



27 April 2023

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts

To the Director, Postal Policy—Communications Services and Consumer Division

Please find attached a submission to the Postal Services Modernisation: Discussion Paper.

As the largest mutual in Australia with more than 2.7 million Members, the NRMA works with government, industry and community to advocate for continued improvements to Australia's policy settings to ensure safety, efficiency and equitability.

Should further information on the NRMA's submission be required, please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED].

Yours faithfully

Suzanne Monks

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Editor, Open Road

Submission to the Postal Services Modernisation: Discussion Paper

Open Road, the NRMA's bi-monthly Member magazine, is an iconic publication that has been proudly serving the motoring community for more than 100 years. Open Road has continued to evolve throughout this time, today bringing together the latest news on motoring issues, road safety rules, trusted car reviews and travel ideas for exploring Australia.

This submission highlights the importance of Australia Post and regional offices in distributing 1.3 million copies of Open Road per issue to households, primarily across NSW and the ACT. Additionally, the submission provides insights into how the NRMA Group further leverages the services of Australia Post.

Distribution and Advertising

Open Road magazine has a wide reach, with a minimum of 1.3 million copies per issue distributed; the magazine is reliant on advertisers to offset some of the associated costs. Many Open Road advertisers plan campaigns to coincide with the magazine's distribution, ensuring a timely and coordinated effort to reach their target audience.

In addition to traditional advertisements, many advertisers are mail-order businesses that support revenue to Australia Post's parcel business. The efficient and reliable service provided by Australia Post is essential for ensuring that products reach customers right across Australia.

Supporting Regional Post Offices

Through distributing of a high volume of magazines via Australia Post, Open Road supports the viability of regional offices. A drop in the number of distributed copies could adversely affect these offices, potentially contributing to closures which would negatively impact the communities they serve. It is vital that Australia Post continues to maintain its extensive network of regional offices as they provide essential services and support local economies.

Serving Our Diverse Customer Base

Open Road has a unique customer base, with a high proportion of Members not disclosing an email addresses for electronic communications. As a result, the NRMA is also legally required to mail them statutory information, such as notices of general meetings and information pertaining to director elections. The services provided by Australia Post are essential in ensuring that the NRMA can effectively communicate with all Members to fulfil legal and governance obligations.

Supporting Charities and Community Initiatives

Open Road partners with various charity organisations, which insert reply-paid envelopes in the publication. By providing a platform for these charities, Open Road plays a role in supporting their vital work within Australian communities.

Top 200 Customer of Australia Post

As one of the top 200 customers of Australia Post, Open Road demonstrates the ongoing value and importance of postal services in Australia. The NRMA recognises that the digitisation of the economy has led to a decline in traditional postal services usage; however, there is still a strong need for the reliable delivery of physical goods and communications, particularly for businesses and customers who prefer or require these services.

Given this context, the NRMA submits the following recommendations:

- **Maintain Support for High-Volume Customers:** Recognising the importance of large-scale customers, the NRMA urges the Australian Government and Australia Post to continue offering favourable rates for high-volume mailings. This will not only support operations, but will also help to sustain regional offices and the communities they serve.
- **Enhance Parcel Delivery Services:** As the eCommerce market continues to grow, the NRMA recommends that Australia Post invest in improving parcel delivery services, including increasing flexibility, delivery reliability, and providing greater control over where and when a parcel is delivered. This will benefit mail-order clients and other businesses that rely on Australia Post for their logistics needs.
- **Focus on Regional and Remote Communities:** The NRMA recommends that Australia Post maintain a strong and viable Post Office network in rural and regional Australia, ensuring the broadest regional reach of any logistics company nationally. This will help support the economic and social wellbeing of rural locations, and provide essential services to NRMA Members.
- **Encourage Environmental Sustainability:** As part of modernisation efforts, the NRMA encourages Australia Post to invest in more environmentally sustainable customer services, solutions and operations, including transitioning to electric delivery vehicles and expanding recycling collection points.