Question No: 68

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Pg 61 (12/02/2013)

Topic: Complaints Procedures

Senator Cameron asked:
Chair: Mr Fahour, I do not want to take up any more of the committee's time. The reason I am looking at this is that one of my constituents wrote to me complaining about Australia Post in quite vehement terms. I understand that, if you are waiting for something and it does not turn up, then it is a personal issue and there is a bit of angst, but the person did raise issues about your complaints procedure. I do not want you to go through the complaints procedure now, but could you on notice provide us with some details about how your complaints procedure works, and I might come back to that in the next estimates hearing?
Mr Fahour: Chair, that is not a problem. We will take that on notice. Also if you could let us know the specific individual so we can at least see what the issue is as well with the specific case.
CHAIR: Sure.

Answer:
Customer enquiries are handled via multiple channels such as phone, email and written letter. In instances where customers make a complaint, Australia Post's Customer Contact Centre (CCC) will attempt to resolve this at the first point of contact and log details of the complaint to assist with process improvement opportunities. Some complaints require subject matter expertise for resolution and these complaints are handed to specialist areas, including network and product staff for follow-up and advice. Once the CCC has received advice, the customer is then contacted and feedback is provided. Consistent with its Customer Service Charter, Australia Post aims to resolve most complaints within 10 working days, but some more complex complaints may take longer.

Australia Post uses this complaint information and a range of other content to assist in improving the overall service provided to its customers.

Question No: 69

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: CSO – Licensee Percentage

Senator McKenzie asked:
Senator McKENZIE: Finally, how much of your CSO do your licensees supply? What percentage?
Ms Corbett: We have over 4,428 outlets, of which the other important one for us is the number of licensees we have in rural and remote Australia. We have 2,556 outlets in rural and remote Australia.
Senator McKENZIE: In terms of the delivery of the service obligations, what percentage of the delivery of those are achieved by licensees?
Mr Fahour: There are several aspects of the CSO, just to be very clear. Number of retail stores is only one aspect of the broader CSO but, in terms of that, we are more than happy for the total number as a percentage to be put on notice as a question and we will get back to you with the exact number.

Answer:
Australia Post's community service obligations (CSOs) are set out in s27 of the Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989 (the Act) which requires that:

- the corporation provide a letter service for both domestic and international letter traffic
- the service be available at a single uniform rate within Australia for standard letters
- the service be reasonably accessible by all Australians wherever they reside
- the performance standards for the service reasonably meet the social, industrial and commercial needs of the community.

Regulations made under s28C of the Act detail the particular performance standards required to meet these obligations.

In particular, Australia Post must maintain at least 4,000 retail outlets, with at least 50%, or no less than 2,500 in rural and remote areas.

Licensed Post Offices (LPOs) form a significant part of Australia Post's retail network providing customer accessibility which contributes towards the above CSO requirements (2,934 as at 30 June 2012).

As at 31 December 2012:

- 4,428 retail outlets were in operation – 2,902 were LPOs or 65.5%..
- 2,556 retail outlets were in rural and remote areas – 1,627 were LPOs or 63.7%

Question No: 70

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Pg 62 (12/2/2013)

Topic: Tasmanian Wine Industry

Senator Whish-Wilson asked:
Senator WHISH-WILSON: I have a very quick question. Are you aware of the relationship that Australia Post has with the Tasmanian wine industry body, Wine Industry Tasmania?
Mr Fahour: No, I am not aware of that specific relationship, but could you please help me understand.
Senator WHISH-WILSON: It is a longstanding relationship with the wine industry. If you are posting wine, and a lot of wine goes by box, there is a special rate that is altered each year based on certain metrics and if you are a member of that industry you can participate in that. I have received feedback from a number of members that they then have to claim their freight equalisation subsidy for each box they send. They have to claim every time they do that, and they might send 200 or 300 boxes in a year, so they have to fill in 200 or 300 forms to claim back that subsidy. It would not just be the wine industry in Tasmania but lots of other industries that would use your service, so I was wondering if the rates that Australia Post charges could already reflect the subsidy to save on administration costs for those businesses. Would that be at all possible?
Mr Fahour: I think that is an interesting suggestion: how do we cut the extra work that people need to do and can we do it in a different way? I am more than happy to take that on notice….

Answer:
Australia Post's current pricing model does not incorporate the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme (TFES) and Australia Post is not registered as an Agent under the TFES to institute claims on behalf of Tasmanian businesses. The TFES specifically states that companies primarily involved in freight forwarding or freight logistics may not apply to act as an Agent. This exclusion statement under the TFES, therefore, precludes the activities proposed.

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Question No: 71

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Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Pg 64 (12/02/2013)

Topic: Post Office Closures

Senator Boyce asked:

Senator BOYCE:… but I wanted to ask you about the closure of the front counter at the Business Centre in Albion, and I understand that Kelvin Grove and Caboolture post offices are also closing. Why is that?

Mr Fahour: Senator, we are happy to take those on notice. The reality is that we assess our network all over the country. There are some areas where we will change the type of service that we offer. Over the last several Senate committees that I have come to, it has been a rare pleasure for me in being able to say that we have actually grown our total network, and in particular we have grown our regional and rural network. But we have to put our stores where the customers are and where they want to do business.

Answer:

Since November 2011, Australia Post has rolled out nationally 23 new Business Hubs, which are designed to provide customer service, delivery, transport operations and sales together in one location, servicing business customers and offering a range of products and services specific to their needs.

As a result, the Albion Business Centre closed on 1 March 2013 due to declining customer patronage and low volumes of business customers transacting over the counter. The Business Centre was co-located with the Albion Delivery Centre, which continues to operate and provide customers with the ability to collect parcels. There are five alternative retail outlets within 3kms and seven outlets within 8kms, as well as the nearby Virginia Business Hub that provides dedicated services to business customers. The new Business Hub has a fleet of vans that services Albion including bulk mail collection and delivery of Australia Post products. There has been no impact on PO Box customers.

The Kelvin Grove and Caboolture Business Centres closed in May 2009 and January 2012 respectively due to declining customer numbers and the close proximity of neighbouring postal outlets.

There are no plans to close the retail outlets in Kelvin Grove or Caboolture.

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Question No: 72

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Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Pg 65 (12/2/2013)

Topic: Post Office Closures

Senator Boyce asked:
Senator BOYCE: Could I have on notice the customer patronage of all the post offices that are being closed up to the end of June?
Mr Fahour: I am not sure that we will be able to give you that confidential information because some of these are private businesses. If they are owned by private businesses we do not want to reveal what their private situation is. So I would request that—
Senator BOYCE: As much detail as possible, particularly in Queensland.
Mr Fahour: A lot of these shops, we are competing with other businesses around us and there are other licensees who have legal contractual rights. We have to follow a process. All I am asking is that, rather than on the public record that you reveal somebody's private business interests and what the customer numbers are so forth, if there is something specific in Queensland, for example, we are happy to deal with you personally to discuss this. But I would ask the chair and the Senate to think about what we can and cannot put on the Senate record.
Senator BOYCE: Given the concern of businesses in the Albion area, the question is far broader than a private conversation. It is about the interests of businesses within a lot of smaller business communities in Queensland. If you are not able to give me the exact figures up until 30 June, perhaps you could give me the figures up until when you believe the provision of that information might cause commercial harm to a business.
Mr Fahour: We will take notice your question about the Albion area and we will provide you what information we are able to provide you on notice. I will reiterate, though, that my obligations according to the act are to act in the commercial best interest of Australia Post and to meet the community service obligations as outlined by the Parliament of Australia.

Answer:
Due to the dynamic nature of the retail network, Australia Post will continue to open and close outlets to ensure it is operating in a commercially viable manner whilst continuing to meet its community service obligations.

Since November 2011, Australia Post has rolled out nationally 23 new Business Hubs, which are designed to provide customer service, delivery, transport operations and sales together in one location, servicing business customers and offering a range of products and services specific to their needs. As a result, the Albion Business Centre closed on 1 March 2013 due to declining customer patronage and low volumes of business customers transacting over the counter.

Currently, Australia Post is not planning on any further changes to the retail network in the Albion area/vicinity.

Question No: 73

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Licensed Post Office Payment Rates

Senator Birmingham asked:
1) Roughly how many parcels does the average Licensed post office or franchise post office handle per day?
2) How much do licensees receive for delivery of a street carded article?
3) How much do franchisees receive for delivery of a street carded article?
4) When was the last time that Licensed Post offices received an increase to this payment?
5) Does this payment adjust for inflation?
6) Are payments to licensees based on an average number of parcels per month – not the actual number of parcels per month?
7) Are licensees paid for accepting, scanning and recording parcels?
8) With parcel volumes growing rapidly is it reasonable to lock in volumes and payments 12 months out which quickly fall behind actual present volumes?
9) Is Australia Post aware of suggestions that outdated rates and increasing volumes are leaving post office licensees hundreds of dollars out of pocket per week?

Answer:
1. As payments to licensees for handling street addressed carded articles have been historically made through either the mail management fee or carded article fee, which do not identify the volume of carded articles involved and can include payment for other activities, details of the number of street addressed carded articles delivered through LPOs are not available.

2. Licensees receive payment for the delivery of street addressed carded articles through either the mail management fee or the combination of the carded article fee and a recently introduced "scanning fee".   The mail management fee is a per-delivery-point payment which does not take into account mail volumes. The carded article fee is reflective of average article volumes and is paid as either a base-rate amount or where the LPO regularly receives more than 25 carded articles per week, a negotiated-rate. The "scanning fee" is a per-article payment generated directly from scanned delivery events.

   The mail management fee is in the order of $29 and $73 per private or business delivery point per annum respectively. This payment covers activities such as handling customer enquiries, preparing statistics relating to mail delivery and the delivery of carded articles.

   The carded article fee is expressed as an annual fee rather than a per article rate for the delivery of carded articles within the LPO Agreement (paid monthly). The base-rate carded

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Hearings February 2013
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
Australia Post

article fee is $381.82 p.a. (GST inclusive). The "scanning fee" is 22 cents per article (GST inclusive).

The LPO Agreement provides that the carded article fee is negotiable by individual licensees where the LPO regularly receives more than 25 articles per week.

3. Franchised post offices operate under a different business model to corporate and licensed outlets with fees and commissions reflecting among other things a 10 year licence term and an ongoing franchise service fee payment to Australia Post (LPOs operate with an indefinite licence term and no ongoing service fee payment to Australia Post). Franchisees receive a net payment of $1.00 and $0.50 for signature and non-signature carded street addressed articles respectively.

4. The base-rate carded article fee payment for LPOs was last increased in 2010 (and 2008 prior to that) in line with the movement in the basic postage rate at that time, as provided in the LPO Agreement. Licensees in receipt of a negotiated-rate carded article fee may request a review of that payment at any time with any variation being effective from the time of the review.

Most recently, Australia Post advised licensees on 27 March 2013 of an additional payment, effective from April 2013, for the handling of street addressed carded articles.

This additional payment of 22 cents per article is applicable to the 1,800 LPOs who currently receive the carded article fee. It will be paid automatically, in addition to the current carded article fee, based on the completion of required scan events for street addressed carded articles.

5. The LPO Agreement provides that a number of delivery and mail processing related fees are varied at the time of any movement in the basic postage rate. This includes the base-rate carded article fee.

6. Licensees receive payment for the delivery of street addressed carded articles through either the mail management fee or the combination of the carded article fee and a recently introduced "scanning fee". The mail management fee is a per-delivery-point payment which does not take into account mail volumes. The carded article fee is reflective of average article volumes and is paid as either a base-rate amount or where the LPO regularly receives more than 25 carded articles per week, a negotiated-rate. The "scanning fee" is a per-article payment generated directly from scanned delivery events.

Where a licensee is paid a negotiated-rate carded article fee (ie. LPO regularly receives more than 25 carded articles per week), this is based on an average number of articles received for delivery. Licensees in receipt of a negotiated-rate carded article fee may request a review of that payment at any time.

7. Licensees receive three separate payments for handling parcels:
    ▪ To assess postage and accept the parcels – payment is a commission based on the amount of postage paid

- To stream (sort) the parcel – payment is an additional commission based on the amount of postage paid
- Where applicable, to deliver parcels to customers – payment is either part of the mail management or a combination of the carded article fee and "scanning fee".

8. Payments to licensees are not locked in for a 12 month period. Licensees in receipt of a negotiated-rate carded article fee may request a review of that payment at any time with any variation being effective from the time of the review.

   The "scanning fee" is a per-article payment generated directly from scanned delivery events.

9. Australia Post believes that overall, the payments that it makes to licensees for providing products and services on its behalf are appropriate.

   The LPO payment scheme is structured to provide licensees with an overall payment from Australia Post. The income for any individual licensee is subject to the mix of business within their LPO (Australia Post and non-Australia Post) which will also be reflective of local customer demand and associated work effort.

Question No: 74

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Digital MailBox – Australia Post expects considerable revenue

Senator Birmingham asked:
1) Are targets for the number of registered users, number of active users, number of providers and revenue being met?
2) What partners have joined since the last estimates? What resistance or concerns is Post finding potential partners have?
3) When will the full launch occur?
4) What is the status of competition in this market?
5) Have there been any teething issues with customers or partners yet?
6) In reference to QoN 11 (from Oct 2012 estimates) – why would there be a 'high cost' involved in switching providers for a new service?
7) Noting the privacy breaches experienced with the 'click and send' online service and parcel tracking service, how confident is Australia Post that its digital mailbox won't experience similar breaches?

Answer:
1. Australia Post is pleased with the progress to date of the digital mailbox against targets.
2. Since October 2012, Australia Post has been working with a wide range of providers across a number of industries but is not in a position to make any public announcements at this stage. The key issues being worked through with prospective providers are the alignment of digital strategies, the cost of systems integration, likely consumer uptake, budget and priority setting of the digital mailbox compared to other provider projects and IT resource availability.
3. Australia Post will publicly launch its beta digital mailbox in 2013, with the timing of its nation-wide marketing campaign dependent on the nature and number of providers onboard to ensure that it gives consumers a positive experience and the utility they want and expect from the product.
4. The significant benefits of shifting to a digital mailbox has meant that numerous service providers and companies with related offerings have emerged in the market all trying to capture market share.
5. Australia Post is working closely and collaboratively with all of its providers to ensure a seamless and efficient onboarding process, which considers the individual technical requirements for each provider.

6. The "high costs" mentioned in the answer to Q11 Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearing (October 2012) predominantly referred to the cost of switching existing services to a new provider. Sourcing existing and new services from different providers would result in a dilution of scale benefits available from using a single provider.

7. The problems previously experienced with the click and send service have been rectified. Australia Post is extremely confident that its digital mailbox service will not be impacted in a similar way. It has a dedicated team of highly experienced security professionals working under a newly created Information Security Office that oversees all security components.

Question No: 75

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Digital Post Australia

Senator Birmingham asked:
What is the status of the appeal to the full federal court?

Answer:
The appeal is due to go before the Full Federal Court in Melbourne on 15 and 16 May 2013.

Question No: 76

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Closures

Senator Birmingham asked:
1) Have any Post Officers closed to date in 2012-13?
2) Are further closures expected? Please provide details of each closure.
3) What notification process does Australia Post go through when notifying the community of a post office's closure?

Answer:
1) Due to the dynamic nature of its retail network, Australia Post will continue to open and close outlets to ensure it is operating in a commercially viable manner whilst continuing to meet its community service obligations.

From 1 July 2012 – 31 January 2013, the number of Australia Post retail outlets was reduced marginally from 4,428 to 4,426.

During this period there have been 32 outlet closures, 21 of which were a result of licensees terminating their agreements, 4 corporate closures, 6 temporary closures and 1 premises was demolished , with no viable alternative available. For the same period there were 30 new openings, resulting in a minor decrease in the number of points of presence across the network.

2) The following changes to the retail network have been/or are expected to be made between 1 February and 30 June 2013:

Consolidation of retail services:

- Kingaroy Delivery Centre Annexe (QLD) with Kingaroy Post Office (300m away)
  - 15 February 2013.
- Mount Isa Delivery Centre Annexe (QLD) with Mount Isa Post Office (300m away)
  - 1 March 2013.
- Hobart Argyle St Post Office at Hobart Business Centre (TAS) with Bathurst Street Post Office (600m away) – 15 March 2013.

Conversion of Corporate Post Offices to Licensed post offices

- Bordertown (SA) – 1 March 2013
- Allenstown (QLD) – 15 March 2013
- Beaconsfield (TAS) – 28 March 2013
- Scarborough (WA) – May (TBC)
- Leederville (WA) – June (TBC)

Consolidation of Business Centres to Business Hubs

- Bundoora (VIC) – 1 March 2013
- Ferntree Gully (VIC) – 1 March 2013
- Albion (QLD) – 1 March 2013
- Rydalmere (NSW) – 1 March 2013
- Tuggeranong (ACT) – 1 March 2013

Conversion of Business Centres to Parcel Collection Facilities

- Rockingham (WA) – 15 February 2013
- Joondalup (WA) – 15 February 2013

3) Australia Post's Community Participation Commitment (CPC) details Australia Post's process for engaging with the community and other key stakeholders (including customers, staff, unions, federal/state members of parliament and local government) when planning changes to its retail network. The CPC is available online at **www.auspost.com.au**.

<div align="right">**Question No: 77**</div>

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Electricity

Senator Birmingham asked:
1. How much does Australia Post project the carbon tax to add to its electricity bills for this financial year?
2. What is the total projected increase in electricity bills?

Answer:
1. Australia Post estimates carbon tax costs (relating to electricity) will equate to approximately $4.4m in the FY 2012/13.
2. Australia Post estimates an increase of approximately $10m in electricity expenditure in the FY 2012/13 (Actual 2011/12 = $29.9m, Estimate 2012/13 = $40m).

Question No: 78

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Parcels

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What does Australia Post believe needs to be done to improve the processing of parcels as they enter the country?

2. What discussions has Australia Post had with Customs regarding parcel processing?

Answer:

1. Australia Post works closely with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) Biosecurity to improve the processing of parcels as they enter the country.

2. In March 2011 CBP, DAFF and Australia Post introduced a joint screening process that improved processing rates through the combined gateway. To further improve processing rates, CBP, DAFF and Australia Post are now working on the introduction of item level exchange of data to allow pre-screening of parcels before they enter the country.

Question No: 79

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Travel Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:
Please provide a breakdown of international travel costs for 2011-12 and 2012-13 to date, including trip details, purpose of travel and the number of employees attending and their classification.

Answer:
Australia Post spent a total of $1,422,725 on international air travel for business-related purposes in 2011/12 and $654,569 in 2012/13 (as at 31 January 2013).

Question No: 80

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Prices

Senator Birmingham asked:
Does Australia Post have any plans to ask the ACCC for approval to increase prices, if so what?

Answer:
Prior to formally approaching the ACCC for permission to increase prices for Ordinary letter services (includes the basic postage rate), Australia Post consults with customers in order to understand the impact of any proposed change(s) and may also have informal discussions with the ACCC.

Once Australia Post formally approaches the ACCC, the ACCC's assessment process is well publicised and comprehensive.

Currently, Australia Post has not initiated and has no plans to initiate discussions with its customers or the ACCC regarding any increases to the prices for Ordinary letter services.

Question No: 81

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Franchises

Senator Birmingham. asked:
1) Is Australia Post still committed to converting 150 branches into franchises?
2) If Australia Post is not proceeding with the planned conversions, please detail why.
3) How many have been converted to date?
4) Are reports that 29 of the branches which have been converted to franchises are likely to be closed down on absorbed back into the branch network?
5) Did Australia Post agree with the CEPU to create just 20 franchises?

Answer:

1&2 Australia Post commenced the rollout of the franchise network in 2006 after an extensive development process commencing in around 1999. At that time, it expected to establish up to 150 franchised outlets in its network of over 4,400 outlets.

Given the significant changes that are taking place within the retail environment and postal industry, as well as developments within the franchise sector generally, Australia Post has decided to pause the rollout of any further franchise outlets while it focuses on determining the future of the franchise model beyond the terms of the current individual agreements.

3) 29 franchised outlets are currently in operation (17 corporate conversions, 8 greenfield sites and 4 pilot franchises).

4) Australia Post has not made a determination on the operating model that will be in place for existing franchised post offices beyond the term of the current individual agreements.

5) Australia Post believes this question refers to its agreement with the CEPU within the then Enterprise Agreement (EBA6). This was a commitment that for the life of that agreement (2004 – 2006), Australia Post would not convert more than 20 corporate outlets to a franchise.

This agreement did not restrict Australia Post on the size of its franchise network. Australia Post's advice at the time to prospective franchisees was that its network would be achieved through a combination of the conversion of existing corporate outlets, conversion of licensed outlets and the establishment of new sites.

Question No: 82

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Express Post

Senator Birmingham asked:

Can Australia Post provide details of all changes to the Express Post delivery networks including:

(a) The revised Express Post network delivery areas
(b) All postcodes affected by the changes
(c) The reasons for changing the Express Post network in those areas.

Answer:

There have been no changes to the national Express Post guaranteed next-business-day delivery network.

Question No: 83

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Post Office Closures

Senator Birmingham asked:

Can Australia Post provide a list of all offices, including Licensed Post Office and Community Post Agents, that have closed from January 2010 to date? Please include in that list
a.   Location of post office
b.   Type of post office
c.   Date of closure
d.   Reason for closure

Answer:

Due to the dynamic nature of the retail network, Australia Post will continue to open and close outlets to ensure it is operating in a commercially viable manner whilst continuing to meet its community service obligations.

Service levels and financial viability are the key parameters used in network change assessments (ie. new outlet, closure, amalgamation, relocation & conversion). The following represents a non-exhaustive list of standard metrics considered:

·   Customer numbers;
·   Post Office Boxes installed / leased;
·   Account customer numbers / spend;
·   Catchment area coverage / proximity to nearest site;
·   Property measures - lease terms, asset values, physical attributes;
·   Staffing;
·   Product mix;
·   Profitability; and
·   Termination of agreement by agent / licensee.

In each of the instances below, at least one of the above criteria was met, resulting in a change to the retail network. In the vast majority of situations, the closures have resulted from the termination of agreement by the agent / licensee.

The overall number of postal outlets has increased from 4,423 in January 2010 to 4,426 in January 2013.

The following outlets have opened/closed during this period:

2010 Net Openings / Closures: (14)

Openings (38):

Craignish	01/02/2010
Koonoomoo	09/02/2010
Janefield Drive	22/02/2010
Balgowan	04/03/2010
Urania	10/03/2010
Donovans	22/03/2010
Meringandan West	29/03/2010
Varsity Lakes	05/04/2010
Mount Direction	07/05/2010
Yamba	01/06/2010
Enngonia	01/07/2010
Narbethong	01/07/2010
Thurgoona	02/07/2010
Ma Ma Creek	28/07/2010
Bellbridge	01/08/2010
Canberra Airport	15/09/2010
Windradyne	23/09/2010
Binningup	30/09/2010
Myalup	30/09/2010
Highbury	01/10/2010
Kalparrin	01/10/2010
Amelup	04/10/2010
Cable Beach	04/10/2010
Victor Harbor Central	05/10/2010
Goomboorian	07/10/2010
Goolwa	13/10/2010
Lethbridge	13/10/2010
Djugun	14/10/2010
Plainland	19/10/2010
Woodridge	21/10/2010
Heavitree Gap	31/10/2010
Wembley Downs	15/11/2010
Mount Kuring-Gai	02/12/2010
Currimundi	06/12/2010
Lynbrook	13/12/2010
Moore Park	13/12/2010
Mount Annan	20/12/2010
Lake Placid	22/12/2010

Closures (52):

Mount Kuring-Gai	17/01/2010
Builyan	29/01/2010
Endeavour Falls	31/01/2010
West Richmond	5/02/2010
Halfway Creek	22/02/2010
Lockwood South	12/03/2010
The Pines	14/03/2010
Gateshead	19/03/2010
Meringandan	29/03/2010
Marmor	31/03/2010
Bond University	14/04/2010
Rockhampton North	17/04/2010
Prairie	30/04/2010
Parramatta BC	1/05/2010
Eagle Farm	7/05/2010
Eastgardens	24/05/2010
Halidon	28/05/2010
Babakin	28/05/2010
Yuna	3/06/2010
Camperdown	25/06/2010
Injanoo	29/06/2010
Innot Hot Springs	1/07/2010
Mt Hope	1/07/2010
New Mapoon	01/07/2010
Seisia	1/07/2010
Torrens Creek	1/07/2010
Umagico	1/07/2010
Warriwillah	1/07/2010
Southbank	2/07/2010
Nelia	20/08/2010
Hines Hill	27/08/2010
Sydney City	30/08/2010
Glen Huon	31/08/2010
Princetown	1/09/2010
Branxholm	3/09/2010
Carrathool	3/09/2010
Narrikup	3/09/2010
Milperra BC	17/09/2010
Tennyson	15/10/2010
Adelaide Station Arcade	15/10/2010
Aitkenvale	22/10/2010
Wokalup	25/10/2010

Currarong	1/11/2010
Portland Roads	19/11/2010
Cumberland Park	23/11/2010
Heatherton BC	6/11/2010
Palm Beac	26/11/2010
Kambalda East	9/12/2010
Palmers Island	14/12/2010
New Gisborne	24/12/2010
Hallam BC	24/12/2010
Huon	31/12/2010

2011 Net Openings / Closures: 19

Openings (59):

Cairns Lake St	24/01/2011
Cairns Abbott St	24/01/2011
Halls Head	01/02/2011
Lange	01/02/2011
Aherrenge	10/02/2011
Amata	10/02/2011
Utopia	10/02/2011
Turramurra	11/02/2011
Marcoola Beach	14/02/2011
Erskine	21/02/2011
Pipalyatjara	21/02/2011
Glebe	21/02/2011
Cape Denison	22/02/2011
Willowra	23/02/2011
Yuelamu	23/02/2011
Nyirripi	24/02/2011
Singleton Heights	01/03/2011
Anmatjere	03/03/2011
River Heads	14/03/2011
Meadow Springs	21/03/2011
Alice Plaza	01/04/2011
Telegraph Station	01/04/2011
Bunbury North	01/04/2011
Kelso	06/04/2011
Albany North	11/04/2011
Harts Range (Arltarlpilta)	12/04/2011
Toogoom	18/04/2011
Forest Glen	18/04/2011
Eastside	01/05/2011

Kalka	01/05/2011
Esperance North	09/05/2011
McKail	09/05/2011
Alice Springs Gregory Tce	15/06/2011
Eaton East	20/06/2011
Dalyellup	01/07/2011
Alice Springs Bath Street	18/07/2011
Alice Springs Hartley Street	18/07/2011
Port Pirie South	22/07/2011
Laura	25/07/2011
Woollahra	01/08/2011
McDonnell Range	01/08/2011
Coral Cove	01/08/2011
Erlunda	01/08/2011
Orange Moulder Street	23/08/2011
Orange West	24/08/2011
Corroboree Park	01/09/2011
Portland Roads	01/09/2011
Tyndale	21/09/2011
Ballina West	22/09/2011
Cambridge	03/10/2011
Grantham	03/10/2011
Belyuen	01/11/2011
Waverley	07/11/2011
Beswick	01/12/2011
Manyallaluk (Barunga)	01/12/2011
Jilkminggan	01/12/2011
Barunga	01/12/2011
Delahey IGA	05/12/2011
Balwyn	19/12/2011

Closures (40):

Milton BC	12/01/2011
Cairns Orchid Plaza	21/01/2011
Ashgrove	21/01/2011
Coorparoo BC	28/01/2011
Turrumurra	28/01/2011
Loganholme	28/01/2011
Keyneton	1/02/2011
Schofields	4/02/2011
Glebe	4/02/2011
Woollahra	4/02/2011
Urania	10/02/2011
Balwyn	11/02/2011

Copping	25/02/2011
Garvoc	3/03/2011
Culburra	11/03/2011
Cremorne	14/03/2011
Black Rock North	25/03/2011
Clonard	25/03/2011
Doncaster East	1/04/2011
Woolooga	12/04/2011
Fraser Island Retreat	12/04/2011
Laura	29/04/2011
Timor Street	12/01/2011
Pitjantjatrjara Homelands	21/01/2011
Canberra Airport	21/01/2011
Murphys Creek	28/01/2011
Mailors Flat	28/01/2011
Lake Tyers Beach	28/01/2011
Perth Adelaide Terrace	1/02/2011
Balgowan	4/02/2011
Frankston	4/02/2011
Edith Creek	4/02/2011
Silkwood East	10/02/2011
Alice Plaza	11/02/2011
St James	25/02/2011
Wedgefield	3/03/2011
Davistown	11/03/2011
Dudinin	14/03/2011
Bullaring	25/03/2011
Unley BC	25/03/2011

2012 Net Openings / Closures: (2)

Openings (43)

Ashgrove East	12/01/2012
Molesworth	01/02/2012
Pelican Waters	05/03/2012
Newtown	19/03/2012
Napoleon	30/03/2012
East Bunbury	01/04/2012
Broadwater	02/04/2012
Clonard	30/04/2012
Vivonne Bay	01/05/2012
Spencer	04/05/2012
Larapinta	01/06/2012
Walker Flat	01/06/2012
Milton	04/06/2012

Bentley Park	04/06/2012
Mundingburra	04/06/2012
Speewah	04/06/2012
Ingleburn BC	25/06/2012
Walhallow	25/06/2012
Annandale	02/07/2012
Douglas	02/07/2012
South Townsville	02/07/2012
Colo Heights	02/07/2012
Cobdogla	02/07/2012
Doncaster East	09/07/2012
Bluff	09/07/2012
Hardwicke Bay	30/07/2012
Tyagarah	01/08/2012
Hindmarsh	13/08/2012
Keith Hall	03/09/2012
Ernabella	01/10/2012
Yakamia	08/10/2012
Melbourne University	15/10/2012
Craigieburn North	22/10/2012
Upper Coomera	29/10/2012
Cullen Bullen	01/11/2012
Umbakumba	01/11/2012
Engawala	01/12/2012
Laramba	01/12/2012
Hindmarsh Island	01/12/2012
Hamelin Pool	03/12/2012
Lemnos	03/12/2012
Toowoomba James St	05/12/2012
Ross Creek	14/12/2012

Closures (45)

Bulli	20/01/2012
Caboolture BC	20/01/2012
Gladstone BC	27/01/2012
Earlville BC	27/01/2012
Meringandan West	29/02/2012
Lyons	2/03/2012
Dampier	21/03/2012
Orange South	26/03/2012
Melbourne Collins St East	26/03/2012
Grevilia	28/03/2012
Lemnos	29/03/2012

Windsor	2/04/2012
Toowoomba West	6/04/2012
Hardwicke Bay	26/04/2012
Myalup	28/05/2012
Cobdogla	4/06/2012
Bluff	8/06/2012
Orana	22/06/2012
Capalaba BC	22/06/2012
Neville	1/07/2012
Flying Fish Point	1/07/2012
Lyndhurst	13/07/2012
Wards River	13/07/2012
Cooya Beach	27/07/2012
Marcoola Beach	1/08/2012
Roadvale	3/08/2012
Kaimkillenbun	8/08/2012
Hindmarsh	10/08/2012
Coral Cove	13/08/2012
Muradup	30/08/2012
Monash Park	1/09/2012
Bluewater	1/09/2012
Launceston	1/09/2012
Bauple	28/09/2012
Woodford	28/09/2012
Capertee	19/10/2012
Clinton	31/10/2012
Yoogali	31/10/2012
Virginia	5/11/2012
Drillham	9/11/2012
Melbourne University	10/11/2012
Bellbridge	16/11/2012
Greenacre	10/12/2012
Orient Point	21/12/2012
Capalaba Central	28/12/2012

As at January 2013 Net Openings / Closures: 0

Openings (3):

Kalgarin	16/01/2013
Bundaberg North	30/01/2013
Melbourne University	31/01/2013

Closures (3):

Bowen North	02/01/2013
Capalaba Central	02/01/2013
Murphy's Creek	15/01/2013

Question No: 84

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: LPO Remuneration

Senator Boyce asked:

In the February Estimates hearings explicit, specific questions were asked re the support Australia Post provides for the 2,990 LPO's in your network.

In response Australia Post representatives mentioned;

(a.) Investment in new point of sale technology.

(b.) Assistance to be more productive in the parcel environment.

(c.) Investment in new "agency opportunities, particularly in the identity services space."

(d.) Acquiring more agency principal work for bill paying.

(e.) Monthly site visits

(f.) POALL

(g.) LAC – that focuses on 'business development opportunities.

Also, in your most recent annual report Australia Post claims a desire for a deeper understanding of the needs of your LPO's

However, from the torrent of complaints we have been receiving from your LPO's it would seem fairly obvious that none of (a) to (g) relate to their **most important 'needs',** which have been plainly and vigorously expressed for some time now and in the view of the LPO's have not been responded to appropriately by Australia Post, namely;

- A need for a new Australian Post agreement with its LPO's to replace one that is 21 years old and no longer represents a fair and equitable contract in a radically changed postal business environment.

- A more equitable and fair, 'terms of trade' arrangement with your LPO's.

- Remuneration and commissions that fairly reflect the time and effort of LPO's to maintain the service delivery KPI's demanded by Australia Post.

- A termination of the policy of Australia Post of 're-defining' tasks or products to avoid having to increase the remuneration it has to pay LPOs.

1) Could Australia Post respond in detail to each of the above dot points and outline your plans to expeditiously negotiate a settlement of these outstanding matters of concerns for a significant number of your LPOs?

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Hearings February 2013
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
Australia Post

Answer:

1) The LPO Agreement is made up of a number of individual components including but not limited to:

- specific contractual terms for Australia Post's relationship with its licensees;
- basis of payment to licensees; and
- operational procedures and accounting instructions.

While the contractual terms between Australia Post and its licensees have remained largely unchanged since the inception of the LPO Agreement in 1993, the other elements of the Agreement such as the payment scheme and operational procedures are subject to constant review in line with changing business requirements. This results in, for example, annual adjustments to payments in line with price adjustments for a large majority of products and services. Any changes to either the LPO payment scheme or operational procedures are subject to consultation with the licensee representative body, the Post Office Agents Association Limited (POAAL).

Most recently, Australia Post advised licensees on 27 March 2013 of an additional payment, effective from April 2013, for the handling of street addressed carded articles.

This additional payment of 22 cents per article is applicable to the 1,800 LPOs who currently receive the carded article fee. It will be paid automatically, in addition to the current carded article fee, based on the completion of required scan events for street addressed carded articles.

On the whole, Australia Post believes that the terms of its Agreement with licensees are appropriate. The LPO payment scheme is structured to provide licensees with an overall payment from Australia Post for providing products and services on its behalf. The income for any individual licensee is subject to the mix of business within their LPO (Australia Post and non-Australia Post) which will also be reflective of local customer demand and associated work effort.

Question No: 85

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: LPO Remuneration

Senator Boyce asked:

Under questioning regarding the current returns LPO's receive from Australia Post in light of the rapid changes in the postal business Mr. Fahour did not deal with those questions, instead he simply justified the current LPO remuneration situation by referring to the $190 million loss Australia Post was now taking in respect to letter delivery and that, and I quote;" the licensees do not share in the loss" and that the business overall operated on a 'very, very thin margin."

1) Does Australia Post honestly think the current returns received by LPO's for parcel handling and delivery are fair and reasonable?

2) Does Australia Post thinks its terms of trade with its LPOs reflect the changes nature of the business and are they fair and reasonable as currently constructed?

Answer:

1. Australia Post considers the current payment structure for the handling of carded articles is on the whole appropriate.

   Licensees receive three separate payments for handling parcels:
   - To assess postage and accept the parcels – payment is a commission based on the amount of postage paid
   - To stream (sort) the parcel – payment is an additional commission based on the amount of postage paid
   - Where applicable, to deliver parcels to customers – payment is either part of the mail management or a combination of the carded article fee and "scanning fee".

   Licensees benefit from increasing parcel volumes through:

   - Commission from the sale and acceptance of parcels over the counter;
   - Where applicable payment for the delivery of carded parcels; and
   - Associated customer foot traffic.

   Most recently, Australia Post advised licensees on 27 March 2013 of an additional payment, effective from April 2013, for the handling of street addressed carded articles.

This additional payment of 22 cents per article is applicable to the 1,800 LPOs who currently receive the carded article fee. It will be paid automatically, in addition to the current carded article fee, based on the completion of required scan events for street addressed carded articles.

2. Australia Post considers the existing LPO Agreement is on the whole appropriate.

The LPO payment scheme is structured to provide licensees with an overall payment from Australia Post for providing products and services on its behalf. The income for any individual licensee is subject to the mix of business within their LPO (Australia Post and non-Australia Post), which will also be reflective of local customer demand and associated work effort.

Question No: 86

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: LPO Remuneration

Senator Boyce. asked:

In respect to questions about the remuneration paid to LPO's re, 'a carded parcel item' I note the following exchange form page 63/67 of the transcript;

> **Boyce:** ... "I have had it put to me by some licensees that, irrespective of whether they are delivering 13 boxes of wine to a street address or a soft cuddly toy to the address, in one delivery, they would get paid the same. Is that correct?
>
> **Mr Fahour:** I will ask Christine to answer that specific question.
>
> **Ms Corbett:** I think you are referring to the carded parcel item.
>
> **Senator BOYCE:** Yes, a carded article.
>
> **Ms Corbett:** For some licensees that is correct.
>
> **Senator BOYCE:** How much would they get?
>
> **Ms Corbett:** There is actually a negotiated payment.
>
> **Senator BOYCE:** Is that negotiated individually or across the board?
>
> **Ms Corbett:** On average, I think the payments that you are referring to for carded parcel is in the vicinity of 29c per item.
>
> **Senator BOYCE:** So if I deliver 13 boxes of wine I get 29c?
>
> **Ms Corbett:** It is actually—
>
> **Senator BOYCE:** In one delivery?
>
> **Ms Corbett:** Yes,
>
> 1) When Ms Corbett says "For some licensees that is correct", exactly how many licensees is she referring to?
> 2) When Ms Corbett says 'it's a negotiated payment" what does she mean by that? Is it negotiated individually with each and every one of your 2,900 IPOs ? Is it part of the 1992 agreement between Australia Post and the LPO's?
> 3) Exactly when was the 29 cent rate implemented?
> 4) Is it correct that since 1993 Post Office Box rentals have been increased by 132 per cent and while the fees paid by Australia Post to LPOs for providing and administering this service have only increased by 33 per cent? Can you please provide a detailed explanation of Australia Post's decision making in this regard?

Answer:

Ms Corbett provided the following additional information during the exchange with Senator Boyce :

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Hearings February 2013
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
Australia Post

Senator Boyce: In one delivery?

Ms Corbett: Yes, it is when a delivery has already been attempted by the parcel contractor. They have attempted to go to someone's home. That person has not been there and the item then comes back to a post office, and that fee is for handing it across the counter.

1. Around 1200 licensees receive payment for the delivery of carded articles to customers through the mail management fee and 1800 through a combination of the carded article fee and a recently introduced "scanning fee".

    The mail management fee is a per-delivery-point payment which does not take into account mail volumes. The carded article fee is reflective of average article volumes and is paid as either a base-rate amount or where the LPO regularly receives more than 25 carded articles per week, a negotiated-rate. The "scanning fee" is a per-article payment generated directly from scanned delivery events.

    The carded article fee is expressed as an annual fee rather than a per article rate for the delivery of carded articles within the LPO Agreement.

    In the example provided, from April 2013 recognition of the 13 boxes of wine for a LPO in receipt of the negotiated-rate carded article fee is through the annual fee that they receive for the delivery of carded articles plus the per-article "scanning fee".

2. The LPO Agreement provides that the carded article fee is negotiable by individual licensees where the LPO regularly receives more than 25 articles per week.

3. The carded article fee is expressed as an annual fee rather than a per article rate for the delivery of carded articles within the LPO Agreement. The reference to 29 cents is the per-article equivalent of the base-rate annual carded article fee, i.e. annual base-rate fee divided by 25 articles per week.

    The LPO Agreement provides that a number of delivery and mail processing related fees are varied at the time of any movement in the basic postage rate. This includes the base-rate carded article fee which was last varied in 2010 (and 2008 prior to that) in line with the movement in the basic postage rate.

    Most recently, Australia Post advised licensees on 27 March 2013 of an additional payment, effective from April 2013, for the handling of street addressed carded articles.

    This additional payment of 22 cents per article is applicable to the 1,800 LPOs who currently receive the carded article fee. It will be paid automatically, in addition to the current carded article fee, based on the completion of required scan events for street addressed carded articles.

4. Licensees receive two separate payments from Australia Post for each Post Office Box leased. The Post Office Box service fee which provides for the selling, processing of mail into and the supply/ maintenance of the box and the mail management fee, which is a per delivery point payment.

   Fees payable to licensees for Post Office Boxes are not tied to the charge to customers with licensees continuing to receive payment of the full fee in situations where Australia Post provides the service to customers at a reduced rate.

   The LPO Agreement provides that a number of delivery and mail processing related fees are varied at the time of any movement in the basic postage rate. This includes the post office box/bag fee and the mail management fee. Since 1993, both payments have increased in the order of 33%, notwithstanding the significant reduction in per delivery point letter volumes and associated work effort during this time.

   Post Office Box rental charges have increased on average by around 103% over the corresponding period.

<div align="right">**Question No: 87**</div>

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: LPO Remuneration

Senator Boyce asked:

In the February Estimates hearings evidence was given that 'a working party has been put together' to look at issues the LPO's have with remuneration.

1. What is the exact brief of the 'working party'?
2. Who are the members of the 'working party'?
3. Does that membership include any of the LPO's who have making the complaints that have led to the formulation of the working party?
4. Does the 'working party' have set time frames for its deliberations?
5. How many times has it met in the 18 months it has been in existence?
6. What has been the average length of time for those meetings?
7. What have been the major matters it has discussed?
8. Has it made any recommendations yet?
9. Many Royal Commissions don't run for 18 months why hasn't this working party finished the job?
10. Complainants complain that the 'working party' is just window dressing and that everything about its performance suggests only one thing that Australia Post is not seriously and expeditiously working on a fair and reasonable outcome for the LPO's?

Answer:

1. The working party (Carded Parcel Forum) has had a brief to identify opportunities to resolve issues relating to the handling of carded articles within Australia Post's retail network. This forum operates separately from Australia Post's consultation with the licensee representative body, the Post Office Agents Association Limited (POAAL), on any proposed changes to licensee payments.

2. The Carded Parcel Forum comprises representatives from POAAL and various areas of Australia Post.

3. The Carded Parcel Forum was established as a result of consultation between Australia Post and POAAL rather than as a result of complaints from any individual licensees. It was formed in recognition of the challenges being faced by Australia Post's retail network in handling the increase in carded article numbers and the benefits that could be achieved through a forum with a dedicated focus on resolving issues relating to carded articles.

4. As the parcel business is still experiencing rapid growth, it is intended that the Carded Parcel Forum will continue to meet periodically to discuss issues and opportunities relating to the handling of carded articles.

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Additional Estimates Hearings February 2013
Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio
Australia Post

5. The Carded Parcel Forum has met on 12 occasions since its formation.

6. Meetings are typically in the order of 2 hours in duration.

7. The Carded Parcel Forum discusses operational issues and opportunities relating to carded articles and has contributed to key initiatives such as the:
    a. Introduction of formal by-pass arrangements where outlets reach site storage capacity
    b. Establishment of dedicated arrangements for the handling of oversize items in metropolitan areas which avoids the involvement of retail outlets
    c. Rollout of handheld scanners to LPOs
    d. Provision of parcel trolleys to LPOs at a subsidised price

8. The Carded Parcel Forum has made recommendations relating to key initiatives such as those listed in reply to part 7.

9. See reply to part 4.

10. The Carded Parcel Forum has been able to provide important input to Australia Post on operational issues and opportunities relating to the handling of carded articles within its retail network. The key initiatives identified at point 7 have assisted all outlets in its retail network in the handling of carded articles.

Question No: 88

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Albion Post Office Closure

Senator Birmingham asked:
During the February 2013 Estimates the following exchange occurred (page 68);
> **"Senator BOYCE:** Absolutely. Do you consult with local businesses and other stakeholders before you decide to close down a post office?
> **"Mr. Fahour:** We have what I consider to be one of the best consultative processes."
> And **"**We are prepared to be held to account to it."

Can you provide us a detailed list of every business in the catchment area of the Albion Post Office that Australia Post 'consulted with' in regard to the Albion closure?

Answer:
By way of background, since November 2011, Australia Post has rolled out nationally 23 new Business Hubs, which are designed to provide customer service, delivery, transport operations and sales together in one location, servicing business customers and offering a range of products and services specific to their needs.

As part of the Business Hubs consolidation program, the Albion Business Centre closed on 1 March 2013 due to declining customer patronage and low volumes of business customers transacting over the counter.

A range of actions were implemented to ensure that postal services continued to be provided to customers, including the following:

- The Albion Delivery Centre is continuing to operate from the current site;
- All Post Office Box customers received written correspondence to advise them that their Post Office Box would remain on site and that they would be able to continue to collect all mail and parcels from the facility;
- Plans are underway for the site to have minor renovations to increase their capacity to store carded parcels;
- The site is currently being assessed for parcel locker installation;
- Business customers serviced by the van fleet were not impacted as this service is now being provided from the Virginia Business Hub; and
- The local newsagency was approached prior to the Business Centre closure and plans are still underway to establish a Community Postal Agency in the main street of Albion. These plans were delayed as a result of the local newsagency relocating to new premises recently.

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2013

Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio

Australia Post

There are five outlets within three kilometres - Ascot LPO – 1.2km, Lutwyche Franchise – 1.5km, Newstead LPO – 1.6km, Clayfield LPO – 1.8km and Hamilton PO – 2.1km.

Regarding customer consultation, Australia Post is unable to provide the "detailed list" of the businesses involved because customer details are confidential.

Australia Post's Community Participation Commitment (CPC) details Australia Post's process for engaging with the community and other key stakeholders (including customers, staff, unions, federal/state members of parliament and local government) when planning changes to its retail network. The CPC is available online at **www.auspost.com.au**

Consistent with its CPC, Australia Post:

- Wrote to 116 local business customers on 20 August 2012 to advise them that their mail delivery and collection arrangements would be managed from the Virginia Business Hub, instead of the Albion Business Centre, from early 2013;
- Delivered a letter to all Post Office Box customers on 29 January 2013, which explained that there would be no changes to the current arrangements for the delivery of mail and parcels;
- Handed out a notice from 29 January 2013 onwards to all over the counter customers advising of the front counter closure, the location of nearby outlets, with local staff on hand to offer assistance and advice on any future postal requirements;
- Approached 22 SMB customers who lodged mail over the counter and offered a daily mail collection via the van fleet. To date, 3 customers have accepted the offer; and
- Provided a fax order form to an additional 40+ SMB customers to enable them to receive stock deliveries via the van fleet.

Question No: 89

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Express Post

Senator Boyce asked:
1. How many of your post offices do not have the capacity to provide a 'track and trace' facility for parcels, registered and certified mail and express post services?
2. How many postal addresses can you NOT provide an 'Express Post' service between? Please provide a complete list.
3. How many postal addresses can you provide an 'Express Post' service between? Please provide a complete list.
4. Does or has Australia Post ever sold an Express Post service for mail between two points that cannot fulfil the product service description?
5. As part of the Express Post service that is widely advertised a tracking system is offered. Technically, exactly how does this service operate?
6. Some of your own staff has described this tracking system as "not a proper tracking system.' Can a customer ring and find out exactly where a parcel is at any given time, especially when the parcel hasn't arrived at its destination in the promised 24 hours?
7. Has Australia Post charged customers for a service that includes a tracking system when the tracking system would not operate on the mail route required by the customer?
8. What provisions do you have to compensate customers if they discovered they'd paid for a service that wasn't provided?

Answer:
1. By way of clarification, Australia Post does not promote the services in question - barcoded parcels, Registered Post and Express Post - as providing full "track and trace". Australia Post promotes the services as providing "tracking" capability, with tracking events varying according to the service used and how the article is lodged and delivered. To assist customers, full details of the types of tracking events applicable to specific services are made available online at **www.auspost.com.au**

   In so far as post offices are concerned, while all post offices have the capability to *record* the delivery of barcoded parcels, Registered Post articles and Express Post articles, approximately 237 do not currently have the capability to provide a delivery *scan* for these articles. These post offices will receive scanners progressively throughout 2013.

2&3. Coverage of the Express Post national and state guaranteed next business day delivery networks is determined by postcode, not postal address. A full list of postcodes included in the current Express Post guaranteed networks is attached.

4&8. By "product service description" Australia Post assumes Senator Boyce is referring to the Express Post next business day delivery guarantee, which only applies to articles posted within the national and state guaranteed next business day delivery networks. To assist customers, full details of the postcodes within the guaranteed networks are available online at **www.auspost.com.au**

   In so far as compensation is concerned, if an eligible Express Post article (i.e. one that is posted within a guaranteed network, correctly addressed and lodged by the required time) is not delivered next business day as guaranteed, Australia Post will provide the customer with another prepaid product or refund of postage on the provision of a postage receipt.

5. Tracking capability is a core feature of the Express Post service. Each item has a unique barcode and identification number that is retained by the customer. The number of times an article is scanned will vary according to how the article is lodged and delivered. As a minimum, an Express Post article lodged at an Australia Post outlet for delivery within a guaranteed network will be scanned at lodgement and delivery.

6. All staff should have a clear understanding of the tracking events applicable to specific services. A customer can track their article using Australia Post's online tracking tool or by calling its Customer Contact Centre on 13 7678.

7. No. Tracking events are available on all routes within the Express Post guaranteed next-business-day delivery network.

National Interstate Guaranteed Network

Next business day delivery to and from places listed below

Location	Current Network Postcodes
Canberra	0200-0250; 2600-2639; 2900-2920
Sydney and Suburbs	1000-1920; 2000-2249; 2555-2574; 2740-2786
Gosford Region	2250-2265
Newcastle	2280-2300; 2302-2310
Wollongong Area	2500-2530
Melbourne and Suburbs	3000-3210; 3335-3338; 3340#; 3427-3429; 3750#, 3755#; 3757#; 3765-3767; 3782; 3785-3796; 3800-3809; 3810# 3910-3915; 3930-3934; 3975-3977#; 8000-8899
Geelong and Suburbs	3211-3220
Bendigo	3550; 3552-3556
Ballarat	3350; 3353-3356
Shepparton	3629-3632#
Seymour	3660-3661
Morwell	3825; 3840-3844
Brisbane	4000-4209
Gold Coast	2484-2490; 4210-4299; 9726; 9728; 9729
Booval/Ipswich Areas	4300-4305
City of Toowoomba	4350; 4352*
Strathpine/Caboolture	4500-4510; 4520
Sunshine Coast Areas	4550-4601
Maryborough City	4650#
Hervey Bay City	4655#
Bundaberg City	4670#
Adelaide	5000-5199; 5800-5999
Hobart Area	7000-7019; 7050-7053; 7055;7892
Launceston	7248-7325
From all places listed above to - Perth CBD	6000-6005; 6800-6899
Only from Perth CBD to	
Canberra CBD	2600; 2601
Sydney CBD	1000-1299; 2000-2009
Melbourne CBD	3000-3010; 8000-8010
Brisbane CBD	4000-4004
Adelaide CBD	5000-5005; 5800-5879
Hobart CBD	7000-7003
Launceston CBD	7250

\# Service guaranteed in townships only in these postcodes

* Service guaranteed to Mail Centre Post Office Boxes only

Current 8/03/2013

Express Post State Network

NSW State Network

Next business day delivery from Sydney and suburbs (1000-1920;2000-2249; 2555-2574; 2740-2786)
to all locations listed below; and from all locations listed below to Sydney and suburbs.

Location	Postcodes
Sydney and suburbs	1000-1920; 2000-2249; 2555-2574; 2740-2786
Canberra Region	0200-0250; 2600-2639;2900-2920
Albury/Lavington/Woodonga	2640-2641‡ ; 2708‡; 3689-3690
Armidale/University of New England	2350-2351
Bathurst Region	2787-2820; 2845-2877
Casino	2468; 2470
Coffs Harbour	2450
Dubbo	2826; 2830
Gosford Region	2250-2265
Goulburn Region	2580-2589; 2591-2599
Grafton/South Grafton	2460
Griffith	2680
Kempsey	2440; 2442
Lismore	2480
Newcastle Region	2266-2338; 2413-2430
Port Macquarie	2444
Riverina Region	2590; 2649-2650; 2653; 2665-2672; 2678; 2720-2730

Note: Outside metropolitan areas guaranteed service is to and from townships only.

Victoria State Network

Next business day delivery between the locations listed below.

Location	Postcodes
All places in Victoria‡	3000-3999; 8000-8999
Albury/Lavington	2640-2641; 2708

Next business day delivery is also available between Wodonga (3689-3690) and
Sydney and suburbs (1000-1920; 2000-2249; 2555-2574; 2740-2786).
‡ Next day delivery to roadside addresses or offshore islands is not guaranteed.

Canberra Region Network

Next business day delivery between all locations listed below.

Location	Postcodes
Canberra Region	0200-0250; 2600-2639; 2900-2920
Goulbourn Region	2580-2589; 2591-2599
Southern Highlands	2575-2579

Tasmania State Network

Next business day delivery between the locations listed below.

Location	Postcodes
Between all places in Tasmania	7000-7999‡

‡ Next day delivery to roadside addresses or offshore islands is not guaranteed.

Queensland State Network

Next business day delivery between the locations listed below.

Location	Postcodes
Brisbane and suburbs	4000-4209
Gold Coast	4210-4299; 2484-2490; 9726; 9728-9729
Goodna/Booval/Ipswich/Boonah/Lockyer Valley	4300-4349
Toowoomba Area≠	4350-4383; 4385-4428; 4486-4487; 4494-4498; 4602-4618
Strathpine/Caboolture/Sunshine Coast	4500-4601
Maryborough/Burnett/Bundaberg	4619-4676‡
Gladstone	4680#
Rockhampton/Yeppoon	4700; 4701; 4702Ω; 4703
Mackay	4740#
Townsville/Bluewater	4810-4815; 4817; 4818#
Cairns	4870#
Casino	2470#

 # Service guaranteed to township only. Ω Service guaranteed to Mail Centre Post Office Boxes only.
‡ Next business day delivery to roadside addresses or offshore islands is not guaranteed.
≠ Next business day delivery to remote areas and roadside delivery addresses is not guaranteed.
For complete network details, please ask retail outlet staff.

WA State Network

Next business day delivery from Perth CBD and suburbs (6000-6214;6800-6999) to all locations listed below; and from all locations listed below to Perth CBD and suburbs.

Location	Postcodes
Perth and suburbs	6000-6214; 6800-6999

Many country centres including Albany, Augusta, Bunbury, Busselton,Esperance, Geraldton, Kalbarri, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Katanning, Leinster, Leonora, Manjimup, Margaret River, Menzies, Merredin, Moora, Mullewa, Narrogin, Norseman, Port/South Hedland, Ravensthorpe, Roebourne and Walpole≠.

≠Next business day delivery to remote areas and roadside delivery addresses is
not guaranteed. For complete network details, please ask retail outlet staff

SA State Network

Next business day delivery from Adelaide and suburbs (5000-5199; 5800-5999) to all locations listed below; to Adelaide and suburbs.

Location	Postcodes
Adelaide and suburbs	5000-5199; 5800-5999

Most country centres throughout South Australia, including Adelaide Hills, Barossa Valley, Murray Mallee, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Port Pirie, Riverland, South East, Whyalla and Yorke Peninsula, also Broker
Hill (NSW) 2880.

Current 8/03/2013

Question No: 90

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Gun Freight Policy

Senator Scullion asked:
1.   Does Australia Post have a policy of not carrying or freighting guns?
2.   What is the rationale for this policy?
3.   Does the policy only apply to guns or to gun parts as well – for instance parts of rifles like springs?
4.   Please provide a copy of this policy.

Answer:
Australia Post's policies on the carriage of firearms and firearm parts in the domestic and international mail are detailed in the Dangerous & Prohibited Goods & Packaging Post Guide and International Post Guide, both of which are available online at www.auspost.com.au. The policies mirror the requirements of the various state *Firearms/Weapons Acts* and international airline restrictions.

Question No: 91

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staffing

Senator Birmingham asked:
1. How many ongoing staff have been recruited this financial year to date? What classification are these staff?
2. How many non-ongoing positions exist or have been created this financial year to date? What classification are these staff?
3. This financial year to date, how many employees have been employed on contract and what is the average length of their employment period?

Answer:
1. 862 Permanent staff have been recruited this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), with the following classifications.

Administrative, Contract and IT (All Levels)	217
Customer Contact Centre (All Levels)	166
Postal Services (Including Delivery Managers, Postal Delivery Officers, Postal/Parcel Services Officer, Drivers, Sorters, Transport, Technical Services, and Trainees, etc)	351
Retail	128
Total	**862**

2. 140 Fixed Term Positions have been created this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), with similar classifications to those listed above.

3. 173 staff have been employed on contract this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013) and their average length of employment is 3 months.

Question No: 92

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staffing

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How many ongoing staff have left the department/agency this financial year to date? What classification were these staff?

2. How many non-ongoing staff left the department/agency this financial year to date? What classification were these staff?

3. How many contract staff left the department/agency in the year this financial year to date? What classification were these staff?

Answer:

1. 1,557 Permanent staff have left the organisation this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), with the following classifications.

Administrative, Contract and IT (All Levels)	151
Customer Contact Centre (All Levels)	128
Postal Services (Including Delivery Managers, Postal Delivery Officers, Postal/Parcel Services Officer, Drivers, Sorters, Transport, Technical Services, and Trainees, etc)	1,029
Retail	249
Total	**1557**

2.   473 Fixed Term staff left the organisation this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), with the
      following classifications.

Administrative, Contract and IT (All Levels)	17
Customer Contact Centre (All Levels)	1
Postal Services (Including Delivery Managers, Postal Delivery Officers, Postal/Parcel Services Officer, Drivers, Sorters, Transport, Technical Services, and Trainees, etc)	379
Retail	76
Total	**473**

3.   76 Contract staff left the organisation this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), with the
      following classifications.

Administrative, Contract and IT (All Levels)	63
Postal Services (Including Delivery Managers, Postal Delivery Officers, Postal/Parcel Services Officer, Drivers, Sorters, Transport, Technical Services, and Trainees, etc)	13
Total	**76**

Question No: 93

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staffing

Senator Birmingham asked:
Are there any plans for staff reduction? If so, please advise details including if there is a reduction target, how this will be achieved, and if any services/programs will be cut. If there are plans for staff reductions, please give the reason why these are happening.

Answer:
There are no plans to reduce staff numbers. Staff numbers will continue to reflect the change and growth areas of the business. The Future Ready Skills Program investment of $20m over three years will support training and skills development of staff that may be in roles that are not needed in the long-term and also support them if they do need to leave the business.

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Question No: 94

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Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Making the Public Service More Efficient

Senator Birmingham asked:
Please provide an update of the savings achieved through pursuing further efficiencies in the way the public service operates (see media release by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Special Minister of State of 25 September 2012 http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_1982012.html).
In addition, please provide the following detail:

1. Can you quantify the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates for reductions in air travel?
2. Has there been a reduction in business flights? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
3. Has there been a reduction in the use of external consultants and contractors? Has this impacted on the Department/agency, and how? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
4. Provide an update of moving recruitment advertising online. Is any recruitment still in printed materials, and if yes, why? What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?
5. Has the department/agency reduced its printing costs? If no, why not? Have printing costs increased, and if yes why and how much? Has the five per cent savings target been achieved – if yes, how, or if it will not, why not?   What are the estimated savings for each year over the forward estimates?

Answer:
The Media Release in question "Making the Public Service more efficient" relates to budget-funded departments and agencies and, therefore, is not relevant to Australia Post.

Question No: 95

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Printing Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:
How many documents (include the amount of copies) have been printed this financial year to date? How many of these printed documents were also published online?

Answer:
Australia Post has had numerous documents printed this FYTD, some of which are published on its website www.auspost.com.au. The specific details sought about documents printed across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 96

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Graduate Recruitment

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How much has been spent on 2014 graduate recruitment to date? Please itemise and detail costs.
2. Has any travel been incurred for 2014 Graduate Recruitment?

Answer:

1. Australia Post has spent approximately $15,000 on 2014 graduate recruitment in the FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), on online Graduate Publications.

2. A small amount of travel (taxi) costs have been incurred on 2014 graduate recruitment through staff attendance at Melbourne-based universities for career-related events.

Question No: 97

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Graduate Training

Senator Birmingham asked:
How much was spent on 2013 Graduate Training? Provide details of what training was provided, why and the estimated cost for each.

Answer:
No money has been spent on 2013 Graduate Training (as at 31 January 2013).

Question No: 98

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Government Advertising

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What was the total cost of all advertising for the financial year to date?
2. Is the advertising campaign or non-campaign advertising? Provide details of each advertising, including the program the advertising was for, the total spend and the business that provided the advertising services.
3. Has the Department of Finance and Deregulation provided any advice about the advertising? Provide details of each advertising item.
4. Has the Peer Review Group (PRG) and/or Independent Communications Committee (ICC) provided any advice about the advertising? Provide details of each advertising item.
5. Did the Advertising comply with the Guidelines on Information and Advertising Campaigns by Australian Government Departments and Agencies? Provide the details for each advertising item.
6. Provide details for any other communications program, including details of the program, the total spend and the business that provided the communication services.
7. What advertising – Campaign and Non-Campaign – and other communications programs is the Department/Agency undertaking, or are planning to undertake?

Answer:
Australia Post has not undertaken and is not proposing to undertake any "Advertising or Communications Programs" as defined in QoN 59 – Budget Estimates Hearing May 2010.

Question No: 99

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Hospitality and Entertainment

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. Is the Department/Agency planning on reducing any of its spending on these items? If so, how will reductions be achieved and what are the estimated savings over each year of the forward estimates?
2. What entertainment spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
3. What hospitality spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
4. What is the Department/Agency's entertainment spend for this financial year to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
5. What is the Department/Agency's hospitality spend for this financial year to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.

Answer:

As a large commercially focussed Government Business Enterprise operating in a number of highly competitive markets, Australia Post engages in a broad range of business-related hospitality and entertainment activities across the corporation on an ongoing basis. These activities are aimed at strengthening existing customer relationships and developing potential ones. The specific details sought about hospitality and entertainment across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 100

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Meeting Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What meeting spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
2. What is the Department/Agency's meeting spend for this financial year to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events, including any catering and drinks costs.

Answer:

The specific details sought about meetings across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 101

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Program Launch Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What is the Department/Agency's program launch spend for 2011-12? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of each event including any catering and drinks costs.
2. What program launch spend is the Department/Agency's planning on spending? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events including any catering and drinks costs.
3. What is the Department/Agency's program launch spend for this financial year to date? Detail date, location, purpose and cost of all events, including any catering and drinks costs.

Answer:
Nil. Australia Post has not launched any Commonwealth programs as identified in the Department of Finance and Deregulation Central Budget Management System.

Question No: 102

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Freedom of Information

Senator Birmingham asked:
1. Has the department/agency received any updated advice on how to respond to FOI requests?
2. What is the total cost to the department to process FOI requests for this financial year to date?
3. How many FOI requests has the Department received for this financial year to date? How many requests have been denied and how many have been granted?
4. Has the department failed to meet the processing times outlined in the FOI Act for any requests? If so, how many and why?
5. Do any of these requests remain outstanding? If so, how many and why?

Answer:
1. At various times, Australia Post has sought expert external advice on technical aspects of the Freedom of Information Act, however, not within the last 12 months.

2. The total cost to process FOI requests FYTD is approximately $71,000.

3. In the FYTD, Australia Post has received 121 applications, granted access in full to 82 applications, access in part to 13 applications and refused access to 26 applications.

4. In the FYTD, Australia Post has failed to meet the required processing times on two occasions.

5. No.

Question No: 103

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Consultancies

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How many consultancies have been undertaken this financial year to date? Identify the name of the consultant, the subject matter of the consultancy, the duration and cost of the arrangement, and the method of procurement (i.e. open tender, direct source, etc). Also include total value for all consultancies.
2. How many consultancies are planned for this calendar year? Have these been published in your Annual Procurement Plan (APP) on the AusTender website and if not why not? In each case please identify the subject matter, duration, cost and method of procurement as above, and the name of the consultant if known.

Answer:

1. Australia Post has engaged 3 major management consultants (i.e. those costing $250k or more), at a total cost of $9.7m in the FYTD (as at 31 January 2013). Specific details about individual consultants are commercial-in-confidence.
2. Australia Post's reporting systems do not identify consultancies planned for the remainder of the 2013 calendar year. As a Government Business Enterprise, Australia Post is not required to produce or publish an Annual Tender Plan on the AusTrade website). Specific details about individual consultants are commercial-in-confidence.

Question No: 104

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Media Monitoring

Senator Birmingham asked:

What was the total cost of media monitoring services, including press clippings, electronic media transcripts etcetera, provided to the department/agency for this financial year to date?

    a. Which agency or agencies provided these services?

    b. What is the estimated budget to provide these services for the year 2012-13?

    c. What has been spent providing these services this financial year to date?

Answer:

The total cost of media monitoring services for this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013) was $113,750.

    a. Media Monitors.
    b. Approximately $250,000.
    c. $113,750.

Question No: 105

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Social Media

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. Has there been any changes to department and agency social media or protocols about staff access and usage of Youtube; online social media, such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter; and access to online discussions forums and blogs since May 2012 Budget Estimates? If yes, please explain and provide copies of any advice that has been issue.
2. Does the department/agency monitor usage of social media?
   (a) If yes, provide details of the usage (for example details could include average hours per employee, hours when usage peaks).
   (b) Has there been a change to the department/agency protocols due to staff usage?
   (c) If no, why not? Will the department/agency monitor usage in the future?
3. Does social media impact on employee productivity? Provide details (details could include increased internet usage in general or increased internet usage in standard business hours).

Answer:

1. No change since the May 2012 Budget Estimates.

2. (a&b) Australia Post does not/will not monitor usage of social media because staff cannot access these sites via the Australia Post network (excludes small online channel team who have access for the purposes of customer liaison).

3. Social media does not impact on employees productivity because staff cannot access these sites via the Australia Post network.

Question No: 106

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Internet

Senator Birmingham asked:

Has the Department experienced any internet problems, such as but not limited to slow internet, or internet blackouts? If yes, what was the reason for this? Did it impact the Minister's office?

Answer:

Australia Post has received a stable internet service from Telstra with no major problems reported this financial year. One incident was experienced on 22 November 2012 when a fire at the Warrnambool Telstra Exchange knocked out data and voice communications to multiple Telstra customers, including 31 post offices and 3 delivery centres in the region.

Question No: 107

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Staff Amenities

Senator Birmingham asked:
 What amenities are provided to staff? Provide a list.

Answer:
Australia Post provides a range of workplace amenities for the health, safety and well-being of its staff – which may include canteens, showers/changing rooms, kitchens/break-out areas, first aid rooms, bicycle lockers etc – depending on the type of facility. The specific details sought about workplace amenities across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 108

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Coffee Machines

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. Has the department/agency purchased coffee machines for staff useage? If yes, provide a list that includes the type of coffee machine, the cost, the amount, and any ongoing costs such as purchase of coffee or coffee pods and when the machine was purchased.
2. Why were coffee machines purchased?
3. Has there been a noticeable difference in staff productivity since coffee machines were purchased? Are staff leaving the office premises less during business hours as a result?
4. Where did the funding for the coffee machines come from?
5. Who is responsible for the maintenance of the coffee machines? How much was spent on maintenance in this financial year to date, include a list of what maintenance has been undertaken. Where does the funding for maintenance come from?
6. What are the ongoing costs of the coffee machine, such as the cost of coffee?
7. Does the department/agency rent coffee machines for staff useage? If yes, provide a list that includes the type of coffee machine, the cost, the amount, and any ongoing costs such as purchase of coffee or coffee pods and when the machine was purchased.
8. Why are coffee machines rented?
9. Has there been a noticeable difference in staff productivity since coffee machines were rented? Are staff leaving the office premises less during business hours as a result?
10. Where does the funding for the coffee machines come from?
11. Who is responsible for the maintenance of the coffee machines? How much was spent on maintenance in this financial year to date, include a list of what maintenance has been undertaken. Where does the funding for maintenance come from?
12. What are the ongoing costs of the coffee machine, such as the cost of coffee?

Answer:

Yes, managers at the local level may purchase coffee machines for staff usage. The specific details sought about coffee machines across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Additional Estimates Hearings February 2013

Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy Portfolio

Australia Post

Question No: 109

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Contractors

Senator Birmingham asked:

For this financial year to date:

a. Has the department/agency ever employed Hawker Britton in any capacity or is it considering employing Hawker Britton? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

b. Has the department/agency ever employed Shannon's Way in any capacity or is it considering employing Shannon's Way? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

c. Has the department/agency ever employed John Utting & UMR Research Group in any capacity or is it considering employing John Utting & UMR Research Group? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

d. Has the department/agency ever employed McCann-Erickson in any capacity or is it considering employing McCann-Erickson? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

e. Has the department/agency ever employed Cutting Edge in any capacity or is it considering employing Cutting Edge? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

f. Has the department/agency ever employed Ikon Communications in any capacity or is it considering employing Ikon Communications? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

g. Has the department/agency ever employed CMAX Communications in any capacity or is it considering employing CMAX Communications? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

h. Has the department/agency ever employed Boston Consulting Group in any capacity or is it considering employing Boston Consulting Group? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost).

i. Has the department/agency ever employed McKinsey & Company in any capacity or is it considering employing McKinsey & Company? If yes, provide details.

j. What contractors have been employed by the department/agency? If yes, provide details (including the work undertaken and the cost)

Answer:

Since 1 July 2012, Australia Post has engaged McCann Erickson to perform media buying on behalf of Australia Post. Specific details are commercial-in-confidence.

Question No: 110

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Grants

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. Could the department/agency provide a list of all grants, including ad hoc and one-off grants for this financial year to date? Please provide details of the recipients, the amount, the intended use of the grants and what locations have benefited from the grants.
2. Have all grant agreement details been published on its website within the required timeframe? If not, provide details.
3. Provide a list of grants that your department/agency administers that had uncommitted grants funding reduced as per the statement by the Finance Minister on 22 October 2012 (see http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2012/mr_2102012.html). How much was funding reduced for grant?

Answer:

As a Government Business Enterprise, Australia Post is not subject to the Commonwealth Grant Guidelines.

Question No: 111

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Government Payment of Accounts

Senator Birmingham asked:

For this financial year to date, has the department/agency paid its accounts to contractors/consultants etc in accordance with Government policy in terms of time for payment (i.e.within 30 days)?

1. If not, why not? Provide details, including what has been the timeframe for payment of accounts? Please provide a breakdown, average statistics etc as appropriate to give insight into how this issue is being approached)
2. For accounts not paid within 30 days, is interest being paid on overdue amounts and if so how much has been paid by the portfolio/department agency for the current financial year and the previous financial year?
3. Where interest is being paid, what rate of interest is being paid and how is this rate determined?

Answer:

As a Government Business Enterprise, Australia Post is not subject to the Government's policy requirements for the payment of contractor/consultant accounts.

Question No: 112

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Stationery Requirements

Senator Birmingham asked:
What are the department/agency's stationery costs for the financial year to date?

Answer:
The specific details sought about stationery costs across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 113

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Media Subscriptions

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What pay TV subscriptions does your department/agency have?
   (a) Please provide a list of what channels and the reason for each channel.
   (b) What is the cost for this financial year to date?
2. What newspaper subscriptions does your department/agency have?
   (a) Please provide a list of newspaper subscriptions and the reason for each.
   (b) What is the cost for this financial year to date?
3. What magazine subscriptions does your department/agency have?
   (a) Please provide a list of magazine subscriptions and the reason for each.
   (b) What is the cost for this financial year to date?

Answer:

The specific details sought about media subscriptions across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 114

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Travel Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. For the financial year to date, please detail all travel for Departmental officers. Please include a total cost plus a breakdown that include airfares (and type of airfare), accommodation, meals and other travel expenses (such as incidentals). Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
2. What travel is planned for the rest of this financial year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
3. What travel is planned for the rest of this calendar year? Also provide a reason and brief explanation for the travel.
4. Are the Government's Lowest Practical Fare travel policy for Domestic Air Travel
5. (Finance Circular No. 2009/10) and Best Fare of the Day for International Air Travel
6. (Finance Circular No. 2009/11) guidelines being followed? How is the department/agency following the advice? How is this monitored? If the guidelines are not being followed, please explain why.
7. Are lounge memberships provided to any employees? If yes, what lounge memberships, to how many employees and their classification, the reason for the provision of lounge membership and the total costs of the lounge memberships.
8. When SES employees travel, do any support or administrative staff (such as an Executive Assistant) travel with them? If yes, provide details of why such a staff member is needed and the costs of the support staff travel.
9. Does the department/agency elect to offset emissions for employees work related travel? If yes, what is the cost?

Answer:

1-3. Australia Post spent a total of $2.9m on air travel and $2.2m on accommodation for business-related purposes FYTD (as at 31 January 2013). The specific details sought about travel/future travel across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is unable to provide the information requested.

4-6. These questions relate to government employees and are, therefore, not relevant to Australia Post.

7.   Australia Post Executive General Managers and Board of Directors are entitled to lounge membership. For other employees, membership may be approved by the relevant Executive General Manager where it is expected the employee will be required to travel frequently as part of their position. Membership ceases on termination of employment.

Consistent with normal business practice, Australia Post offers this benefit in recognition of the inconvenience and personal sacrifice involved when undertaking frequent business-related travel. The specific details sought about lounge membership across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

8.   This question relates to government employees and is, therefore, not relevant to Australia Post.

9.   No.

Question No: 115

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Legal Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services for this financial year to date within the department/agency? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
2. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services this financial year to date from the Australian Government Solicitor? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
3. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services this financial year to date from private firms? Please provide a list of each service and costs.
4. What sum did each portfolio department and agency spend on legal services this financial year to date from other sources? Please provide a list of each service and costs.

Answer:
1. Approximately $1.4m in staff related costs (FYTD 31 January 2013)
2. Nil (FYTD 31 January 2013)
3. Approximately $4.1m (FYTD 31 January 2013)
4. Approximately $0.6m (FYTD 31 January 2013)

Question No: 116

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Education Expenses

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What is the department/agency's guidelines on study?

2. For this financial year to date, detail all education expenses (i.e. in house courses and tertiary studies) for each portfolio department and agency. Include what type of course, the total cost, cost per participant, the employment classification of each participant, how many participants and the amount of study leave granted to each participant (provide a breakdown for each employment classification). Also include the reason for the study and how it is beneficial for the department/agency.

Answer:

1. All permanent employees are eligible to apply for benefits under Australia Post's Assistance Study Scheme. The study must be identified as being a developmental need and must be approved by the relevant manager. Once approved, the employee is eligible for financial assistance and/or granting of leave.

2. The specific details sought about education expenses across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 117

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Executive Coaching

Senator Birmingham asked:

1) In relation to executive coaching and/or other leadership training services purchased by Australia Post for senior management or the executive team, please provide the following information for this financial year to date:
   a. Total spending on these services
   b. The number of employees offered these services and their employment classification
   c. The number of employees who have utilised these services, their employment classification and how much study leave each employee was granted (provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   d. The names of all service providers engaged
2) For each service purchased form a provider listed under (iv), please provide:
   a. The name and nature of the service purchased
   b. Whether the service is one-on-one or group based
   c. The number of employees who received the service and their employment classification
   d. The total number of hours involved for all employees (please provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   e. The total amount spent on the service
   f. A description of the fees charged (i.e. per hour, complete package)
3) Where a service was provided at any location other than the department or agency's own premises, please provide:
   a. The location used
   b. The number of employees who took part on each occasion (please provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   c. The total number of hours involved for all employees who took part (please provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
4) Any costs the department or agency's incurred to use the location

Answer:
The specific details sought about executive coaching across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 118

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Media Training

Senator Birmingham asked:

1) In relation to media training services purchased by each department/agency, please provide the following information for this financial year to date:
   a. Total spending on these services
   b. The number of employees offered these services and their employment classification
   c. The number of employees who have utilised these services, their employment classification and how much study leave each employee was granted (provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   d. The names of all service providers engaged

2) For each service purchased form a provider listed under (d), please provide:
   a. The name and nature of the service purchased
   b. Whether the service is one-on-one or group based
   c. The number of employees who received the service and their employment classification (provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   d. The total number of hours involved for all employees (provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   e. The total amount spent on the service
   f. A description of the fees charged (i.e. per hour, complete package)

3) Where a service was provided at any location other than the department or agency's own premises, please provide:
   a. The location used
   b. The number of employees who took part on each occasion
   c. The total number of hours involved for all employees who took part (provide a breakdown for each employment classification)
   d. Any costs the department or agency's incurred to use the location

Answer:
1)   a) $2,500.
        b) Eight. Australia Post does not use the public service employment classification system.
        c) Three. No study leave was granted.
        d) Katrina Byers Consulting.

2)   a) Television and radio media training.
        b) Small group based with one-on-one break-out sessions.
        c) Three employees. Australia Post does not use the public service employment
        classification system.
        d) Three hours.
        e) $2,500.
        f) Complete package.

3)   a) In-house.
        b) Three.
        c) Three hours. Australia Post does not use the public service employment classification
        system.
        d) None.

Question No: 119

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Paid Parental Leave

Senator Birmingham asked:
1. Please list how many staff in each department and agency are eligible to receive payments under the Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme?
2. For this financial year to date list which department/agency is providing its employees with payments under the Government's Paid Parental Leave scheme? Please list how many staff and their classification are in receipt of these payments.
3. What is the paid parental scheme offered by each department and agency? How many staff have used the scheme this financial year to date.

Answer:
1. All employees who become the primary carer of a newborn or recently adopted child and who also meet the Government's Paid Parental Leave (PPL) scheme eligibility criteria are eligible to receive payment under the Government's PPL scheme. As eligibility is based on primary care responsibility, the number of eligible staff cannot be identified.

2. The following table details the number and classification of employees who are currently in receipt of PPL payments (as at 31 January 2013):

Admin, Contract and IT	39
Customer Contact	10
Postal Services (including Mail Officer, Parcel Post Officer, Post Delivery Officer, Snr Post Delivery Officer, Delivery Manager and Team Manager)	67
Retail Services (includes Postal Manager, Post Services Officer, Snr Post Services Officer and Sprintpak Officer)	54
Transport (including Post Transport Officer and Post Transport Coordinator)	4
TOTAL	**174**

3. Employees with 12 months qualifying service are entitled to full pay for the first 14 weeks of Maternity Leave. They can elect to take this at half pay for 28 weeks.
   For this FYTD (as at 31 January 2013), 296 employees have received maternity leave payments under this scheme.

Question No: 120

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Corporate Cars

Senator Birmingham asked:
1.   How many cars are owned by each department/agency?
2.   Where is the car/s located?
3.   What is the car/s used for?
4.   What is the cost of each car for this financial year to date?
5.   How far did each car travel this financial year to date?

Answer:
1&3.   As at 31 January 2013, Australia Post owns 423 cars, which are used for a variety of
        business-related purposes.

2,4&5. The details sought about corporate cars across the entire corporation are not captured on
        any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the
        information requested.

Question No: 121

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Taxi Costs

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How much did each department/agency spend on taxis this financial year to date? Provide a breakdown for each business group in each department/agency.

2. What are the reasons for the taxi costs?

Answer:

Australia Post spent a total of $1.2m on taxis in the FYTD (as at 31 January 2013) for business-related purposes. The details sought about taxi costs by business group across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 122

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Hire Cars

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How much did each department/agency spend on hire cars this financial year to date? Provide a breakdown of each business group in each department/agency.
2. What are the reasons for hire car costs?

Answer:

1&2   In limited circumstances, hire cars are used for business-related purposes. The specific details sought about hire car use across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 123

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Credit Cards

Senator Birmingham asked:
1) Provide a breakdown for each employment classification that has a corporate credit card.

2) Please update details of the following?
   a. What action is taken if the corporate credit card is misused?
   b. How is corporate credit card use monitored?
   c. What happens if misuse of a corporate credit card is discovered?
   d. Have any instances of corporate credit card misuse have been discovered? List staff classification and what the misuse was, and the action taken.
   e. What action is taken to prevent corporate credit card misuse?

Answer:
1) 2,575 – Managers (1,082) and Staff (1,493), as at 31 January 2013.

2) No change since Supplementary Budget Estimates (October 2012).

Question No: 124

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Provision of Equipment

Senator Birmingham asked:
Is electronic equipment (such as ipad, laptop, wireless card, vasco token, blackberry, mobile phone (list type if relevant), thumb drive) provided to department/agency staff? If yes provide details of what is provided, the purchase cost, the ongoing cost and a breakdown of what staff and staff classification receives it.

Answer:
Australia Post provides electronic equipment to staff for business-related purposes. The specific details sought about the provision of equipment across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 125

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Electricity Purchasing

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. What are the details of the department/agency electricity purchasing agreement?
2. What are the department/agency electricity costs for this financial year to date?

Answer:

1. Australia Post has three separate purchasing agreements for electricity as follows:

   Large sites

   Australia Post has negotiated calendar year contracts with a single supplier in individual states. This represents more than 50% of the total electricity consumed by the organisation.

   Small sites

   Australia Post negotiated a separate contract with a single supplier to cover the majority of sites such as retail outlets and delivery centres.

   Landlord sites

   Australia Post also pays electricity for a small number of sites where electricity is included as part of the contractual arrangement with a landlord and where Australia Post does not negotiate the price directly with the retailer.

2. Australia Post has spent $21.8m on electricity FYTD (as at 31 January 2013).

Question No: 126

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Briefings for the Australian Greens and Independents

Senator Birmingham asked:

1) Have any briefings and/or provision of information s been provided to the Australian Greens? If yes, please include:
   a. How are briefings requests commissioned?
   b. What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
   c. Provide details of what information has been provided and a copy of the information.
   d. Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provide details of what the requests were and why it could not proceed.
   e. How long is spent preparing and undertaking briefings/information requests for the Australian Greens? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.
2) Have any briefings and/or provision of information been provided to Independents? If yes, please include:
   a. How are briefings requests commissioned?
   b. What briefings have been undertaken? Provide details and a copy of each briefing.
   c. Provide details of what information has been provided and a copy of the information.
   d. Have any briefings request been unable to proceed? If yes, provide details of what the requests were and why it could not proceed.
   e. How long is spent preparing and undertaking briefings/information requests for the Independents? How many staff are involved and how many hours? Provide a breakdown for each employment classification.
   f. Which Independents have requested briefings and/or information?

Answer:
Australia Post has not provided any briefings for the Australian Greens or Independents.

Question No: 127

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Shredders

Senator Birmingham asked:

Has the department/agencies purchased any shredders this financial year? If yes, provide details of how many shredders were purchased, the cost of each shredder, why each new shredder was needed and the purpose for which the shredder is to be used.

Answer:

Australia Post purchases shredders for business-related purposes. The specific details sought about shredders across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 128

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Protective Security Policy Framework.

Senator Birmingham asked:
Provide an update for your department/agency, including what is your current compliance level, what are you doing to manage risk, what is being done to comply with the mandatory requirements and details of any department/agency specific policies and procedures.

Answer:
Although not formally obliged to comply with the Protective Security Policy Framework ("PSPF") Australia Post is fully supportive of the PSPF objectives, and has, for many years, sought to implement appropriate measures to effectively manage protective security risks arising from its operations;

In particular, Australia Post:

- Identifies and manages the Corporations overall risk profile and tolerances through a specialist Risk & Compliance function,
- Has developed an established and strong, whole-of-enterprise, security awareness and culture through the operations of its Security & Investigation group, and
- Identifies and manages information security maturity and capability through the activities managed by the office of the corporation's Chief Information Security Officer.

Through its established security framework, and through the activities of its Risk & Compliance, Security & Investigation, and Information Security functions, Australia Post has appropriately identified security risks arising from its operations, and has implemented appropriate controls to manage those risks.

Efforts to enhance the enterprise security framework are evolving. By way of example, Australia Post has recently released an enhanced Information Security awareness campaign under the banner of 'Secure at Post'.

At present, Australia Post believes that it is compliant with many of the PSPF directions and policies.

Question No: 129

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Office Locations

Senator Birmingham asked:

Please provide a list of all office locations for all departments and agencies within the portfolio by:
    a. Department/Agency;
    b. Location;
    c. Leased or Owned;
    d. Size;
    e. Number of Staff at each location and classification;
    f. If rented, the amount and breakdown of rent per square metre;
    g. If owned, the value of the building;
    h. Depreciation of buildings that are owned;
    i. Type of functions and work undertaken.

Answer:

Australia Post occupies a large number of offices around Australia, including an administrative office in every capital city and a national network of 4428 retail outlets (as at 30 June 2012), the locations of which are available at www.auspost.com.au. The specific details sought about offices across the entire corporation are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.

Question No: 130

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Communications Staff

Senator Birmingham asked:

1) For all departments and agencies, please provide – in relation to all public relations, communications and media staff – the following:

   (a) By Department or agency:
     i.   How many ongoing staff, the classification, the type of work they undertake and their location.
     ii.   How many non-ongoing staff, their classification, type of work they undertake and their location
     iii.   How many contractors, their classification, type of work they undertake and their location
     iv.   How many are graphic designers?
     v.   How many are media managers?
     vi.   How many organise events?

2) Do any departments/agencies have independent media studios? If yes, why? When was it established? What is the set up cost? What is the ongoing cost? How many staff work there and what are their classifications?

Answer:

(1) i,ii&iii:

    As at 31 January 2013, 23 communications staff service the business and workforce communications needs of a national workforce of more than 33,000. Two Heads of Business Communications manage small teams that work across Australia Post's Business Units – Communication Management Services, Parcel and Express Services and Retail Services, and three Senior Business Communications Managers work with business support functions. There are currently two contract staff working in the team, the remainder are ongoing employees. Australia Post does not use the public service employment classification system and is, therefore, unable to provide this information.

(1)iv:

    Australia Post employs one graphic designer in the communications team.

(1)v:

A media team of three employees manage all inquiries to the national media line. One position is currently vacant.

(1)vi:

Australia Post has one event manager in the communications team.

2.   Australia Post does not have an independent media studio.

Question No: 131

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Grant Freeze

Senator Birmingham asked:

1. How much has grant funding been reduced across the department/agency as a result of the grants freeze?
2. Please detail all variations to grants (ie reductions, rephasing etc) that have occurred this financial year.
3. Has the department/agency been required to find any other savings in this financial year? Please detail all such savings.

Answer:

As a Government Business Enterprise, Australia Post was not involved in the Australian Government's grant freeze.

Question No: 132

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Licensees

Senator Boyce asked:
In the Estimates hearings of February 12 the following exchange took place

"Senator McKENZIE: In terms of responding to some representations made to me and other senators by licensees and noting your desire within your annual report for a deeper understanding of their needs, I am wondering if you can respond to claims that the goals seem to shift quite often within their interaction with Australia Post. Secondly, I wonder how you assess your relationships with your licensees?
Ms Corbett: Certainly. With regards to how we support our licensees from a physical support perspective, we break up into geographical areas. We have a national retail network partnership area and we also have people who represent and work with those licensees on a weekly basis, so in terms of how we communicate we have a monthly site visit program that is in place and Australia Post staff who actually then look at and support our licensees with everything from how that outlet is performing to what their KPIs are and what promotional campaigns are underway."

1. Exactly how many of these monthly visits have your representatives undertaken in the past 2 years?
2. How many staff do you have that participate in site visits?
3. Please provide a comprehensive list of LPOs visited during this period detailing dates, times and duration of each visit.
4. Who pays for the installation, fit out, servicing/maintance and provision of post office boxes at LPOs?

Answer:
1. Network Managers maintain a monthly program of planned site visits to LPOs within their network. In addition to these programmed visits, ad-hoc visits will be undertaken on an as-required basis. How often an individual LPO is visited during the course of a year is subject to factors such as individual licensee support needs, outlet customer numbers and the physical location of the LPO.
   The details sought about outlet visits to LPOs are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.
2. Around 40 staff participate in these planned LPO site visits including the State Retail Network Partnerships Managers, LPO Area Managers and LPO Network Managers.
3. The details sought about outlet visits to LPOs are not captured on any central database. As such, Australia Post is not in a position to provide the information requested.
4. In the majority of cases, the licensees is responsible for all costs associated with the installation, fit out, servicing/ maintenance and provision of post office boxes.
   Licensees receive two separate payments from Australia Post for each post office box leased. The Post Office Box service fee, which provides for the selling, processing of mail into and the supply/ maintenance of the box and the mail management fee, which is a per delivery point payment.

Question No: 133

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Written

Topic: Licensees

Senator Boyce asked:

Again, in evidence at the Estimates hearings of February 12 of this year the following exchange took place;

"Senator BOYCE: Is every licensed post office in Australia undertaking trace and track of articles?

Ms Corbett: I am assuming that you mean: are they scanning items?

Senator BOYCE: Yes.

Ms Corbett: Yes.

Senator BOYCE: And express post as well.

Ms Corbett: Basically, we have over the last 12 months deployed scanners. Scanners are part of our EPOS network. But we also have a number of manual outlets. So the answer to your question is that not every licensee would be scanning because we do have manual outlets still that do not have that technology."

1. How can this possibly be true when a number of LPOs have refused to take parcels, refuse to scan and track because of the time it takes for which ,in their view, they do not receive proper remuneration?

2. "Is every parcel or registered item in Australia being logged at every point of the track and trace process – i.e. into and out of every Australia Post centre?

3. How many LPOs in your network have are refusing to engage in track and trace?

Answer:

1. The scanning of articles with tracking features is an existing operational requirement with licensees receiving payment for these activities through the current LPO payment scheme.

2. From 8 April 2013, all domestic parcels lodged through an Australia Post outlet will be tracked. This involves the recording of tracking events at selected rather than all points within the Australia Post network. These are:

   a. On lodgement over a retail counter
   b. On receipt at the facility from which the delivery will be undertaken
   c. At the time of a successful or attempted delivery
   d. At the time of receipt at a retail outlet where carded and awaiting customer collection
   e. At the time of a successful delivery or return/ transfer from a retail outlet.

3.   The scanning of articles with tracking features is an existing operational requirement. In the event that Australia Post becomes aware of individual licensees failing to comply with this or any other operational requirement, action is taken to resolve the issue within the terms of LPO Agreement.

Question No: 134

Program No. Australia Post

Hansard Ref: In Writing

Topic: Stakeholder consultation

Senator Boyce asked:
1. Was the public consulted with and properly informed of the decision to close the Palm Beach Post Office on the Gold Coast, Queensland? Please provide evidence to support your answer.

2. I refer to a recent memo from Australia Post sent to all offices asking your retailers to place 'an initial order for the new Domestic Parcel products'.

Do you believe it is reasonable to ask for orders to be completed between 11/2/13 and 24/2/13, when you note that the price has yet to be determined but should be available in March?

3. Why hasn't a price been set?

4. How can a retailer make a decision about stocking such products if they don't know what the retail price will be?

5. Have these "new Domestic Parcel products" been discussed in any detail with your LPO

network? Was their advice sought?

Answer:
1.Where there is a change to the retail network, Australia Post is committed to communicating and engaging with the community in line with its Community Participation Commitment, which is available online at www.auspost.com.au. In the case of Palm Beach Post Office, which ceased trading in November 2010, the public was advised of decision to close via letters delivered to local Post Office Boxes, letters delivered to Palm Beach residents' home addresses and Public Notices displayed in the Post Office and Post Office Box area. State and Federal members were also consulted, as were members of the local council.

2. Licensed Post Offices were invited to place an initial order for the new Domestic Parcel products between 11/2/13 and 24/2/13. Licensees who placed orders during this time were offered a period of extended credit which provided them the opportunity to order and receive the new products and pay for them within an extended period of time. Licensees who did not wish to take up this offer were able to continue to place orders for the new Domestic Parcel products outside of this order window.

3. Australia Post aligns the announcement of price changes across a number of internal and external stakeholders. Prices for the new Domestic Parcel products were not made available in February for commercial reasons. Prices for the new Domestic parcel products have now been set and were communicated to retail outlets on Friday 8 March 2013. Business customers were sent a letter on 8 March 2013 advising of the price changes. Other customers were advised of price changes via public notices displayed in retail outlets from 11 March 2013.

4. Licensees were advised that the prices for the new products would not be any less than existing products and were offered the opportunity to access extended credit facilities. Licensees who did not wish to take up this offer were able to continue to place orders for the new Domestic Parcel products outside of this order window.

5. Consultation with the licensee representative body was undertaken on the new Domestic Parcels products. Selected Licensees were also involved in the User Acceptance Testing of the new products.