# Up to 2,000 posties move to support COVID-19 parcel boom

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Australia Post will retrain 2,000 motorbike posties to deliver and process parcels to help manage the unprecedented parcel volumes being sent across the country as the business continues to manage significant disruption as Australians adapt to living differently under COVID-19 restrictions.

Australia Post welcomes the Federal Government's announcement today to provide temporary changes to delivery standards to continue to service the broader needs of the community as quickly as possible. The temporary regulatory relief requested by Australia Post and agreed by the Government includes:

Removing the Priority Mail letter product. This is manually intensive for processing and delivery speed cannot currently be guaranteed. Priority letters lodged by consumers each year is significantly less than one per cent of all letters and 12 per cent of total letter volumes;
Adjusting the existing service standards on other letters, to enable Australia Post to deliver letters in metropolitan areas every second day. Australia Post will maintain existing delivery standards in rural and remote locations;
Extending the required delivery time for regular intrastate letters to five days after the day of posting
Parcel volumes have almost doubled in the last four weeks, up by 80 per cent compared to last year, as more and more householders shop online as they self-isolate. At the same time, demand for other core products, including letters, have been volatile and many have halved.

Adding to Australia Post's challenges is the impact of significantly reduced air freight availability due to the reductions of passenger planes and the need to prioritise transport of medical supplies. Although Australia Post has secured more capacity from Qantas, and have welcomed recent announcements from the Federal Government to support more domestic flights, these cannot ensure the speed of deliveries at the same level as prior to the crisis.

Australia Post Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Christine Holgate said an additional challenge is the majority of the 1.8 million parcels being sent each day are too large to be delivered by a traditional postie as people purchase items to allow them to stay at home.

"To action the changes announced today we will retrain up to 2,000 motorbike posties to process or deliver parcels in vans. This will

enable Posties to carry more and relieve some of the significant pressure on our parcel delivery drivers, who have been swamped with huge volumes. It will also enable parcels to be delivered every operational day across the country," Ms Holgate said.

"We welcome the support of the Federal Government, including Minister Fletcher and Minister Cormann, to allow us to ensure our posties can work where their help is needed most.  Our people want to serve our country at this difficult and challenging time."

Delivery frequency in regional, rural and remote Australia will not change in recognition that Australia Post is often the only operator in these areas, however households in metro areas will soon start to receive a letter delivery every second day. Post Offices will continue to remain open, in-line with health and safety guidelines to protect our people and customers.

"It is imperative we act fast to ensure parcels can be delivered promptly and we can support our country. We ask for communities to understand as we rollout these changes," Ms Holgate added.

Further information will be available in Post Offices and on auspost.com.au over the coming days.

Source: Australia Post


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