



Australian Citizens Party

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia Post mercenaries vs. licensees: Whose side are you on, Albanese?

The gang of mercenary executives from Woolworths, McDonalds, and Subway who have hijacked Australia Post are behind today's vicious *Australian Financial Review* attack on former Australia Post CEO Christine Holgate and the Licensed Post Office Group, because they are resisting the mercenaries' plan to close thousands of post offices.

In "Holgate's Australia Post campaign fails to deliver", *AFR*'s Rear Window column by Myriam Robin sneers at now Team Global Express (TGE) CEO Christine Holgate's campaign to open up post offices for other parcel companies like TGE to deliver to, and her message that it would be good for the small business licensees who would be paid for the deliveries.

AFR lied that Ms Holgate "stayed well away from this while responsible for Post's dwindling viability", when in fact she did allow other companies to deliver to post offices, and she in fact returned Australia Post to viability by making the banks pay properly to use Bank@Post (which made the banks angry and may have something to do with the snipers at the bankers' toilet paper *AFR* regularly attacking her).

AFR also belittled LPOG's desperate petition to the government seeking help to save post offices.

The Australian Citizens Party, which has been heavily involved in trying to save post offices ever since then-PM Scott Morrison bullied Christine Holgate out of her role as Australia Post CEO, is accusing the mercenary executives led by CEO Paul Graham of taking the easiest but most short-sighted pathway back to profitability, which will boost their bonuses and future job offers but be a disaster for postal services.

ACP Research Director Robert Barwick said today: "The question is: what is the Albanese government going to do?"

"The government is ultimately responsible for Australia Post, not these mercenaries who jump from business to business in search of fat bonuses and are currently vandalising the postal network.

"Is Albanese going to side with the mercenaries, or with the licensees whose resistance to mercenary executives is arguably the only reason we still have a postal network in Australia?"

Slash and burn

Australia Post is a 100 per cent government-owned Commonwealth Business Enterprise, required to operate commercially, i.e. to turn a profit, but it has suffered enormously from having executives whose only idea for how to make a profit is to slash and burn.

As emails increasingly replaced letters in the late 2000s, then-CEO Ahmed Fahour made profits by selling post office buildings to lease back, counting the sale of capital as income, and investing everything into the growing e-commerce parcels business instead of post offices.

Concerned licensees who were going broke under Fahour organised themselves into the LPO Group to fight to save the postal network.

They finally made progress when Christine Holgate took over as CEO in 2017 and restored Australia Post to profitability by expanding services, including banking services, for which she recognised that Australia Post's network of more than 4,200 post offices was an asset, a competitive advantage.

Holgate made the LPOs viable, and when Morrison forced Holgate out in 2020, LPOG members were her staunchest defenders, calling her "the best CEO Australia Post has ever had".

Under her replacement Paul Graham, however, who sees post offices as a cost, Australia Post is back to slashing and burning, withdrawing services from post offices and implementing mass-closures, with immediate plans to close 271 to reduce the network to the regulatory minimum of 4,000, on top of which he is lobbying for a change of regulation so he can close thousands more.

Dozens of communities like St. Kilda in Melbourne are already suffering the extreme disruption of

losing their post offices.

LPOG, whose members have decades of experience in Australia Post that the short-term mercenaries in the executive suite ignore, is lobbying the government to save the network by expanding services.

LPOG has launched a petition calling for the government to allow licensees to do independent deals with other businesses who are willing to pay to use their infrastructure, as Christine Holgate allowed when she was CEO.

In response, Australia Post has dishonestly attacked LPOG and Christine Holgate using *AFR* today.

LPOG is also campaigning for the government to establish a public post office bank, which will save postal and banking services for all communities.

The ACP is calling on all Australians to demand the Albanese government side with LPOs and save post offices from the mercenaries.

“The survival of an essential service is at stake”, Robert Barwick said.

What you can do

Call or email your federal MP and demand they explain why the government is allowing Australia Post to close so many post offices.

[Click here to sign the Citizens Party's petition for a post office people's bank.](#)