

Tragicomic story of US Postal Service trying to send letters by rocket

To get rid of 'slow slug' letters, the US Postal Service tried to make a much bigger dream - send letters by rocket.

In the late 1950s, all over America was looking to the future. The race into space has just begun, the US military is studying rockets that can reach around the world, even to the Moon. However, the US government at that time did not consider flying development a military priority, according to *Today I Found Out*.

One of the other 'ambitions' to think about is sending letters by rocket. The US Postal Service has tried to do this.

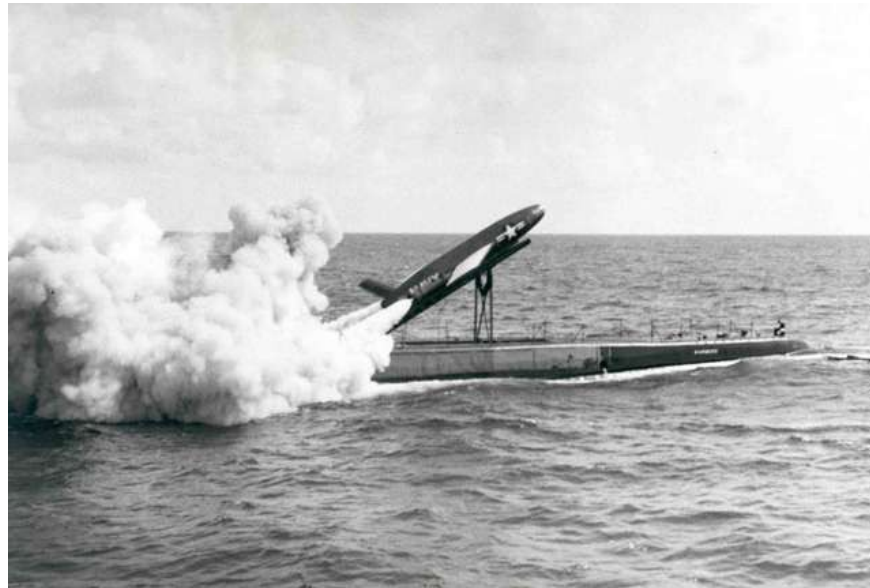


The envelope reads "The first official letter sent by rocket". (Image: The Week Publications)

According to *Today I Found Out*, in June 1959, the US Navy sent 3,000 letters on a cruise missile to a naval air station in Mayport, Florida. Launching from USS Barbero - a submarine stationed at 100 miles (about 160 km) off the US coast in international waters, the 36-foot (about 10 m) rocket Regulus I arrived in Mayport within 22 minutes.

The letters were kept in two metal tanks, which were the missile warheads, a copy of a letter from Post Secretary Arthur Summerfield to President Eisenhower, Vice President Richard Nixon, members of Congress, Supreme Court members, USS Barbero crew and many others. Letters with the 'not even airmail' stamp (not even airmail) - according to AP.

The US Postal Service calls it the first successful mail delivery (they have tried it before but have not succeeded). But the delivery was incomplete: Most of the letters must then be sent by regular mail because 3,000 recipients did not sit around a naval base in Florida waiting for them.



In 1959, the US Postal Service tried to transfer mail via rocket. (Photo: Smithsonian National Postal Museum)

After the trial, they planned a series of discussions to determine how and where the method could be used in practice. But the method was never put into practice, as it is today.

The inauguration after Summerfield, J. Edward Day, canceled the program, arguing that letters sent from USS Barbero would eventually take eight days to reach the recipient - a speed too far from the "name speed". fire".

Although not financially or logically feasible to send regular rocket letters, the test still appears to have some "bragging" value. As Professor Nancy A. Pope wrote on the blog of the National Postal Museum, the rocket mailing sent a subtle signal during the Cold War that the US military was capable of precision missiles even lice can be used for postal services.

Besides, sending letters by train that time became more expensive and less efficient. Throughout the early 20th century, the US Postal Service looked at several alternatives, including postal buses that would travel from town to town and categorize letters along the way, inter-provincial helicopter letters, or other The idea of ??how to send mail is somewhat more difficult to imagine.

But eventually, improving roads to make it easier for trucks to travel across the country became an effective plan, instead of using military missiles.

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