



Australian Citizens Party

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Scott Morrison lavishes 200 Cartier watches on Australia Post executives: He—Can—Go!

Government corruption is systematically destroying Australia's national postal service; to save it, join the national campaign for a postal bank!

The appalling actions of Labor Senator Kimberley Kitching and Liberal Prime Minister Scott Morrison have cost Australia Post far, far more than the \$20,000 of “taxpayers’ money” they accused then-CEO Christine Holgate of wasting in 2018. But unlike their sanctimonious, hypocritical, and frankly vile grandstanding over the money Christine Holgate spent on Cartier watches to award executives, they don’t care about the supposed taxpayers’ money being splurged at Australia Post due to their actions. And neither do any of the other treacherous hypocrites who threw Christine Holgate under a bus.

Senate Estimates learned this week that Scott Morrison’s minions in charge of Australia Post lavished the equivalent of 200 Cartier watches on five highly-paid executives in late 2021. Australia Post management, with the consent of the Liberal Party-stacked board, approved around \$1 million in retention bonuses to the five executives to stop them from following Christine Holgate out the door, as many other executives had.

The exodus of executives reflected the chaos and collapse in morale at Australia Post following Kitching’s malicious ambush and Morrison’s brutal and unlawful removal of Christine Holgate in October 2020. They attacked Holgate for her decision two years earlier to recognise the hard work of four executives who had worked with her to land the greatest deal in Australia Post history, convincing three of the Big Four banks to cough up \$20 million each per annum to pay for post offices serving their customers. The deal saved banking services for 1,500 regional communities, and secured the viability of the 2,850 small business families who run licensed post offices (LPOs) across Australia. What Holgate and the executives did was an undeniable good for Australia Post and Australia—the LPO Group called Holgate “the best CEO Australia Post has ever had”—but Kitching and Morrison, for their grubby political purposes, dishonestly twisted it into a narrative of wasting taxpayers’ money.

The real damage to Australia Post was done by the chairman, Lucio Di Bartolomeo, and the board, most of whom are Liberal Party hacks. They all knew Christine Holgate’s actions had saved the organisation, and it was their duty to defend her; instead, they were all treacherous cowards, who fell into line behind Morrison and threw Holgate under a bus, lying that they would never have approved spending \$20,000 on watches as rewards. For the executives at Australia Post, who all knew the 2018 deal had been an amazingly good achievement for the benefit of the community, the cowardice and treachery of the Chair and board had a chilling effect on morale that saw many head for the door.

So, what did the Australia Post board do, in response to a mess of their own making? To retain one executive, they approved a \$500,000 retention bonus! The \$500,000 is on top of the executive’s existing bonus! They also approved lesser retention bonuses for four others; the combined total is not yet known, but it would be safe to estimate that all up, the retention bonuses cost at least \$1 million, or the equivalent of 200 of the Cartier watches Christine Holgate awarded to the four executives. Note: these bonuses are not a symbolic recognition for doing a brilliant job saving Australia Post’s services as Christine Holgate’s \$5,000 watches were; these are at least a million dollars’ worth of bonuses just for not leaving the toxic culture at Australia Post!

Cue the ... crickets?

So where is the outrage of all of those who had crucified Christine Holgate over four watches adding up to \$20,000? Every single one of Christine Holgate’s assassins are okay with Morrison’s minions splurging the equivalent of 200 Cartier watches on retention bonuses:

- Labor’s Kimberley Kitching, Communications spokesperson Michele Rowland, and Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese, who all grandstanded against Christine Holgate in 2020 on the day Morrison attacked her, didn’t say boo in Question Time about the million dollars in retention bonuses;
- Scott Morrison, who bellowed “She—Can—Go”, is obviously happy with his minions lavishing such money on executives now;
- Australia Post chairman Lucio Di Bartolomeo, who to throw Christine Holgate under a bus

claimed he would never have approved the \$20,000 for Cartier watches, approved the million dollars in retention bonuses;

- The Australia Post board, led by heavyweight Liberal Party “fixer” Tony Nutt, who all claimed they didn’t know about the watches and would never have approved the watches, all approved these payments.

Threat to the banks

This disgusting hypocrisy by the politicians and Australia Post board confirms what the Citizens Party and the Licensed Post Office Group said all along—the ambush and assassination of Christine Holgate had nothing to do with watches. The truth, which emerged during the subsequent Senate Inquiry, was that Christine Holgate had enraged the banks by making them pay for a service they previously exploited for free; had become a threat to the banks by advocating Australia Post should become a public bank; and had been the main obstacle to the Liberal Party’s longstanding plot to privatise Australia Post. (For the full story, watch “[Taking on the banks: The truth about the Australia Post Cartier watches affair](#)” on YouTube.)

Christine Holgate’s idea of Australia Post becoming a postal bank is a threat to the banks because it is an excellent solution to the problems in the financial system they have created. It would:

- break the monopoly of the Big Four banks;
- guarantee banking services to the regional communities the major banks are abandoning;
- ensure the long-term viability of Australia Post and the LPOs;
- serve the real economy by guaranteeing full, low-cost banking services to all Australians, including 100 per cent secure deposits, and loans to small businesses in local communities; and
- ensure cash availability and support for cash payments.

The Citizens Party has drafted a bill for a [Commonwealth Postal Savings Bank](#) to achieve this vision. The best way to send political crooks like Morrison packing is by winning the support of Australians for such positive solutions—join the campaign!

[Click here to sign the petition:](#)
[An Australia Post ‘people’s bank’—with fully guaranteed savings deposits!](#)