



# Australian Citizens Party

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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13 July 2021

### Watch 'The untold story of the Australia Post scandal'

All Australians must watch the Citizens Party's latest *Citizens Insight* YouTube interview, with Licensed Post Office Group Executive Director Angela Cramp, called "The untold story of the Australia Post scandal". Every Australian uses the local post office, but most would have no idea of the immense struggle that the small business families who run licensed post offices (LPOs) have gone through over the past two decades just to survive. Angela Cramp vividly recounts that struggle, allowing all concerned citizens to see the Australia Post scandal through the LPOs' eyes.

[Click here to watch "The untold story of the Australia Post scandal"](#).

The Senate inquiry into the unlawful removal of Christine Holgate as CEO of Australia Post laid bare the issues and agendas besetting the national postal service. These include the longstanding agenda to run Australia Post into the ground as a pretext for privatisation, to which Christine Holgate's successful management became an obstacle; and the practice of successive governments and ministers interfering politically in Australia Post's management, in breach of the law, such as when Prime Minister Scott Morrison and Communications Minister Paul Fletcher unlawfully ordered the Chair to stand Christine Holgate aside.

The final report of the inquiry made excellent recommendations to address these issues, but the question is: who will enforce them? Scott Morrison and Paul Fletcher won't—they are contemptible politicians who are contemptuous of parliamentary due process and being held accountable for their actions. Will the Nationals, under born-again leader Barnaby Joyce, who was the first MP aside from Bob Katter to support Christine Holgate and the LPOs, and whose Senate allies Bridget McKenzie and Matt Canavan were very supportive in the inquiry, but who must govern in coalition with Morrison? Will Labor, which actually instigated the scandal through Senator Kimberley Kitching's vicious ambush of Christine Holgate and Anthony Albanese's dishonest question that provoked Morrison's "SHE—CAN—GO" tirade, and then opportunistically switched sides when public opinion shifted and they saw it as a way to damage Morrison (with the honourable exception of Senator Kim Carr, who did an excellent job in the inquiry)? Or will it be left to the Greens and One Nation, who through inquiry chair Senator Sarah Hanson-Young and inquiry initiator Senator Pauline Hanson teamed up successfully in the inquiry?

To appreciate how absolutely crucial it is that the inquiry's recommendations are enforced, see it through the LPOs' eyes by watching Angela Cramp tell "The untold story of the Australia Post scandal".

Angela Cramp recounts the fascinating but disturbing story of why and how the LPO Group formed in 2012, to save their businesses, and, by doing so, save the post office services Australians use every day. For decades, as Australians lined up at post offices, assuming they were using a government service that would always be available, they would have had no idea that the families running most of Australia's post offices as small businesses were being exploited by the government and Australia Post management.

While the cost of living and business expenses soared in the first decade of the 2000s—cost of living was the reason Kevin Rudd defeated John Howard in the 2007 election—payments to LPOs were effectively frozen for a decade. Yet Australia Post continued to make profits, and the government continued to extract an annual dividend of, on average, \$200 million. "That dividend came out of our pockets, and the board knew that", Angela explains. LPOs found that the busier they were and the more work they did the more money they lost.

It is a damning indictment on successive Coalition and Labor governments' commitment to essential services for the Australian people that they had such callous disregard for the people who actually provided the service. The LPOs were on their own, and in desperation they reached out to each other and found they were all in the same predicament. This led to crucial meetings with receptive individual politicians, including then-Senators Nick Xenophon and Ron Boswell (Senator Boswell called it the most "distressing" meeting he'd ever had with constituents), the formation of the LPO Group as a business association to properly represent LPOs, and a comprehensive Senate inquiry in 2014. However, only a few positive changes flowed from that first inquiry, while Australia Post management continued with its downsizing agenda that was preparing the company for full or partial privatisation.

Not until Christine Holgate took over as CEO in 2017 did the LPO Group experience really positive change, and what it was like to have a CEO who was truly committed to the welfare of the whole business, including the LPOs. Angela describes the 2017 LPO Group Annual General Meeting at which Christine Holgate laid out her vision for addressing Australia Post's issues, including its loss-making banking agency service Bank@Post, which gave longsuffering LPOs such hope that many were reduced to tears. "Did she deliver?" Robert Barwick asks, to which Angela exclaims: "She just kept delivering!"

Angela Cramp's description of the 2018 banking deal and Christine Holgate's other successes, which strengthened Australia Post and restored it to profitability, should make every Australian angry at the bipartisan corruption that conspired to destroy "the best CEO Australia Post has ever had" and drive her out in the most brutal and humiliating way because she upset their agendas. This interview is a powerful reminder that the fight is not over, and of why it is so important that Australians support the LPOs to achieve justice in the form of having the recommendations of the Senate inquiry enforced, including:

- An apology from the PM, Minister, and Australia Post board to Christine Holgate;
- The resignation of Australia Post Chair Lucio Di Bartolomeo;
- Further investigations of the legality of Minister Paul Fletcher's directions to the Board, and of whether the Chair misled the Senate.

It is also a reminder of why expanding Australia Post into a post office "people's bank" is a long-term solution not just for the Australian economy, but for the ongoing viability of Australia Post, the 2,850 LPOs, and the communities they continue to serve.

[Click here to watch "The untold story of the Australia Post scandal".](#)

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[An Australia Post 'people's bank'—a win-win solution for the nation](#)