

**Senate Environment and Communications References Committee
Australia Post inquiry**

Responses to written questions from Committee Chair

Question	Response
<p>In relation to this media statement announcing Ms Holgate would stand aside on 22 October 2020 (https://newsroom.auspost.com.au/article/statement-from-the-australia-post-chairman--lucio-di-bartolomeo):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who drafted the statement? At what time of the day was it drafted? 2. Who approved it? At what time of the day was it approved? 3. When was the statement first released? When was it first published? By what method/s was it released/distributed? 4. Please provide documentary evidence of the approval of the statement (emails, etc), showing the times the statement was sent for approval, and received, and the time the approval was sent. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The statement was drafted by Australia Post’s General Manager Corporate Affairs, Executive General Manager Community & Consumer and Group Chief Financial Officer. Work to prepare a media statement commenced mid-afternoon, as media enquiries were being received by Australia Post. A draft was provided to Australia Post’s Chair at 3:14pm in which the drafters contemplated (in light of statements made in Question Time) that any media statement would need to deal with management arrangements while the investigation was being conducted. A further draft was provided to the Chair at approximately 6:20pm, which was prepared before the Chair had updated the drafters on the outcome of his discussions with Ms Holgate and the decisions made at the Board meeting. The Chair provided feedback on that draft, shortly before 7:03pm, following the Board meeting which closed at 6:20pm. 2. At its meeting on 22 October 2020, which closed at 6:20pm, the Board approved the Chair issuing a public statement – and the substance of that statement. The Chair approved the statement subsequently issued (see below) when providing his feedback shortly before 7:03pm (see above). A copy of the statement to be issued was provided to the Board at 7:20pm. 3. The statement was first released/published/distributed at 7:40pm via publication on the Australia Post online newsroom, after being sent to Ms Holgate via email at 7:20pm. (See paragraph 2.1.10 of Australia Post’s submission dated 19 March 2020 and page 13 of Australia Post’s further submission dated 11 May 2021, and Appendix 29 to that submission.) 4. Documentary evidence related to the drafting and approval of the statement is enclosed. The Minutes of the 22 October 2020 Board meeting (which were tabled during the Senate Inquiry hearings) are also relevant (as described above).

From: [Macdonald, Nick](#)
To: [ldibart](#)
Subject: Draft Statement from the Chair
Importance: High

Hi Lucio

Here is a draft Statement prepared by Corporate Affairs, for your review.

We are apparently being bombarded with media enquiries, and Michelle is keen to get this out.

Importantly, the statement corrects the record regarding the cost of the gifts and the payment of FBT.

Kind regards
Nick

Statement from the Chairman

Australia Post will fully cooperate with the recently announced investigation to be conducted by shareholder departments.

In response to a question taken on notice in today's Senate Estimates hearing on the purchase of staff recognition gifts, the total cost of these four gifts was \$19,500 and FBT was paid in relation to each item.

Australia Post is working through interim management arrangements while the investigation is conducted.

From: [Macdonald, Nick](#)
To: [ldibart](#)
Cc: [Sheffield, Nicole](#)
Subject: FW: For Lucio's approval

Lucio

Here is a further draft of a statement, for your review.

Michelle is also preparing an internal note, which we'll send to you for review.

Kind regards

Nick

From: Skehan, Michelle [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 22 October, 2020 6:14 PM
To: Sheffield, Nicole [REDACTED]; Macdonald, Nick
[REDACTED]
Subject: For Lucio's approval

Statement from the Australia Post Chairman, Lucio Di Bartolomeo

The Australia Post Board and management team will fully cooperate with the recently announced investigation to be conducted by shareholder departments.

We remain committed to delivering for our important stakeholders – our people, our Post Office partners, our customers and the community.

Group CEO & Managing Director CEO Christine Holgate will stand aside during the investigation and will take personal leave. During this time, xx will be acting in the role.

Michelle Skehan
General Manager
Corporate Affairs

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



From: [Sheffield, Nicole](#)
To: [Macdonald, Nick](#)
Cc: [Skehan, Michelle](#)
Subject: Re: For Lucio's approval
Date: Thursday, 22 October, 2020 7:03:40 PM

Just spoke to Lucio he wants the changes below... Nick can you pls send it out to the entire board once confirmed

Nicole Sheffield

Executive General Manager
Community & Consumer

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



On 22 Oct 2020, at 6:21 pm, Macdonald, Nick
[REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks Michelle. I have shared this with Lucio and mentioned that an internal note is also being prepared.

Nick Macdonald

General Counsel & Corporate Secretary

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Skehan, Michelle [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 22 October, 2020 6:14 PM
To: Sheffield, Nicole [REDACTED]; Macdonald, Nick
[REDACTED]
Subject: For Lucio's approval

Statement from the Australia Post Chairman, Lucio Di Bartolomeo

The Australia Post Board and management team will fully cooperate with the recently announced investigation to be conducted by shareholder departments.

We remain committed to delivering for our important stakeholders – our people,

our Post Office partners, our customers and the community.

Group CEO & Managing Director CEO Christine Holgate will stand aside during the investigation. During this time, Rodney Boys, CFO will be acting in the role.

Michelle Skehan
General Manager
Corporate Affairs

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[<image001.jpg>](#)

From: [Skehan, Michelle](#)
To: [Sheffield, Nicole](#); [Macdonald, Nick](#)
Cc: [Boys, Rodney](#)
Subject: RE: For Lucio's approval
Date: Thursday, 22 October, 2020 7:10:33 PM

Nick – can you please share with the board this will be distributed at 7.15pm.

Statement from the Australia Post Chairman, Lucio Di Bartolomeo

The Australia Post Board and management team will fully cooperate with the recently announced investigation to be conducted by shareholder departments.

We remain committed to delivering for our important stakeholders – our people, our Post Office partners, our customers and the community.

Group CEO & Managing Director CEO Christine Holgate will stand aside during the investigation. During this time, Rodney Boys, Chief Financial Officer will be acting in the role.

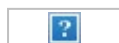
Michelle Skehan
General Manager
Corporate Affairs

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



From: [Macdonald, Nick](#)
To: [ldibart](#); [Andrea Staines](#); [West, Jan](#); [REDACTED].com; [Mciver, Bruce](#); [Nutt, Tony](#); [Ronaldson, Michael](#); [Willmott, Deidre](#)
Subject: Media statement

Dear Directors

The following media statement will be issued shortly.

Statement from the Australia Post Chairman, Lucio Di Bartolomeo

The Australia Post Board and management team will fully cooperate with the recently announced investigation to be conducted by shareholder departments.

We remain committed to delivering for our important stakeholders – our people, our Post Office partners, our customers and the community.

Group CEO & Managing Director Christine Holgate will stand aside during the investigation. During this time, Rodney Boys, Chief Financial Officer will be acting in the role.

Kind regards
Nick