Recommendations

Recommendation 1

4.86 The committee recommends that Australia Post be required to submit notifications of changes to the price of business mail services to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

Recommendation 2

4.90 The committee recommends that the Minister for Communications undertake a thorough examination of cost allocation within Australia Post and report back to the committee.

Recommendation 3

5.49 The committee recommends that greater commercial freedoms for Australia Post should be only be considered if this provides support for the delivery of the community service obligations through a viable Licensed Post Office network.

Recommendation 4

5.70 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government immediately commission an independent review of the community service obligations contained in the Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989 and associated regulations.

5.71 In undertaking this review, the committee further recommends that:

- the future of mail delivery services be assessed;
- the number of retail outlets required in the network be assessed;
- the effects of any changes to the community services obligations on Australia Post employees, Licensed Post Offices, Community Postal Agencies, franchisees and mail contractors be investigated; and
- consideration be given to the needs of remote, rural and regional communities particularly where other service providers have ceased to operate.

Recommendation 5

5.92 The committee recommends that, before further or more complex trusted services are provided through the postal network, the Minister for Communications consult Australia Post and relevant government agencies with a view to determining the requirements for the provision of those services.

5.93 The committee also recommends that Australia Post undertake consultation with all licensee representative groups in regard to any additional requirements related to an expansion in the delivery of trusted services, including training, staffing, shopfront space, technology and remuneration.

Recommendation 6

5.110 The committee recommends that the Minister for Communications form a formal postal network strategy group that engages all stakeholders in the development of a comprehensive strategy to inform changes to the Australian Post network in the face of emerging challenges.

5.111 The committee further recommends that a broad community consultation program be implemented.

Recommendation 7

6.51 The committee recommends that, at the request of any recognised association, Australia Post be required to renegotiate the terms and conditions of an LPO Agreement.

Recommendation 8

6.79 The committee recommends that Australia Post capture information relating to 'issues requiring attention' raised under the dispute resolution process in order to provide early identification of systemic problems.

Recommendation 9

6.83 The committee recommends that the Australia Post dispute resolution process should be amended to provide for a more streamlined process.

Recommendation 10

6.88 The committee recommends that Australia Post provide further information to licensees and franchisees on the alternative dispute resolution processes available under the Franchising Code of Conduct.

Recommendation 11

6.129 The committee recommends that the definition of 'Association' in the LPO Agreement be amended to include, in addition to POAAL, other licensee representative groups including but not limited to the LPO Group.

Recommendation 12

8.33 The committee recommends that Australia Post, as a matter of urgency, reassess post office box payments to licensees to ensure that they reflect the true costs borne by licensees in providing this service.

Recommendation 13

8.80 The committee recommends that Australia Post review parcel storage requirements in Licensed Post Offices with a view to providing payments for those licensees who incur additional storage costs.

Recommendation 14

8.96 The committee recommends that Australia Post review the margins on postal products it sells to licensees with a view to ensure that margins are in line with commercial practice.

Recommendation 15

8.99 The committee recommends that Australia Post allow for the return of unsold and out-of-date stamps by licensees and franchisees.

Recommendation 16

8.119 The committee recommends that Australia Post ensure all employees, in the relevant areas of its corporate network, understand Australia Post's rules and behavioural expectations in relation to the transfer of business from Licensed Post Offices to Corporate Post Offices and that 'poaching' and other predatory behaviour is unacceptable.

Recommendation 17

8.141 The committee recommends that the Minister for Communications, as a matter of urgency, commission an independent audit of the activities undertaken by the Licensed Post Office network specifically to determine the validity of claims made by licensees that payments made under the LPO Agreement are not fair or reasonable.

8.142 The committee recommends that where a payment is found to be not fair or reasonable, that a study should be conducted to determine what an appropriate payment rate should be.

Recommendation 18

9.26 The committee recommends that Australia Post, when negotiating the current value of franchises, takes into account the impact on the value of franchises of its inability to deliver the promised opportunities.