



The Afghan Bulletin

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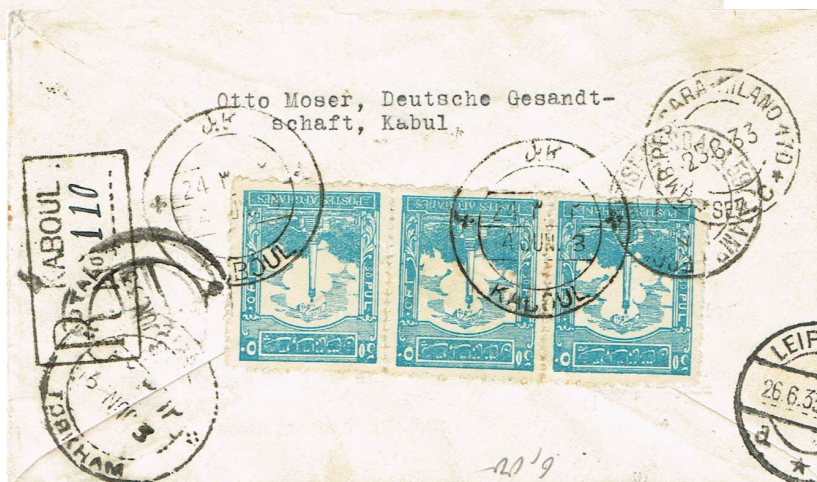
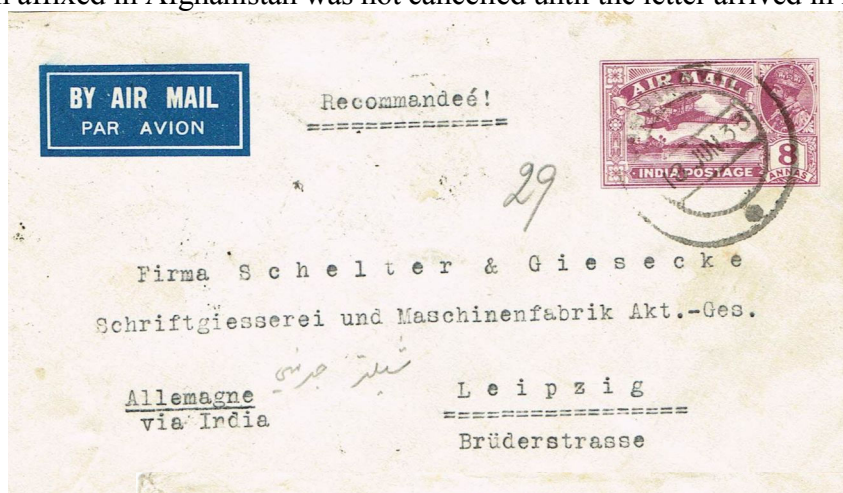


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Airmail rates 1934-40

An airmail service was first offered by the Afghan post office from 1931. At this time the mail was not actually flown from Afghanistan, rather it travelled overland to India and flew from there. At first mail could only be sent this way if Indian stamps were affixed in addition to the Afghan franking. The Indian airmail rate to Europe was 8 Annas, and the cover below shows a typical example of an airmail letter from Afghanistan at this time. The Afghan franking pays the foreign registered letter rate (75 poul + 75 poul), the Indian franking pays the airmail rate from India to Germany. The Indian stamp (in this case it is actually an Indian postal stationery envelope), although affixed in Afghanistan was not cancelled until the letter arrived in India.



NB. All illustrations in this article at approx. 75%

The use of Afghan stamps to pay the air fee (rather than Indian ones) is first recorded from April 1934. What is not clear however are the airmail rates which were charged for this service and it is this that is the subject of this article.

*The earliest recorded 'all-Afghan' airmail franking from April 1934 to Germany—
Kabul 18th April, Torkham 27th April, Brindisi 6th May, Halle 8th May, 1934.
Franked 3Afg 90 poul i.e. 75 poul postage, 75 poul registration, with the balance of 2Afg 40
poul presumably being the airmail supplement.*



But how long did this 2Afg40 rate continue? When and how frequently did it change? I have attempted to collate the covers I have with those of other collectors and those seen elsewhere and the results are tabulated throughout this article. This is still a work in progress but the position is becoming clearer. Any amendments, earlier/later dates, confirmations or contradictions welcomed!

April 1934–March 1936

For these two years the position seems to be clear: there was a uniform airmail rate of 240 poul irrespective of destination or route. It is assumed that the rate was per 10g – but no covers over 10g have yet been seen to test this.

Date	Mailed from	Destination	Route	Franking (poul)	Weight-gm	Postage @ 75p per 20g	Registration @ 75p	Calculated air mail surtax	Comments
18.4.34	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Brindisi	390	–	75	75	240	ie 240p per 10 g
4.5.34	Kabul	Italy	Torkham-Brindisi	390	–	75	75	240	ie 240p per 10 g
?10.35	Kabul	Turkey	Landikotal-Athens	390	–	75	75	240	ie 240p per 10 g
11.11.35	Kabul	France	Landikotal	315	10	75	no	240	ie 240p per 10 g
9.12.35	Kabul	France	Landikotal-Lahore	315	–	75	no	240	ie 240p per 10 g
11.12.35	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal-Brindisi-Milan	390	–	75	75	240	ie 240p per 10 g
7.1.36	Kabul	France	Landikotal-Lahore	315	–	75	no	240	ie 240p per 10 g
13.1.36	Kabul	France	Lahore	315	10	75	no	240	ie 240p per 10 g
24.2.36	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal-Rome-Verona	390	10	75	75	240	ie 240p per 10 g
26.2.36	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal-Lahore	315	8	75	no	240	ie 240p per 10 g
2.3.36	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal-Brindisi-Milan	390	9	75	75	240	ie 240p per 10 g

The last example of the 240 poul rate seen so far (and listed in the Table above) left Kabul on the 2nd March 1936, for Germany–

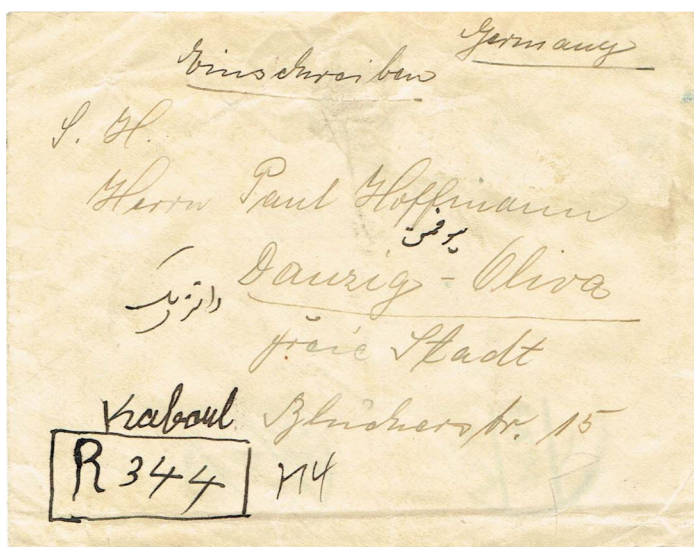
Kabul 2nd March, Torkham 5th March, Landi Kotal 5th March, Brindisi 11th March, Milan 12th March, Berlin Siemensstadt 13th March, Berlin Friedenau 14th March, 1936.



April 36-April 37: No pattern. By Destination?

For this period, the picture is far less clear. The rate is no longer 240 poul per 10g . . but what exactly is it? The rate to Germany seems reasonably (but not totally) consistent at 140 poul per 10g, but there no longer seems to be a “one rate fits all”.

Date	Mailed from	Destination	Route	Franking (poul)	weight-gm	Postage @ 75p per 20g	Registration @ 75p	Calculated air mail surtax	Comment
3.4.36	Kabul	Italy	Torkham-Landikotal-	560	16	75	75	410	ie 205p per 10g?
1.6.36	Kabul	France	Torkham-Landikotal	315	10	75	no	240	ie 240p per 10g? (old rate)
22.6.36	Kabul	Germany	Landikotal-Lahore	355	5	75	75	205	ie 205p per 10g?
?7.36	Kabul	Germany	Landikotal-Lahore	355	10	75	no	280	ie 140p per 10g?
10.10.36	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal	430	—	75	75	280	ie 140p per 10g?
14.10.36	Kabul	Germany	Torkham	430	—	75	75	280	ie 140p per 10g?
9.2.37	Kabul	Danzig	Torkham-Landikotal	430	—	75	75	280	ie 140p per 10g?
22.3.37	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal	430	13	75	75	280	ie 140p per 10g?
10.4.37	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Torkham-Landikotal - Athens	325	9	75	75	175	ie 175p per 10g?
17.4.37	Kandahar	Germany	Chaman	220	-	75	no	145	ie 140p per 10g + 5 poul overpaid?



An example of the 140 poul rate—
Afghanistan to Danzig,
February 1937.



April 37-May 38

Stability returns to the rates table which seems to conclusively show 100 poul per 5g, irrespective of destination.

Date	Mailed from	Destination	Route	Franking (poul)	Weight-gm presumed up to 5g	Postage @ 75p per 20g	Registration @ 75p	Calculated air mail surtax	Comments
22.4.37	Kandahar	Germany	Chaman	250	presumed up to 5g	75	75	100	New Rate ie 100p per 5g
1.5.38	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g
13.5.37	Kabul	Turkey	Torkham -Landikotal -Athens	350	9	75	75	200	ie 100p per 5g
12.6.37	Kandahar	Germany	Chaman	350	Presumably 5-10g	75	75	200	ie 100p per 5g
14.6.37	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Torkham -Landikotal -Athens	350	9	75	75	200	ie 100p per 5g
3.7.37	Kabul	France	Landikotal-Lahore	275	Presumably 5-10g	75	no	200	ie 100p per 5g
7.7.37	Kabul	Germany	Torkham-Landikotal	450	Presumably 10-15g	75	75	300	ie 100p per 5g
13.7.37	Kabul	London	Torkham	400	-	75	75	250	???
21.7.37	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Torkham -Landikotal -Athens	450	12	75	75	300	ie 100p per 5g
26.7.37	Kabul	France	Torkham-Landikotal-Lahore	275	Presumably 5-10g	75	no	200	ie 100p per 5g
21.8.37	Kabul	France	-	275	Presumably 5-10g	75	no	200	ie 100p per 5g
23.8.37	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Athens	350	9	75	75	200	ie 100p per 5g
1.9.37	Kabul	France		115	5	75	no	40	???
11.10.37	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g
25.10.37	Kabul	Holland		375	presumed 10-15g	75	no	300	ie 100p per 5g
8.12.37	Kabul	Germany		375	presumed 10-15g	75	no	300	ie 100p per 5g
22.12.37	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Athens	250	10	75	75	100	ie 100p per 5g
25.12.37	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g
31.1.38	Kabul	France		275	presumed 10-15g	75	no	200	ie 100p per 5g
14.2.38	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g
2.3.38	Kabul	Germany		800	possibly 20-25g	75 x 2	75	575	75p overpaid (would be correct at 115 poul, but 3 months too early!)
7.3.38	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g.
27.3.38	Kabul	Egypt		255	presumed up to 5g	75	75	105	ie 100p per 5g + 5 poul overpaid
1.5.38	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g.
29.7.38	Kabul	France		175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	ie 100p per 5g.

The earliest cover known at the new uniform 100 poul airmail supplement rate—

Kandahar 22nd April, Chaman 26th April, Hamburg 3rd May, 1937.
 75 poul postage, 75 poul registration + 100 poul airmail surcharge



Currently the last recorded cover at the 100 poul airmail supplement rate—

Kabul 1st May 1938, to France.
 75 poul postage + 100 poul airmail surcharge



June 38-January 40

After only about a year at 100 poul per 5g, the rate is increased to 115 poul per 5g, still irrespective of destination. A few covers here that don't fit the pattern. Two are seemingly at the old 100 poul rate despite having been sent 2 and 6 months respectively after the apparent change; and one appears to be overpaid by 35 poul, one underpaid by the same amount. The general picture however does seem reasonably clear-cut.

Date	Mailed from	Destination	Route	Franking (poul)	Weight-gm	Postage @ 75p per 20g	Registration @ 75p	Calculated air mail surtax	Comments
24.6.38	Kabul	Germany		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	New Rate ie 115p per 5g
29.8.38	Kabul	Germany		275	presumed 5-10g	75	no	200	ie 100p per 5g (old rate)
17.10.38	Kabul	Switzerland		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
22.10.38	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Athens	380	presumed 5-10g	75	75	230	ie 115p per 5g
24.10.38	Kabul	Switzerland		265	presumed up to 5g	75	75	115	ie 115p per 5g
23.11.38	Kabul	Switzerland		265	presumed up to 5g	75	75	115	ie 115p per 5g
5.12.38	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Athens?	160	postcard	45	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
18.12.38	Kabul	Turkey	Athens	175	presumed up to 5g	75	no	100	Old Rate
14.12.38	Kabul	Czechoslovakia	Athens	495	presumed 15-20g	75	75	345	ie 115p per 5g
18.1.39	Kabul	Switzerland		265	presumed up to 5g	75	75	115	ie 115p per 5g
10.4.39	Kabul	France		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
22.4.39	Kabul	France		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
24.4.39	Kabul	Germany		995	possibly 30-35g	150	75	690	ie (75 x 2) + 75 + (115 x 7) 35 poul under?
13.6.39	Herat	Germany	Chaman	300	presumed 5g	75	75	115?	ie 115p per 5g + 35 poul overpaid?
14.6.39	Kabul	Germany		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
20.5.39	Kabul	France		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
9.8.39	Kabul	Protectorate of Bohemia	Athens	265	presumed up to 5g	75	75	115	ie 115p per 5g
30.11.39	Kabul	France		190	presumed up to 5g	75	no	115	ie 115p per 5g
11.12.39	Kabul	England		305	presumed 5-10g	75	no	230	ie 115p per 5g

*An example of the 115 poul rate: Kabul 14th June, 1939 to Germany.
75 poul postage + 115 poul airmail supplement.*



For the record . . .

Receiving authority specimen overprints on Afghan stamps

The 1934 Definitive series (except for the 80 poul) handstamped **SPÉCIMEN** (18 x 3mm) and a 1939 5 Afghani orange airmail stamp with **AMOSTRA** (17.5 x 2.5mm) reading vertically upwards.



It is thought that these come from a Portuguese colonial archive, probably Goa (or less likely, Angola). **SPÉCIMEN** was used by the Portuguese colonies between 1932 and 1938, and **AMOSTRA** between 1928 and 1942.

