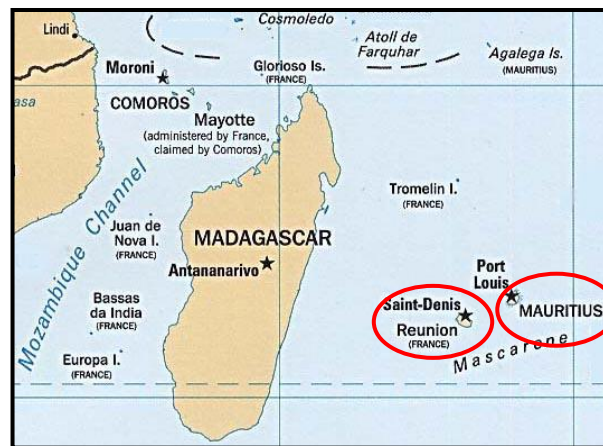


Postage labels on Réunion and Mauritius by Hens Wolf

Far away in the Indian Ocean, the islands Réunion and Mauritius can be located, both of volcanic origin. Réunion has a French history, whereas Mauritius is more British. Both islands also have a history of postage labels, which I will go into hereafter.

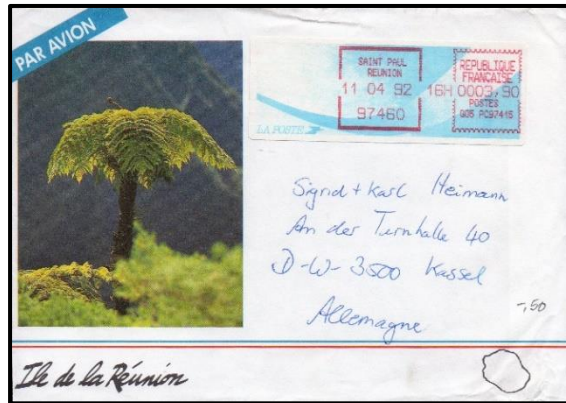


Réunion

Réunion is situated in the Indian Ocean about 750 km east of Madagascar. It is roughly 50 km long and 40 km wide. After its discovery in 1513, it has become a melting pot of nationalities and cultures. Since 1642 it belongs to France.



The interesting thing is, that on such a tiny island, far away from other worlds such as Europe, the currency for a long time has been the French Franc, but since 1 January 2002 the euro!

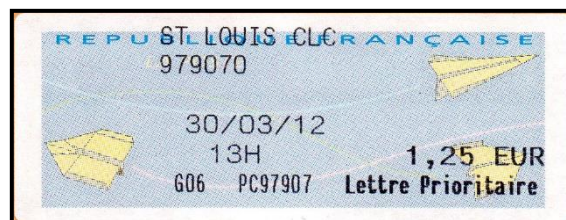


French franc



Euro

On the meters of Réunion, the so called INSEE-code of the French Bureau of Statistics can be found in the middle on the lower line. INSEE stands for: *Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques*. Let's make a side step to France here: that country consists of 96 départements and the post offices in each département have such an INSEE-code, starting with 01 to 96. The codes starting with 97 and 98 have been reserved for overseas French territories. Thus they can be identified easily. The codes of all post offices on Réunion start with 974, except St. Louis (979).



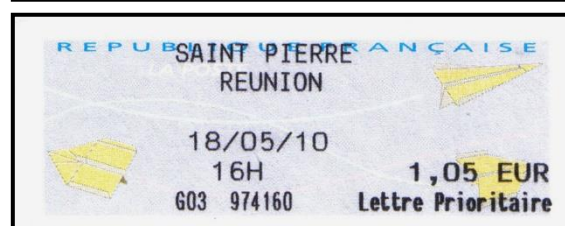
INSEE-code 97907

The airport on Réunion is called Roland Garros. There is a small post office with INSEE-code 974790, thus from Réunion. The name comes from Eugène Adrien

Roland Georges Garros, born in Saint-Denis on Réunion on 6 October 1888. In the beginning of the 20th century he was an aviation pioneer and a war hero. He was killed in an air battle over the French Ardennes, barely 30 years old. When in 1927 an enormous new tennis stadium was built in Paris, a friend and fellow student of his has succeeded in having it named Roland Garros.



The meter of ST PIERRE is interesting. St. Pierre is such a common name for a town in France, that it appears with different INSEE-codes. Only because of the INSEE-code 97416 it is clear that the meter dated 30 04 90 originates from St. Pierre on Réunion. More than 20 years later the name 'REUNION' is added to the meter, such as the one dated 18/05/10.

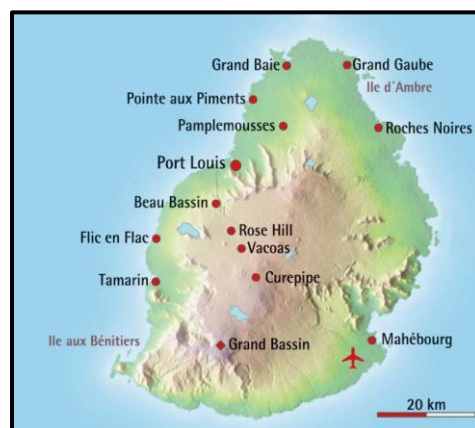


Up until 2014 the town name where the post office was located, was printed on the meters. Later that year, the French *La Poste* has deleted the town name, so that only the INSEE-code shows which post office it concerns. The code 974294 on both meters show that they were printed in St. Paul, substation Savanna, on Réunion.



Mauritius

The distance between Réunion and Mauritius is only 226 km, say a 12 hour boat ride. The island is roughly 50 km long and 40 km wide, about the size of Réunion. The capital Port Louis was founded by the French in 1735 and was named after the french king Louis XV. In 1810 the island was conquered by the British, primarily because it was used as a base by pirates working for France, who attacked British vessels. Since 1968 Mauritius is an independent republic. The currency is the Mauritian Rupee, about \$ 0,02.



Since 2004, Mauritius Post uses meter stamps. The meter dated 11/01/2010 concerns a registered letter to The Netherlands. On top of the logo, MAURITIUS is printed in mini-letters. On the left hand lower side, the letters 'Reg' are

printed. They stand voor Registered. A separate label was used for the barcode and the registration number.



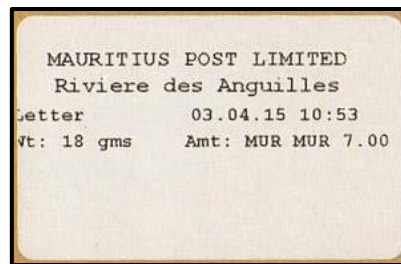
On the meter dated 26/03/2010 another abbreviation appears: 'CoP' which may stand for 'Certificate of Priority'.



The meter dated 26/01/2015 to China shows paper with a pink shade and yet another abbreviation: 'Reg + Reg'.



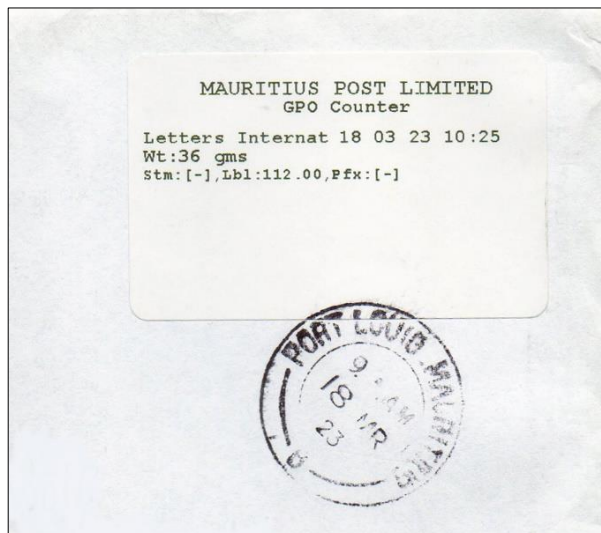
It is remarkable that, while the meters shown above were in use, another type of print appeared without the postal logo. An example is the meter dated 03.04.15. Also notice the double MUR MUR. The abbreviation MUR stands for mauritian Rupee, although on all meters hereabove 'Rs' is used for Rupees.



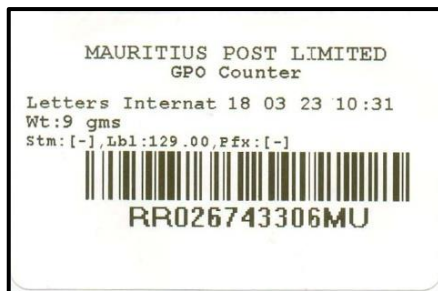
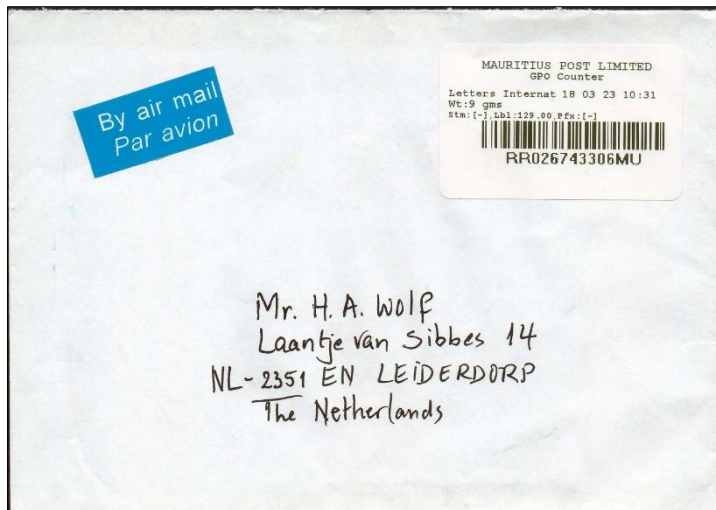
On the registered letter later that same month (04.05.15), the barcode and the RR-registration number are printed on the meter and not on two separate labels. Also interesting is MUR (only once).



My most recent meter dates from 18.03.23 from the General Post Office in Port Louis. A completely new text is used now. The rate is 112.00 Rupees.



On a second envelope of the same date the barcode and RR-registration number are printed. The rate is 129.00 Rupees.



RR026743306 MU

MAURITIUS POST LIMITED
GPO Counter
Letters Internat 18 03 23 10:31
Wt: 9 gms
Stm: [-], Lbl: 129.00, Pfx: [-]

Invoice Number: MMJPG-03235770559
Date: 18-Mar-2023 10:31:59
Emp. & Counter: S00172 (8)

Letters International By Air
Destination: Netherlands
Item Weight: 9 gms
Item No.: RR026743306MU

Details	VAT	Amount
Postage		49.00
Registration Fee		80.00
Total		129.00
Postage Label		129.00
Amount Payable		129.00

Payment Details

Cash : MUR 129.00

Sender: Van Van Wel
Address: Roosje Voshoeve 68, 2743 HS Waddinxveen, The Netherlands

Addressee: Mr H A Wolf
Address: Laantje Van Sibbes 14, NL 2351 EN Leiderdorp, The Netherlands +31715893209

BRN: C07027647
RIA Money Transfer Service available at Post Offices.
For more information, please call Marketing Department 2118423 or 2082051 - Ext 186
Collisboxes are available at Post Offices

Service marked with * do not attract VAT

I wondered how long it would take for these letters to be delivered in The Netherlands. Well, the first letter arrived on 30 March 2023, so after 12 days. The second letter (the registered one) needed a week longer. It was handed over to me on 6 April 2023 after 19 days.

Thus collecting meter stamps remains a lively hobby.