

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice**  
**Additional Estimates Hearings February 2014**  
**Communications Portfolio**  
**Australia Post**

**Question No: 152**

**Program No. Australia Post**

**Hansard Ref: Page 96 (25/2/2014)**

**Topic: Post Bikes**

**Senator Williams asked:**

Tell us about the green bike experiment, because it looks like it was not a very good experiment.

**Ms Walsh:** The postie bikes are dear to our hearts—and I know to the community's as well—but also dear to our heart is the safety and wellbeing of our workforce, and from time to time we seek to pilot new innovations to seek to ensure the safety of our staff as well as the speedy delivery of the mail.

**Chair:** So you changed a sample of the bikes to green from the traditional red?

**Ms Walsh:** That was a pilot that we undertook. Reflecting on that pilot, and also the other pilots that we had undertaken, particularly around the visibility of our posties with their wet-weather gear—

**Chair:** How much did it cost?

**Ms Walsh:** I would have to take that on notice.

**Chair:** Why did the trial fail?

**Ms Walsh:** The trial did not fail. What we do is we reflect on the pilot and the feedback from our workforce, as well as take into account all other factors, but with the pannier bags we have on our bikes, as well as the broader visibility that we have through our uniforms, we were of the view that we provided a safe environment for our posties by maintaining that important red colour for our bikes while maintaining their safety.

**Chair:** Who decided to run the trial?

**Ms Walsh:** I would have to take that on notice, but that is something that we as an organisation do through a group of people across our network area and our safety and human resources area.

**Chair:** Were they repainted bikes, from red to green, or were they new bikes?

**Ms Walsh:** I would have to take that on notice. My understanding is—

**Chair:** No-one knows?

**Mr Fahour:** Chair, I can answer your question.

**Chair:** Were they repainted bikes or new ones?

**Mr Fahour:** The green ones we brought in? They were new bikes.

**Chair:** So you bought these green bikes—

**Mr Fahour:** Yes, but we just repaint them. That is not a problem.

**Chair:** And why did you scrap them? What was the reason that the new green bikes were not as good as the red bikes?

**Mr Fahour:** Chair, let me just respond to your questions. Firstly, a trial means you are prepared to trial and if it does not work in the way you want, you change. That is okay. It is not a failure; it is just that you try some things, and some things work and some things do not.

**Chair:** It depends how serious the trial is.

**Mr Fahour:** Exactly. It was a very serious trial. But, do you know what? At the end of the day it did not provide the extra things that we wanted, so we will stick with the tried and true red.

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**Chair:** That is fair enough, Mr Fahour, but the scheme left one postie in the state's Southern Tablelands without a bike for several months while he waited for his green bike to be repainted red. This is the point I am getting to. Did you read the story in the paper?

**Mr Fahour:** I must have missed that, but I would like to be Ms Walsh, because she seems to get to answer her questions all the way through and nobody jumps in. I do not consider it a failure, and I do not think we actually took them out to repaint them; I just think with the new ones coming in, they get recycled. I will take that on notice and check, but I am not sure that is completely true.

**Answer:**

The trial was developed as part of an Australia Post Enterprise Safety Initiative, in collaboration with Human Resources and Communication Management Services business unit.

There was no additional cost associated with changing from a red to green model, as the trial was conducted in-line with Australia Post's Motor Vehicle replacement policy.

The newspaper article has been discussed with the relevant managers of facilities in the Southern Tablelands region. While there may have been some delays associated with the release of motorcycles, there was no impact on delivery or any instances of posties being left without motorcycles to perform their normal daily duties.