

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: 314

Program No: Australia Post

Hansard Ref: Page 77, 20 November 2014

Topic: Mail volumes

Senator Xenophon asked:

Senator XENOPHON: Chair, I have a question that they can take on notice about mail volumes.

CHAIR: Sure.

Senator XENOPHON: Don't give me that look, Mr Fahour! It is a very simple question that you can take on notice. I obviously do not understand something here in your 2012-13 report.

Mr Fahour: Very unlikely!

Senator XENOPHON: No; it is very likely! Page 11, five-year trends, talks about mail volumes in millions—basically 5.3 billion letters in 2009, going down in 2013 to 4.58 billion. In your 2014 report, at page 13, under five-year trends, it talks about the reserved services letter volumes in the millions, where, in 2013, it is 3.3 billion compared to 4.5 billion and, in 2014, 3.1 billion. On notice, because we are running out of time—

Mr Fahour: I can answer it.

Senator XENOPHON: Chair, it is up to you. We are running behind.

CHAIR: How quickly?

Mr Fahour: The quick answer is that this is the monopoly service that we are regulated on. As I mentioned, there are a bunch of articles that are non-reserved, non-addressed. An example of that is print post, some magazines and flyers. They make up approximately 700 million articles, where you get paid a few cents in the dollar type thing. They are not affected by the regulation change we want. So what we have done here is we put the ACCC definition of the regulated mail volume.

Senator XENOPHON: And there is a note to that effect in the annual report for the change?

Mr Fahour: Yes. It is just the finding what that is. But, in here, this is just the up-front section, as you know. But if you would like the number on a like-for-like for 2014, for the total, I would be delighted to send that to you.

Senator XENOPHON: I could not see the note in the report, but you could maybe point that out to me.

Mr Fahour: I will get that to you as well.

Answer:

In the 2012/13 Annual Report total mail volumes were reported which include our Reserved Services Letter volumes. In 2013/14 only Reserved Services Letter volumes were reported as defined in our glossary on page 143 of the 2013/14 Annual Report as services reserved to Australia Post under Division 2, Part 3 of the *Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989*.

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The table below presents reserved services letter volumes for the past 6 years.

millions	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Reserved Services Letter Volumes	4,102.1	3,876.6	3,738.8	3,545.3	3,305.7	3,173.5