

**Paul Graham
Group Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director
Australia Post**

**Opening Statement
15 February 2022**

Check against delivery

Thank you, Chair and Senators.

My name is Paul Graham, Group Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Australia Post.

It is a privilege to appear before this Committee again, and I'd just like to provide a brief update since our last appearance.

I'm pleased to announce that we have successfully navigated yet another Christmas – with some 52 million parcels delivered through December alone – following 51 million parcels delivered through November. I would like to thank our team at Australia Post for their commitment in serving the community and the people of Australia for their support and understanding.

In the leadup to the peak period and indeed in the lockdown months of COVID-19, our focus was investing in our people, our facilities, our air and networks and our technology – and it paid off.

We moved more packages by air than ever before; a record number of people used the Australia Post website and mobile app; and customers received almost 5 million of our new ETA notifications about when parcels were due to arrive.

As they've done so tirelessly over the past two years, our Post Offices around the country continued to serve their communities with millions of Australians visiting their local Post Office in December.

So too our posties and drivers, working weekends, and twilight hours to serve their communities and deliver ahead of Christmas.

We maintained strict safety measures throughout – with SmartBadge technology and Rapid Antigen Tests all helping to keep our workplaces and communities safe, although as we have switched into 2022, we continue to manage approximately 1800 team members on any given day requiring isolation due to COVID-19.

To date we have seen over 28,000 team members who have had their normal duties at Australia Post impacted by COVID-19.

It wasn't just physical health and safety - there is a strong and increasing focus on the mental health of our teams too – talking to our people regularly and continuing to remove the stigma surrounding mental health.

We have also announced the pending appointment of a Chief Mental Health Officer, to work with us to further accelerate our strategic thinking around mental health in the workplace. The appointment will help leverage our scale and size – so we can learn what works – and share with others, for the greater good of the community.

Our strong network investment continues in earnest, having committed an additional \$400 million by mid 2022 in new parcel facilities, fleet, and technology to help service the growing demand for parcel services. This brings our total committed investment over a three-year period to June 2022 to more than \$1 billion.

This includes the new major parcel processing facilities in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide – as well as brand new facilities underway including in Perth, Melbourne, and Western Sydney.

The investment also includes \$20 million in upgrading our systems to cloud based solutions as we improve parcel scanning and tracking across our network. It is all part of a broader push to become a modern postal service, as we upgrade technology and invest in the digital experience for our customers to benefit from.

From a financial perspective, while our financial results are not finalised, audited and approved yet – we will endeavour to provide as many details as possible based on our full year results and volumes over Christmas, and we will provide full details once the results are finalised.

I can share that the second half of 2021 has been the busiest eCommerce period in the history of our organisation.

With 15 million people in lockdown at one point, Australians turned to online shopping like never before – and it was there where our investment paid off – allowing us to service the community, despite the challenges we faced as a result of the pandemic, including the isolation of thousands of our people at any given time.

The pivot to online shopping also enabled us to be an important lifeline for small businesses turning to eCommerce, and we are proud of the role we are playing with small to medium businesses across Australia.

With an eye to the year ahead, we are prepared for an election year, with our Unaddressed Mail service in good shape, a command centre already established, as we work closely with the Australian Electoral Commission.

We continue to strive towards delighting our customers and our communities, building a sustainable business that makes life easier for Australians – with our dispersed geographic footprint right across the country allowing people to access the services they need, all at their local Post Office.

Further to this, we stand ready to work with all governments both state and federal, using the breadth of our network to create easier experiences for Australians right across the country.

In closing, I'd also like to just touch on and acknowledge my new leadership team, a strong blend of existing and new talent to accelerate our strategy and bring fresh ideas.

We know that at the heart of Australia Post is our people – and together, we need to continue making our organisation the best place it can be – where its people are safe, engaged and able to thrive in the work they do.

My new team will be able to position Australia Post to enhance experiences for its customers – wherever they are in the country, and every time they need our help including through our Post Offices, customer care, delivery network and digital channels.

I am joined today by the Chair, Lucio Di Bartolomeo, Tanny Mangos, Executive General Manager Community, Sustainability and Stakeholder Engagement, and Nick Macdonald Group General Counsel and Corporate Secretary.

We are ready to answer your questions.