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REPUBLIC OF PALAU:

KOROR PW 96940, PALAU - CANCELLATION STUDY:

The USPS provided a postal service to Palau from July 1, 1951 when administration of the Caroline Islands was transferred from the U.S. Navy to the Department of the Interior. The Japanese administration had operated a postal service until September 1944 when U.S. forces occupied the area. Between September 1944 and June 1951 only U.S. military postal services were available.

During 1982 the U.S. and the Government of Palau negotiated an agreement whereby Palau would take responsibility for postal services within Palau and would have the right to "issue postage stamps which shall be used for the prepayment of postage rates and other postal charges on mail originating in its territory, except for mail sent through the military postal system operated by the USPS on behalf of the Defense Department". The U.S. agreed to hand over to the Government of Palau all the USPS facilities and equipment in good working order. The USPS would continue to be responsible for overseas mails and for carrying such mails to and from Palau. In return the Government of Palau agreed to retain USPS postal rates for all mail to addresses outside Palau. The Republic of Palau Postal Service did however retain the right to set postal rates for internal mail for addresses within Palau.

According to an article in the October 18, 1982 edition of 'Linn's' the Republic of Palau took over responsibility for local operation of its postal service on November 1, 1982. The first Republic of Palau postage stamps (a block of 4 x 20c) were issued on March 10, 1983 and were inscribed "Palau-U.S. Postal Agreement/Inauguration of Palau Postal Service" which calls into question the November 1, 1982 date. **Illustration 28/1** was used to cancel these stamps on March 10, 1983. Another postmark commemorating the agreement (**Illustration 28/2**) was in use on on May 16 1983, and possibly on other dates. Definitive stamps were not initially available, the 1c, 3c, 5c, 10c, 30c, & \$1 stamps were issued on July 28, 1983 but it was not until February 22, 1984 that the series was completed with the issue of 13c, 20c, 28c, 37c, & 50c stamps. In the interim U.S. stamps were used as make up values, though a number of commemorative issues at the basic 20c postal rate were issued during this period.

Despite not having the full range of stamps available the Republic of Palau Postal Service did have new 4-Bar and Utility datestamps ready for use from March 10, 1983. While covers bearing a mixture of Palau & US stamps are known until late in 1984 [and occasionally since], I have seen no covers cancelled by the USPS datestamps after March 9, 1983.

Palau has used a large number of Utility/APDS [perhaps because all incoming mail is datestamped using one of these devices] but I have only been able to trace 6 clearly different 4-Bar datestamps. In the early days of postal independence these 4-Bar datestamps appeared on Philatelic and Commercial mail but since 1988 they have been used solely for cancelling commercial mail and, though single circle datestamps specifically for Philatelic use exist, one or other of the many APDS has been used on most Philatelic Mail. In addition to datestamping incoming mail the APDS are used to cancel the stamps on Priority/Registered type mail and on some, mostly bulky, mail - probably handed over the P.O. counter - presumably to be weighed.

[NOTE: I have only seen a limited amount of material from Palau - particularly pre-1990 - this study can therefore only be regarded as a preliminary stab at the subject]

4-BAR DATESTAMPS:

**Illustration 28/3:** Apr 14 1983 [Presumably from Mar 10 1983] to Mar 21 1989. Vertical Height 34mm. Seen on both Philatelic & Commercial Mail,

**Illustration 28/4:** Jun 7 1983 to Sep 12, 1983. Vertical height 33.5 mm. [Clearly different to Illustration 28/3 when held one over the other against a light] Seen only on Philatelic Mail.

**Illustration 28/5** Sep 22 1987 to Feb 28 1989. Vertical Height 35mm. This may be Illustration 28/3 or 28/4 which has become distorted to an oval shape - lack of examples seen between 1983 & 1987 makes is difficult to be sure). Seen on both Philatelic & Commercial Mail.

**Illustration 28/6:** Apr. 10, 1990 to Feb ?, 1995 [By mid 1994 badly worn and by 1995 all examples seen are virtually illegible]. The whole of the date on the last example is illegible but the cover also carries an APDS for Feb 17, 1995. Seen only on commercial mail.



Illustration 28/1



Illustration 28/2



Illustration 28/3

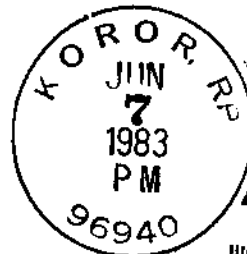


Illustration 28/4



Illustration 28/5



Illustration 28/6