



SENATOR THE HON STEPHEN CONROY

MINISTER FOR BROADBAND, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY
MINISTER ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER ON DIGITAL PRODUCTIVITY
DEPUTY LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SENATE

The Hon John Murphy MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

20 NOV 2012

Dear Mr Murphy

Petition - request for post office at Lakeside Estate, Pakenham

Thank you for your letter dated 10 October 2012 concerning a petition submitted for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions requesting a post office licence to be granted within the Lakeside Estate, Pakenham, Victoria.

Under the *Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989*, Australia Post is responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation, including all decisions relating to its operational network. As a Government Business Enterprise, Australia Post does not receive any funding from taxpayers and, as far as practicable, it is required to perform its functions in a manner consistent with sound commercial practice.

Australia Post has advised that it regularly reviews and makes adjustments to its retail network based on emerging or changing customer needs. In determining whether additional retail outlets are required, a number of factors are taken into account. These include the location and viability of existing outlets in the vicinity, the changing distribution of population and the volume of business likely to be transacted at all outlets, should there be a change to the network.

With customer numbers visiting post offices across Australia in decline, Australia Post must be sure that any new outlet would generate enough new business to be financially sustainable.

Australia Post has reviewed postal services in Pakenham and its Victorian administration has advised that the likely level of new business to be gained from the establishment of a retail outlet in the Lakeside Estate would be insufficient to justify action at this time. Lakeside Estate residents currently have access to postal services from the Pakenham Post Office, which is located approximately 2.9km away, and from the Officer Licensed Post Office (approximately 3.9km away).


While noting Pakenham's population growth since 2006, Australia Post has advised that there has been no corresponding increase in customer patronage at the Pakenham Post Office. Customer numbers have dropped year-on-year since 2008/2009 and Australia Post believes demand for postal services would be insufficient to make any new outlet financially viable.

Australia Post considers that the Pakenham Post Office is able to handle existing customer demand. While queues will be evident at some peak times, staffing is considered adequate to serve current customer numbers. The recent installation of self-service terminals will assist customer flows and reduce customer waiting times.

Australia Post has reviewed all the circumstances of this matter and has advised that it is satisfied that the existing postal facilities are adequately meeting the community's reasonable needs. While Australia Post does not have any plans to establish a new retail outlet in Pakenham in the immediate future, its Victorian Retail Sales and Service Unit will continue to monitor the area to ensure its network remains appropriately configured.

I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely


Stephen Conroy
Minister for Broadband,
Communications and the Digital Economy