

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings November 2014

Communications Portfolio

Australia Post

Question No: 312

Program No: Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Page 71, 20 November 2014

Topic: Enterprise Bargaining Agreement - Franchises

Senator Rushton (Chair) asked:

CHAIR: What I am actually asking you is: as I said, I have material from your organisation to say that your organisation sold this particular product to a number of people on the back of 150 franchises and the opportunity that those 150 franchises delivered for them; what I would like to know is whether, at the same time that you were providing that information to those franchises, you were bound by an enterprise bargaining agreement that prevented you from extending the number of franchises to the level of 150.

Mr Fahour: There has been a similar question that we have answered in writing to the Senate for the last year or so. What I am happy to do is to dig that up and to put it in writing and respond to that question. We are, right now, in a commercial negotiation which may result in our 4,400-plus network, and fewer than 30 fall into this category—we are entering a very important commercial negotiation. I do not wish to prejudice Australia Post's commercial rights in negotiating with people on a business contract that they sign. I would ask that the commercial privileges—

CHAIR: I am not asking you anything about commercial privilege, Mr Fahour. I am merely asking you whether, when you entered into these arrangements with these people, you advised them that you were restricted. Well, firstly, were you restricted? Did this enterprise bargaining agreement exist at the time and prevent you from delivering on the promise that you gave to these people? It has got nothing to do with your commercial negotiations that are going on right now. I am merely asking you to tell me whether your organisation advised these people that, at the time when your predecessor gave these people this wonderful rosy picture about what this franchise opportunity was going to be able to deliver them, you were bound by an agreement that prevented you from delivering what you were promising them? That is what I would like you to provide.

Mr Fahour: I will take that on notice. We will look in the archives of history and we will reply to your question.

Answer:

Please refer to the response provided to '*Additional Estimates Hearings February 2014 Questions on Notice No 150*'.