

## **Urgency Resolution – Australia Post**

The ALP Victorian Branch resolves to support the continuation of the current Community Service Obligations under the Postal Act. These ensure 5 day a week delivery and next day delivery to 'built up' areas, with an additional, appropriate, guaranteed service standards for country areas.

The ALP Victorian Branch notes that Communications Minister Turnbull has announced his intention to introduce changes to the Australia Post regulations that would fundamentally damage this service. The State Conference urges the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party to disallow these regulations in the Senate. The consequences of these changes include:

- The price of next day delivery is to be doubled initially and ACCC over-sight removed from this pricing, subjecting Australians to spiralling postage prices.
- A slow mail service is to be introduced whereby Australia Post can take an additional 2-3 days to deliver other mail. The price for this mail is to be increased to \$1.
- Mailing costs for small businesses and tradies would be up to 100% higher than present, adding a large cost burden. Big business will be able to get bulk discounts but these are not available to the community and small business who post a few letters at a time.
- Rural and Regional Australians would see their mail delivery slowed even further compared to their city cousins.
- Billing, legal documents and notices would be delayed, giving people less time to pay, and slowing economic activity.
- A worse performing Australia Post would reduce customer service further, compounding, rather than mitigating, the effect of new technologies.
- The loss of jobs caused by the massive price hikes in next day delivery costs would be devastating with the wholesale closures of regional mail centres nationwide in areas that need quality permanent jobs.

The current CEO of Australia Post has created a false sense of crisis where none actually exists. He has undermined public confidence in a great Australian icon that belongs to the people of Australia. Australia Post's underlying profit was up by over 10% last year to \$518 million. The growth in parcels can and does support the decline in addressed letters which was 4% last financial year.

Mail volume decline is stabilising in many areas in Europe and Australia Post's own surveys show both business and consumer confidence in the traditional mail service is still very high and customer preference for traditional mail as their main form of communication increased last year.

The Communications Minister's claim that most people will opt into the MyGov website is flawed as those groups who receive a large amount of government correspondence, such as pensioners, are the least likely to opt into digital communication. Comments that mail volumes are about to "fall off the edge of a cliff" are more about agenda setting and trying to convince the Australian public to accept a far lesser service at a hugely increased cost.

The State Conference call on the National Policy Committee and National Conference to ensure Labor Policy include statements that:

- Any reforms must have the full input of the Communication Workers Union, the Community and Public Sector Union who both represent postal workers, the AMWU who represent thousands of workers in the mailing industry and industry groups such as the Printing Industry Association of Australia who represent the employers of tens of thousands of employers in the industry.
- Management reform at Australia Post is necessary to achieve an organisation that continues to provide an affordable next day delivery service for Australia.

Moved: Cindy Shelly (CEPU P&T Delegate)

Seconded: Andrew Dettmer (AMWU Delegate)

Passed without opposition at the Victorian Labor Conference 28 Mar 2015