

Regional Australia

Continued support for regional and remote communities, where Australia Post is needed most,¹¹ including:

- Maintaining a strong and viable Post Office network in rural and regional Australia, ensuring the broadest regional reach of any logistics company nationally.
- Continuing to invest in Bank@Post services making financial services available to all Australians, including supporting cash services in rural and regional areas.
- Improving the economic viability of the letters business to enable a cost-effective national letters service, especially for regional and rural areas.
- Continuing to invest in the parcel network to deliver for all Australians on a truly national basis, including developing new infrastructure in regional Australia to support local businesses.
- Investing in technology to remain competitive so that all Australians (especially regional and rural) can participate in the digital economy.
- Continuing to service regional and rural Australia where others don't.

I live on a farm near Murwillumbah. Australia Post is the one business I use every week. Thank you for recognising how critical AP is to rural & regional communities.

We want to know

1. What services provided by Australia Post are most important to you?
2. What does Australia need in a modern postal service?
3. Do you agree with the potential benefits? Are there additional benefits from your perspective?

1. The ability to send & receive letters and parcels easily and securely.

Australia Post is required by its Performance Standards to deliver ordinary (i.e. stamped) reserved letters in accordance with the regular or priority timetable,¹⁶ with a priority letter costing an additional 55 cents. In 2021-22, priority letters were 8.1 per cent of addressed letter volumes, down from 13.2 per cent in 2017-18.¹⁷

Does priority mail still exist in all areas? When I asked to send a letter priority last year I was told that that service no longer existed...

The Government is seeking the public's view on the potential for changes, which could include:

- Letters pricing arrangements that support Australia Post to recover the actual costs of providing its services, while retaining appropriate Government oversight and maintaining subsidised social mail pricing (for example, for concession card holders);
- Relaxing letter delivery frequency requirements, which are particularly cost burdensome in the face of declining volumes, while maintaining appropriate maximum letter delivery speed regulations; and
- Deregulating the priority letter service, while maintaining a commercial bulk priority letter service to meet the needs of Australian businesses.

We want to know

4. How important is the ability to send or receive a letter and what would be the impact of further increases in postage rates to allow Australia Post to fully recover the full efficient cost of providing the letters service?
5. Do you expect usage of Australia Post's letter services to change in the next 5 years and why?
6. What do individuals, businesses and charities take into consideration in deciding whether to send a letter — for example, price, delivery speed and features (such as tracking), or digital alternatives?
7. What is the value of the regulated priority letter service to you?
8. Should the current letters service speed or frequency of delivery requirements change in line with the expected decline in the number of letters being delivered?

4. I accept that the economic viability of the letters business is critical to AP's future, but please don't price us out of being able to write letters to our grandchildren. Not everyone who writes letters qualifies for a concession.

7. I use the express post service frequently and am very thankful for it. It is a very safe and secure way of posting important documents.

8. I would be very sad to see it

happen, but understand that the postman delivering around the country town may only be economical two or three times per week in the future.

Perhaps Post Office Boxes could retain daily delivery, which may increase the uptake and utilisation of these services, thereby adding to the economic viability of AP.

There is potential for changes to improve parcel services, supporting businesses and consumers who choose to use Australia Post, and delivering environmental benefits. Changes could include:

- Improving parcel frequency and delivery reliability to respond to demand for online shopping, including weekend deliveries and same day service in some locations.
- Enabling greater control over where and when a parcel is delivered, and improving tracking technology so that consumers know more accurately when they will receive a parcel.
- Making it easier, faster and cheaper for small businesses to get their products to customers and exploring innovative delivery products.
- More reliable, transparent, personal and convenient parcel services.
- Investing in new and improved mobile apps and online services enabling simpler interactions for customers to buy, send, receive and redirect parcels.
- Growing the carbon neutral offering to business customers and giving customers the choice of a range of low emissions products.

We want to know

9. How important are parcel delivery services to your business?
10. For businesses that send parcels — what parcel service features matter most to your business?
11. As someone that receives parcels — what features of parcel services do you value most — for example, speed of delivery, time of delivery, convenience of collection, ability to track the item and ease of returns policy?
12. What environmental sustainability factors matter most to you in relation to parcel delivery services?

9. Vital, but Monday – Friday is satisfactory.

11. It would be very, very helpful if ALL businesses which participated in e-commerce allowed their parcels to be sent to a Post Office Box. It has been my personal experience that commercial couriers do not deliver to the farm house and one is forever trying to find missing parcels. Australia Post offers a very secure alternative and going forward it would be excellent to acknowledge it as the

number one receipt option for rural & regional addresses.

We want to know

13. How important is the Post Office to individuals, business and communities, including which Post Office services are most valued?
14. Are other facilities, such as parcel lockers, vending machines, payment terminals or mobile Post Offices, helpful to serve community needs?
15. Are there other services Australia Post could provide to better support the community?
16. For Post Office licensees and agents — tell us the challenges and opportunities from your perspective.

13. Obviously the core business of postal services need to be the number one focus for AP. However in many rural & regional communities, as banking services dwindle or become non-existent, AP also provides a vital service in that area.

14. I have just searched to discover what is a parcel locker... I'm not entirely sure that I understand how they work, but they sound like the ideal solution to my frustration raised in #11.

Key points – Specific needs

- Australia Post provides access to postal and other services to individuals and communities with specific needs.
- Australia Post supports communities in times of need and is an important component of Australia's supply chain resilience.
- The Australian Government is committed to Australia Post remaining a valued part of the community.

We want to know

17. How can Australia Post best support the community?

17. By continuing to “be there” in rural and regional locations.

Thanks to all the staff at my local post office who do an amazing job & offer amazing service.