

**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
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Murphy

25 JUL 2011

Petition – closure of Milton Business Centre, Queensland

Thank you for your letter dated 31 May 2011 concerning a petition submitted for the Committee's consideration regarding the closure of Australia Post's Milton Business Centre, Queensland. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

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 noted that in January this year the Milton Business Centre incurred severe damage in the floods. In response to the extent of the damage and the potential risk of future flooding, Australia Post decided to vacate the site permanently. Australia Post implemented a range of actions during the months following the floods to ensure the continuation of postal services to the local community.

Australia Post has advised that customers were informed in January 2011 of the reasons for the closure of the business centre, the location of five alternative post offices in the local area and the delivery options available. The delivery options included either the transfer of post office boxes to a nearby outlet or a home mail delivery service. A free mail redirection was offered for up to 12 months to assist with the changed delivery arrangements.

Australia Post wrote to customers in March 2011 with updated advice. An agreement had been reached with a local retail outlet, Mary Ryan's Bookstore at 40 Park Road, just 200 metres from the site of the former business centre. The outlet offers stamps, Express Post products, Parcel Post satchels and basic packaging products. Both red and yellow posting boxes have been installed outside the outlet. In addition, customers who purchase a minimum of \$50 of postal products can fax an order form to the South Brisbane Business Centre. The products will be delivered to their business premises on the next working day.

I am advised that although Australia Post is unable to commit to reopening a full business centre in Milton, it will continue to explore options in the Milton locality while closely monitoring the postal needs of local residents.

I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Conroy
Minister for Broadband,
Communications and the Digital Economy