

SENATE REPORT SLAP IN THE FACE FOR AUSSIE POST CEO AHMED FAHOUR

A senate report calling for greater oversight of Australia Post's pricing practices and an independent inquiry into plans to reduce the organisation's Community Service Obligations has been welcomed by a coalition of business groups and unions.

"The Coalition of Mail Service Stakeholders (CoMSS) welcomes the key recommendations of the Senate Committee Inquiry into Australia Post," said alliance spokesperson Bill Healey.

"The restoration of the ACCC oversight of price increases for bulk lodged mail and the monitoring of service standards, as is currently the case with Post's broader community service obligations, is long overdue," he said.

"Since ACCC oversight was removed in 2011, Australia Post has increased prices seven times. These increases cannot be justified on the basis of increased costs and are clearly playing a part in driving down mail volumes.

"The recommendation for a full independent inquiry into the effect of proposed changes to the Community Service Obligations on all stakeholders, including licensed post offices, the mailing industry, Australia Post workers and the community as a whole is welcome and something we have been actively calling for," Mr Healey said.

"The Committee has also recognised the importance of supporting the delivery of community service obligations through a viable Licensed Post Office network. It is a sensible recommendation that any expansion of services should only occur after consultation and if any expansion would actually assist LPO's to remain a viable part of the Post network."

"This report confirms that greater oversight of Australia Post management is required to ensure that a significant public asset is not irreparably damaged.

"We are now calling on the federal government to adopt all of the committee's recommendations.

"The Minister should immediately set out a timetable for restoring ACCC oversight of pricing for bulk lodged mail and rule out any changes to Post's Community Service Obligations until a full independent inquiry has been conducted," said Mr Healey.

"It is time Australia Post worked with industry stakeholders and the community to develop a clear strategic direction for the future of mail services rather than misleading the Australian public on the continuing effectiveness and demand for traditional mail," said Bill Healey.

"The recommendation that extra commercial services could be provided by licensed post offices and that this would help maintain a viable network of licensed post offices in regional and rural Australia is fully supported by our members," he said.

The Coalition of Mail Service Stakeholders brings together business groups representing printers and mail houses (PIAA), licensed post offices (LPO Group) and unions (AMWU, CPSU, CWU).

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Media Release

