

II-6-1 The volume of mail

The number of mail items handled in fiscal 1998 rose by 0.6% from the previous fiscal year.

The total of all mail items handled in Japan in fiscal 1998, including domestic mail and international mail sent from Japan, was 25.9 billion, up 0.6% from the previous fiscal year (Fig. 1; Refer to Appendix 26). Of this, 25.8 million items were domestic mail, up 0.6% (Fig. 2; Refer to Appendix 27).

Regarding international mail, both the number of items sent from Japan and those arriving in the

country dropped in fiscal 1998 (Fig. 3).

During fiscal 1997 Japan ranked second after the U.S. in terms of the volume of mail accepted (Fig. 4).

In the same fiscal year, Japan ranked 16th in the number of mail items sent per capita. The U.S. was top, sending about 3.5 times more mail per capita than Japan (Fig. 5).

Fig. 1 Trends in total volume of mail items accepted

(Unit: billion items)

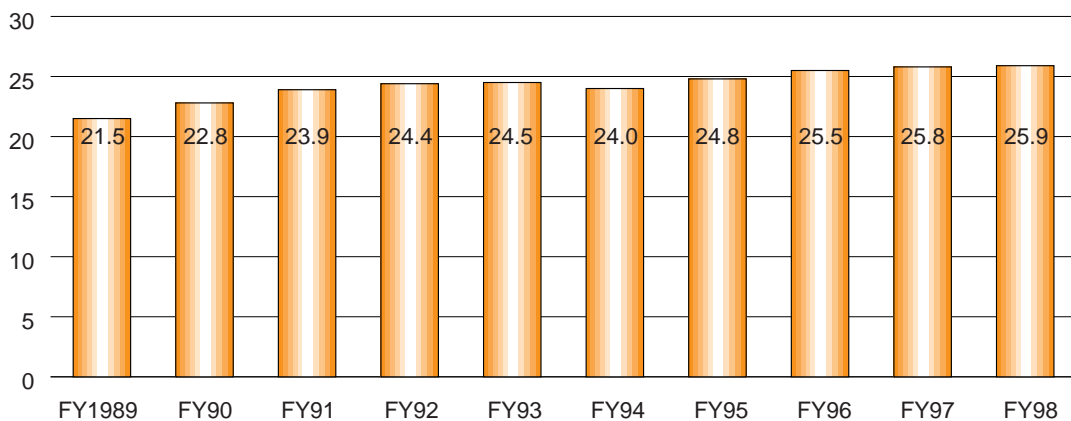
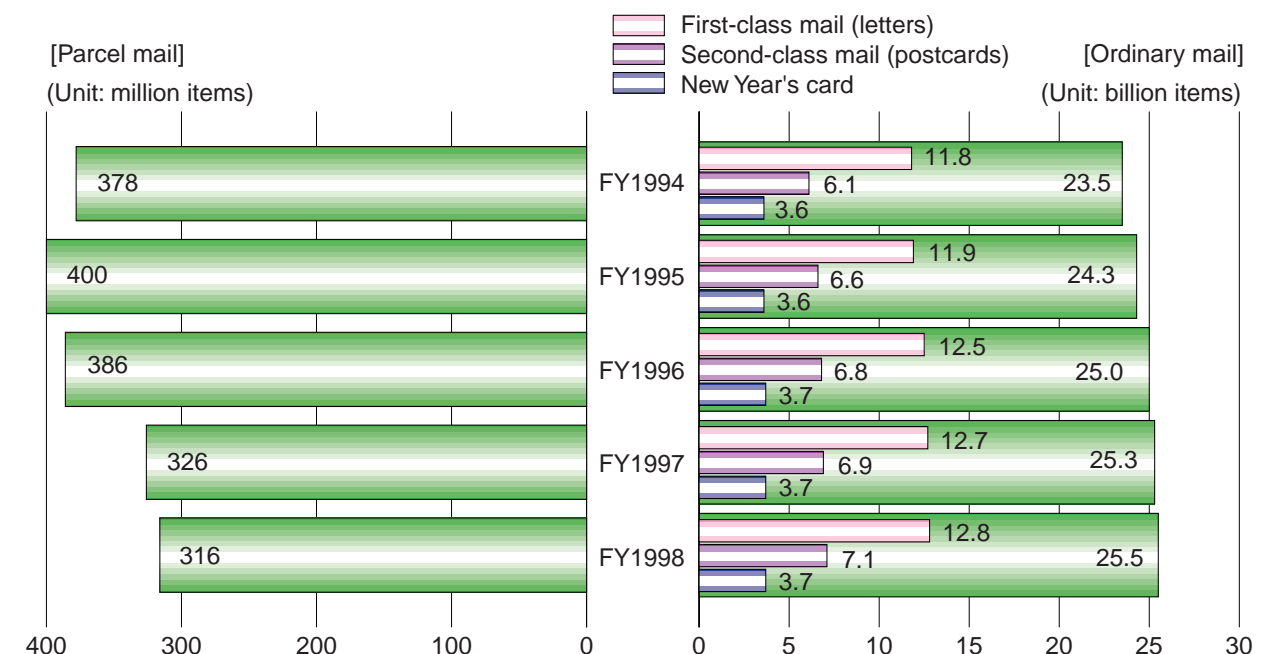
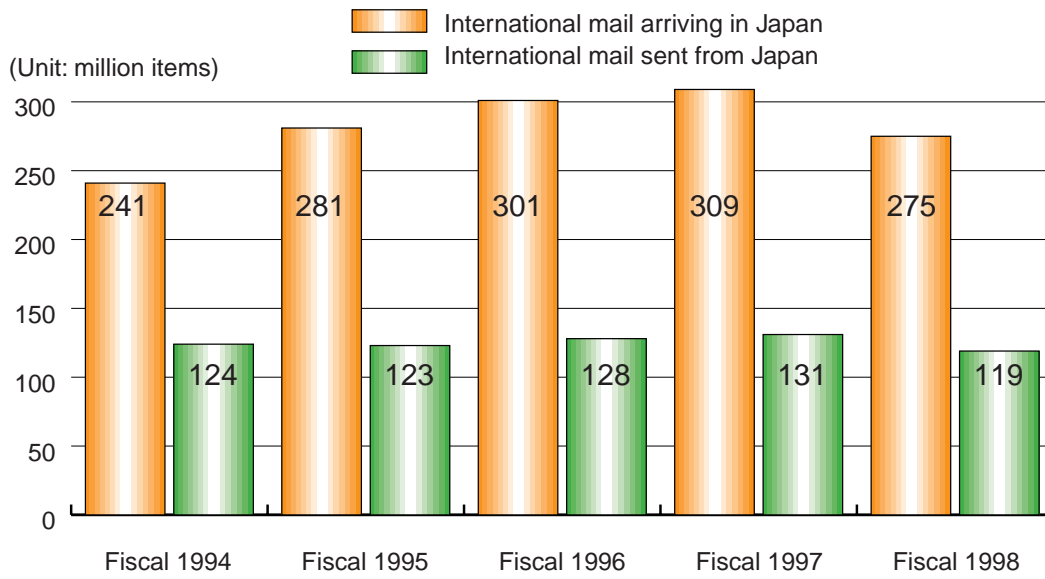


Fig. 2 Trends in the volume of domestic mail items handled



Source: MPT

Fig. 3 Trends in the volume of incoming and outgoing international mail



Source: MPT

Fig. 4 Volume of mail arriving in each country (area) (top 20 countries (area) in fiscal 1997)

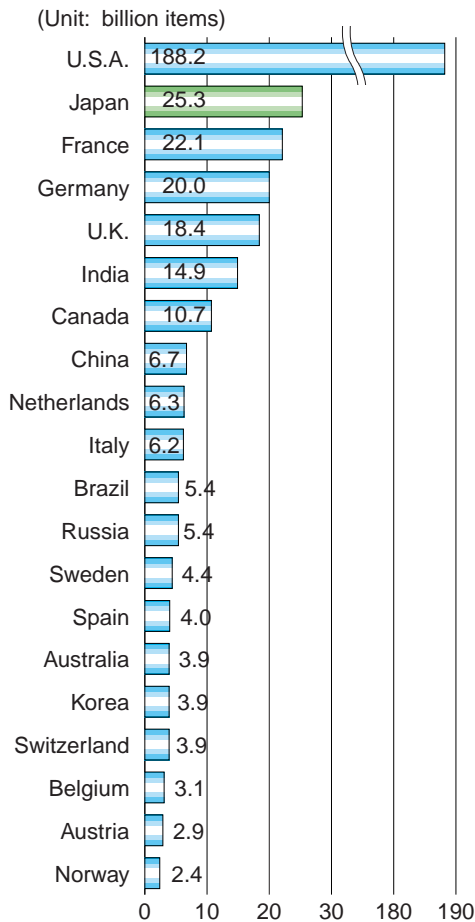
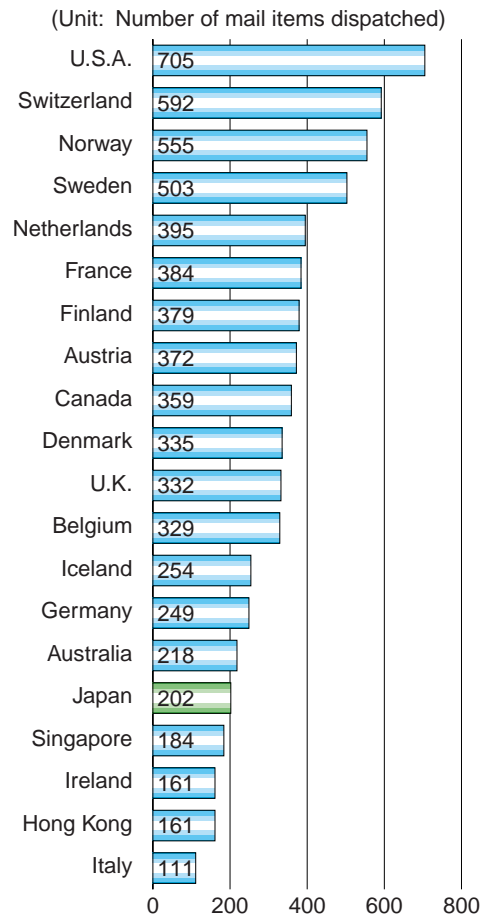


Fig. 5 Volume of mail per capita sent from each country (area) (top 20 countries (area) in fiscal 1997)



Note: The figures for Italy, Brazil and Sweden are for 1996, the figure for Canada is for 1993, and the figure for Switzerland is for 1992.

Note: The figures for Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Italy are for 1996, the figure for Denmark is for 1995, figures for Canada and Switzerland are for 1992 and the figure for the Netherlands is for 1989.

Source: Figs. 4 and 5 are based on data from the UPU (fiscal 1997).

II-6-2 Service

Services are being expanded to meet the needs of both businesses and individuals.

Table New and revised mail services in fiscal 1998

[Domestic mail]

Service (and start date)	Before revision	Revised service
Book parcel post (September 1998) <New>	Book parcel post Catalog parcel post (compared to book parcel post, catalog parcel post is cheaper.) • Items Books (book parcels) Catalogs for commodity (catalog parcel) excluding information booklets, magazines, newsletters and pamphlets • Procedure Pre-approval is necessary regarding the content (catalog parcel)	Book parcel post and catalog parcel post were merged. • Items Printed matters in forms of book and booklet including information booklets, magazines, newsletters and pamphlets • Procedure Pre-approval is not necessary regarding the content. • Postal rate When the total number of items to be sent is less than 1,000: the same as the former book parcel rates When the total number of items to be sent is 1,000 or larger and these items have cleared certain conditions: the same as the former catalog parcel rates
Expansion of Overnight mail "Morning 10" (refer to Note 1.) service area (October and November 1998)	• The Tokyo Metropolis, excluding insular areas Within the Tokyo Metropolis The Tokyo Metropolis ↔ The seats of prefectural governments and Government-designated Cities The Tokyo Metropolis ↔ Cities in Saitama, Chiba and Kanagawa Prefectures • Osaka City Osaka City ↔ Areas covered by the Kinki Bureau of Postal Services Osaka City ↔ The seats of prefectural governments and Government-designated Cities	• The Tokyo Metropolis, excluding insular areas Expanded to the area where delivery is possible (October 1998) • Osaka City Expanded to the area where delivery is possible (November 1998) Expanded nationwide where delivery is possible (April 1999 -)
Expansion of areas where a radio communications system is used for collecting mail items (October 1998)	This service were available only in the Tokyo Metropolis and Osaka City.	Areas were expanded to three (Nagoya City was added).
Revision of conditions for mail with "payment of postage without affixed postage stamps" and "post-payment of postage" (November 1998)	Display form Circle form only	Display form Square form was added. Display items An advertisement illustrating the sender's business can be placed in the lower half of the display.
Revision of display for mail with "payment of postage without affixed postage stamps" (November 1998)	Condition for use Postages for all of the mail items deposited (more than 10 items) should be the same.	Postages of the mail items deposited (more than 10 items) can be different. The senders can use this system by depositing their mail items dividing into groups by postage.
Launch of inkjet postcard service (January 1999)	Issued postcards which can be print by an inkjet printer New Year's lottery cards	Issued postcards which can be printed by an inkjet printer. Ordinary postcards are added (sold at all post offices within Tokyo) From April 1999, post offices nationwide began selling that type of postcards. A trial for "Print Club" postcard service was carried out at the Shibuya Post Office (Tokyo) from January to March 1999, which prints a photograph either taken on site or brought in over inkjet ordinary postcards. (150 yen each including the postcard price of 50 yen.)
Revision of conditions for mail with "post-payment of postage" (January 1999)	• Condition for using the service Mail items deposited had to be more than 100 items per month. • Conditions for invalidating the approval for using the service The approval is invalidated when this service is used neither for three consecutive months nor for more than five months total out of a year.	• Conditions for using the service more than 50 items per month • Conditions for invalidating the approval for using the service The approval is invalidated when this service is not used for one year.
Introduction of designated time delivery system for ordinary parcel post "Yu-Pack" (March 1999) <New>		Designation of a delivery time zone A sender designates a certain delivery time zone (either in the morning, in the afternoon or at night) and the post office delivers the item during this time zone.
Raised the weight limit for ordinary parcel post "Yu-Pack" (March 1999)	Weight limit Up to 16 kg	Weight limit Up to 20 kg
Improvement in services at postal service counter (February and March 1999)	• Off time service counter Name: After-hours Service Counter • Open the counters over the weekend Open the counters on Saturdays: 204 post offices Open the counters on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays: 109 post offices	• Renewed the off time service counters (February to March 1999) New name: After-hours Postal Service Counter Decided a symbol mark • Increase in the number of counters open over the weekend (March 1999) Open the counters on Saturdays: 275 post offices Open the counters on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays: 150 post offices

[International Mail]

Service (and start date)	Before revision	Revised service
International express mail service, "EMS" (Refer to Note 2)	Expanded the number of destinations for EMS (October 1998)	• Number of countries and areas: 114
	Extended deadlines for accepting EMS (November 1998)	• Number of countries and areas: 117 Azerbaijan, Jamaica and Slovenia were added.
	Raised the limit in weight of parcel post (February 1999)	Up to 20 kg
Raised the limit in compensation for international parcel post items (January 1999)	Up to 30 kg in case of parcels destined for 39 countries and areas (for Belgium, up to 27 kg, for Finland and Senegal, up to 25 kg)	• Number of countries and areas: 117 Azerbaijan, Jamaica and Slovenia were added.
Raised the limit in compensation for international parcel post items (January 1999)	The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 5 kg: ¥10,280 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 10 kg: ¥13,980 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 15 kg: ¥17,680 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 20 kg: ¥21,710	• Deadline for accepting EMS items in order to be loaded on the same-day flight for delivery No services at non-collection and -delivery post offices For 50 countries from 20 collection and delivery post offices in eight wards in Tokyo and 335 non-collection and -delivery post offices in Tokyo: deadline around 5 p.m. • Areas where inbound EMS items are delivered on the same day 20 collection and delivery post offices in eight wards in Tokyo
Revision of delivery system for mail items with customs declaration (February 1999)	Up to 20 kg	Up to 30 kg in case of parcels destined for 39 countries and areas (for Belgium, up to 27 kg, for Finland and Senegal, up to 25 kg)
Raised the limit in compensation for international parcel post items (January 1999)	The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 5 kg: ¥10,280 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 10 kg: ¥13,980 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 15 kg: ¥17,680 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 20 kg: ¥21,710	The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 5 kg: ¥11,160 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 10 kg: ¥15,170 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 15 kg: ¥19,190 The limit in compensation for a parcel up to 20 kg: ¥23,200
Revision of delivery system for mail items with customs declaration (February 1999)	• Taxed items are delivered by post offices after payment of customs duties In cases where total payment is less than 10,000 yen including customs duties	• Taxed items are delivered by post offices after payment of customs duties In cases where total payment is more than 10,000 yen and less than 300,000 yen (Post offices have to confirm with the recipients in advance by telephone call, etc. whether they desire to receive the items.)

Notes: 1. Overnight mail "Morning 10" is a courier service for delivering mail by 10 a.m. the day after posting.
2. EMS items are given top priority from the time of acceptance at a post office through to delivery.

1. New services and revisions in services (fiscal 1998)

New services and revised services in fiscal 1998 are shown in Table.

2. Hybrid Mail Service experiment

In February 1999, MPT conducted an experiment on a Hybrid Mail Service that allows users to send computer-generated text and images (including in full color) via e-mail to certain post offices, which then print the message and deliver it as normal

mail. Some 100 members of the general public participated in the experiment, conducted at the Shibuya Post Office in Tokyo. The Hybrid Mail Service is scheduled for full implementation from February 2000, depending on the results of the experiment.

Meanwhile, MPT has submitted a bill to the 145th Diet session to revise the Postal Law to provide a wide variety of postage payment systems, including with credit cards. It is planned to introduce these systems into the Hybrid Mail Service (Fig.).

Fig. Outline of the Hybrid Mail Service (scheduled from February 2000)

