requirement refers to each individual component of the mailing. It cannot be averaged across the mailing, i.e. you cannot have one item with 100% ink coverage and another with no ink coverage to claim a 50% overall coverage

12. All items must display a statement (for example 'Please recycle this item') and/or a logo (such as 'Recycle Now') on their outside to encourage the recipient to recycle it. Further details of the 'Recycle Now' logo & how to obtain it can be obtained from [www.recyclenowpartners.org.uk](http://www.recyclenowpartners.org.uk)

Other campaigns to promote recycling include:

'Waste Aware Scotland' ([www.wascot.org.uk](http://www.wascot.org.uk))

'Waste Awareness Wales' ([www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk](http://www.wasteawarenesswales.org.uk))

'Wake up to Waste in Northern Ireland' ([www.wakeuptowaste.org](http://www.wakeuptowaste.org))

You must not position any recycling statements/logos in the specified Clear Zones for the Sustainable Advertising Mail services being used.

## **Sustainable Advertising Mail - Intermediate Level**

To qualify for the Intermediate level, you must fulfil both the Entry level and the following seven Intermediate level requirements.

### **Improving targeting**

1. All customer and prospect data used in your mailing must be checked against one or more commercially available deceased and gone away suppression files (including business gone away suppression files) 30 days or less before you post the item that uses the data. For mail produced overseas where the transit time to the UK is greater than 30 days, your mailing files should be checked for recency 30 days or less before the items are despatched to Royal Mail and transit time to UK should be no longer than 90 days

Information regarding commercially available files is available through a number of sources including the DMA and Royal Mail. When buying these files, appropriate documentation such as the original order on the supplier, invoice from supplier and job details from internal data processing etc should be retained in the event of an audit by us.

2. Each item in the mailing must clearly incorporate information regarding how the addressee can register to unsubscribe preference options relating to any or all of the sender's legal entity brands and/or products for a period of one year.

This information should detail how the addressee can unsubscribe, exactly what they are unsubscribing from (e.g. the channel and brands) and how long it will last. There is no specific requirement regarding where this information should be added on the item.

3. Where items have been returned from previous mailings because the recipient is deceased, gone away or requesting opt-out, this must be recorded and the addressee removed from future mailing lists within 3 months of receipt.

You must have a documented procedure for the above in the event of audit by us.

4. You must ensure that at least 95% of items are fully and accurately addressed and postcoded in accordance with Royal Mail's Postcode Address File (PAF®).

### **Sustainable resources and materials**

5. All printers, mailing houses or in-house mailing facilities used to produce your mailing must have an environmental management system conforming to BS EN ISO 14001.

## Recyclability

6. You must not use any ultraviolet varnish finishes in the mailing.

UV varnishes are mineral-oil based and contain solvents. In addition, the application of UV finishes is via a process that uses a large amount of energy and these finishes cause problems for the recycling process.

7. You must not use rubber-based adhesives. Adhesives that contain rubber (latex) are not water soluble, which means they can be disruptive in the recycling process. Envelope suppliers and manufacturers will be able provide the specification of the adhesives used in their products.

## FORMATS

Letter: up to 240mm x 165mm x 5mm and a maximum weight of 100g

Large Letter (non-machine readable) for High Sort: up to 353mm x 250mm x 25mm and a maximum weight of 750g

Large Letter (machine readable) for Low Sort: up to 345mm x 245mm x 10mm and a maximum weight of 750g

## DELIVERY SPEEDS

1<sup>st</sup> Class: delivery aim of the next working day

2<sup>nd</sup> Class: delivery aim within two working days after the day of posting

Economy Class: delivery aim within four working days after the day of posting

Working days are Monday – Saturday

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

OBA only

## PAYMENT INDICIA OPTIONS

PPIs: see examples below:



NB: m is the indicia for Economy class

There are four sizes available in the English PPI design and 3 sizes available in the bilingual Welsh/English version.

## SORTED OPTIONS

You can earn savings with Sustainable Advertising Mail by pre-sorting your items and ensuring your addresses & postcodes are accurate. Minimum of 4,000 Letters or 1,000 Large Letters in a single mailing

Low Sort: for mail that meets our machine-readable specifications, sort your mail to our Low Sort specification and ensure your items can be read by our sorting machines to achieve maximum savings.

Sort as detailed in the Royal Mail Selection Files, see an option below:

**OCR:** Mail pieces printed with addresses in a machine-readable font (minimum of 90% address and postcode accuracy, 95% for Intermediate level). Available for Letter and Large Letter formats. Information: minimum of 90% address, postcode and DPS accuracy, 95% for Intermediate level.

Letter formats only.

**Royal Mail Mailmark<sup>®</sup> barcode:** Mail pieces printed with a 2D<sup>1</sup> Mailmark barcode (that encodes unique information about the mail piece, information about the service being used and the participants in the supply chain) and a machine-readable font (100% address, postcode and DPS accuracy highly recommended<sup>2</sup>). Available for Letter and Large Letter formats.

### Containers

- Trays or bags for Letter formats
- Trays or bags for Large Letter formats up to 10mm in thickness
- Bags, segregated bundles or ALPs for Large Letters >10mm in thickness
- When using trays, you must have an average of at least 100 Letters or 25 Large Letters per mailing across each section

High Sort: sort your mail to earn savings;

Sort to Direct Selections or Residue Selections as detailed in the Royal Mail Selection Files. Ensure that your mail has the appropriate level of postcode and address accuracy compared to PAF<sup>®</sup>; 90% for Sustainable Advertising Mail Entry Level and 95% for Intermediate Level. You must have a minimum of 50 Letters or 10 Large Letters (not machine-readable) for a Direct Selection

### Containers:

- Trays, bags or segregated bundles for Letters
- Trays, bags or segregated bundles for Large Letters up to 10mm in thickness
- Bags, segregated bundles or ALPs for Large Letters >10mm in thickness
- When using trays, you must also have an average of at least 100 Letters or 25 Large Letters per selection across the mailing

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<sup>1</sup> A 4-state Mailmark barcode option is also available for customers that cannot produce 2D Mailmark barcodes

<sup>2</sup> It is recommended that the address and postcode on the item is consistent with the postcode and DPS in the Mailmark barcode on the mail piece and in the eManifest. If the address, postcode & DPS accuracy drops below 90% when compared to PAF<sup>®</sup> you may see an invoice adjustment to cover the additional cost of conveying poorly addressed mail pieces. Please note: for 4-state Mailmark barcode postings a full and accurate postcode and DPS is required on each item.

## AVAILABILITY OF SUSTAINABLE ADVERTISING MAIL WITH OTHER ROYAL MAIL OFFERS

	Class		
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2nd	Economy
First Time User	Not Available	Not Available	Available
Volume Related Discounts	Available	Available	Available

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Mailing Standards Levy

A Mailing Standards Levy will be collected to finance the self-regulatory system of advertising standards. The levy equates to 0.2% of the value of each mailing and is additional to the prices quoted. It will be collected on every item of Advertising Mail, Advertising Mail with Response and Sustainable Advertising Mail via Royal Mail's invoicing process. The levy is not liable to VAT.

If any mailer wishes to be refunded the levy they have paid then they may make a quarterly or annual claim to the Advertising Standards Board of Finance at the address below providing evidence of the levy paid.

The Treasurer, ASBOF  
7th Floor North  
Artillery House  
11-19 Artillery Row  
LONDON  
SW1P 1RT

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### How difficult is it to meet the Sustainable Advertising Mail specification?

At first sight the requirements for Sustainable Advertising Mail Entry and Intermediate levels may appear daunting. However, if you are using a mailing house and other suppliers, you will find that most of these will already be meeting many of the requirements and as indeed your own business may be if it has environmental policies and procedures in place.

#### What are the benefits of using Sustainable Advertising Mail?

By making your direct mail activity environmentally-friendly you will not only be reducing waste, increasing recycling rates and have high levels of targeting, but you will also save money on your mailings as well. In addition, being seen by the recipients as acting in a way that reduces the environmental impact of your business's advertising will have a beneficial impact on your brand.

#### How will Royal Mail check that I am meeting all the requirements of Sustainable Advertising Mail?

When you post a Sustainable Advertising Mail mailing, we will undertake a visual check. In addition to this, you will be required to provide a seed item to us. After this, Royal Mail reserves the right to undertake regular audits to ensure you meet the specifications.