

The Mail Service Gateway, where parcels from all over the world pass through

Pubblicato: Venerdì 21 Ottobre 2016



This is the way in to Italy or the way out to the world. It is the Gateway of Poste Italiane, the logistics centre that handles all of the parcels that have a foreign state as their origin or destination and ships them with the aid of the company and its partners. All pass by here, that is, Lonate Pozzolo.

It all happens under a warehouse of 6000 square meters, where a hundred people work tirelessly to clear the parcels in the shortest possible time. And there is plenty of work to do, **as 1.4 million parcels in import and 1.7 million parcels in export passed through here in 2015.** It works like this: a parcel arrives, it is registered, the documents are checked and then it is sorted either to Malpensa or to another logistics centre of the mail services. At least in theory, because the work is much more complicated due to missing or incorrect records and monitoring.

There are 800 parcels that are being sent every day in what is called temporary storage facility “on hold, namely that the addressee or sender provide us with the missing information” says Emanuele Donzelli, supervisor of the centre, **who explains the complex procedure of shipping management in the video linked to this article,**

A procedure to which several variables are added, starting with those of the custom authorities, a permanent fixture of the gateway. But how do the inspections work?

“It’s impossible to check everything, so there are two kinds of flow control, the first being a telematic

one that is established according to the information of our offices that identify which packages could be suspicious, and the second being a physical one consisting in/of an analysis of the risks from operators” says a customs officer. Then, according to the information held by the authorities, you decide which parcel to x-ray and if something does not convince the monitors (and so the operators), the control becomes physical, **you open the parcel and analyse its contents.**

The most frequent case is the suspicion of having a counterfeit product before your eyes. In that case **“we call here the experts of the trademark in question who analyse the product and certify more or less its origin** and if they discover that it’s fake whoever bought it could receive a fine for unwise purchases,” says a Custom and Excise operator. Even the Aerial Healthcare experts are in this virtual ‘frontier’ in Italy, particularly in blocking non-statutory medicines.

And so, over time, it became clear that certain origins and certain senders were particularly suspect; **the main fake products come from Asian countries, non-original medicines come from USA and potentially radioactive products, pots in particular, come from India**, a list that constantly changes and which is quite hard to keep updated.

“Now even those who carry these shipments out realised which procedure to follow,” explains Emanuele Donzelli “and then more and more often it may occur that when we contact the addressee of a parcel they tell us that they thought they had bought it from an English website when in fact the merchandise come from China” or vice versa “There are shipments which stop in an European country before, trying to fake the origin”. All more or less elaborate attempts that have a dual purpose, bypassing custom duties and VAT, and shipping condemned materials.

“All controls happen indistinctly, both for import and export,” continues Donzelli who explains how attention for shipments going abroad is very high, especially in the conflict against trafficking art. But even the gateway activities are to be upgraded with the increasingly online trading; if it takes about 24 hours to conduct all the procedures nowadays, these times can be shortened **with the arrival in the next months of new equipment that will allow the simultaneous management of both import and export.**

di Marco Corso Translated by Laura Ravazzani (Reviewed by Prof. Robert Clarke)