

3 April 2023

Mr Stephen Palethorpe
Secretary
Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
By email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Palethorpe

Supplementary Budget Estimates 2022-23 – Clarifications

On 14 February 2023, in my capacity as EGM, Community Sustainability & Stakeholder, Engagement, I appeared with other Australia Post representatives as witnesses before the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee (**Committee**) for Supplementary Budget Estimates 2022-23. During the hearing my colleagues and I answered questions about various matters. The purpose of this letter is to clarify for the Committee a small number of responses provided to the Committee at the hearing.

In responding to questions from Senator Rennick about Bank@Post services, an Australia Post witness stated that there were 1,150 towns in Australia in which Australia Post is the only retail provider of access to banking services. To clarify, 1,150 Post Offices offer Bank@Post services in regional communities that have no bank branch.

In responding to questions from Senator Cadell about the letters business, an Australia Post witness stated that the organisation had a commitment to deliver to every Australian household five days a week. To clarify, Australia Post is currently subject to prescribed performance standards that include a standard that 98% of delivery points be serviced every business day.

In responding to questions from Senator Cadell about letters pricing, an Australia Post witness stated Australian financial services law required a letter to be received for every interest rate rise. To clarify, Australia Post understands that banks often send notices to customers in hard copy in instances where the bank does not have the customer's consent to send notices electronically.

In responding to questions from Senator Cadell about the parcels business, an Australia Post witness stated that the organisation had carried 52 million parcels in December, which was an all-time record for the organisation. To clarify, the achievement was an equal record for the organisation, with 52 million parcels also delivered through the December peak in 2021.

In responding to questions from Senator Cadell about innovations, an Australia Post witness stated that the organisation's application was the number one app in the Android store and in the top ten in the Apple store, and would have multi-hundred million-dollar hits. To clarify, at times during the month of December 2022, the app was the highest-charting free business app in Apple's App Store and the Google Play Store, and on some days had more than a million visits.

In responding to questions from Senator Cadell about staff shortages, an Australia Post witness stated that the organisation sought to engage between 3,000 to 4,000 team members for Christmas peak, and fell short by about 300. To clarify, of the over 3,700 Christmas peak roles to be filled, less than 100 were unfilled.

In responding to questions from Senator Henderson about regional Post Offices, an Australia Post witness stated that Licensees buy a licence from Australia Post, and that one net closure had occurred to date in the current financial year. To clarify, Licensees are either granted a licence from Australia Post or purchase a Licence from an outgoing licensee, and while one net closure in the first half of financial year 2022/23 had occurred in remote areas, the number of Post Offices across regional areas overall – ie rural and remote areas combined – had increased, in part due to the services made available by mobile Post Office vans.

In responding to questions from Senator Henderson about the engagement of Principle Advisory, I stated that the contract was for eighteen months. To clarify, the contract commenced in October 2022, has a maximum term of 15 months, and can be terminated on 28 days' notice or sooner by mutual agreement. This contract followed an initial one month engagement of Principle Advisory, which commenced in September 2022.

In responding to questions from Senator Henderson about the engagement of Principle Advisory, an Australia Post witness stated that our policy on procurement is published. To clarify, the procurement policy is published on the organisation's intranet. An Australia Post witness also indicated that no Principle Advisory staff were known to him beyond Mr Liddell, but that there may have been others supporting him. To clarify, the Principle Advisory engagement also involves services being provided by Principle Advisory partner, Mr Ben Eade. In addition, Stinton Advisory principal, Mr Ben Mitchell has been engaged to provide communications and media support in relation to the Post26 strategy.

Sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Tanny Mangos.

Tanny Mangos
EGM, Community Sustainability & Stakeholder Engagement