



# **Follow-up report on Australia Post's response to the Ombudsman's recommendations**

A REPORT ON AUSTRALIA POST'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN RECOMMENDATIONS FROM  
REVIEW OF AUSTRALIA POST COMPLAINTS ABOUT CARDING,  
SAFE DROP AND COMPENSATION (APRIL 2018)

June 2019

Report by the Commonwealth Ombudsman,  
Michael Manthorpe, under the *Ombudsman Act 1976*

REPORT NO. **02 | 2019**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In April 2018, the Commonwealth Ombudsman published a report titled 'Review of Australia Post complaints about carding, Safe Drop and compensation' (the report). The report made six recommendations to Australia Post highlighting areas where performance could be improved.

Australia Post accepted recommendations one to five on carding, Safe Drop, compensation and complaint-handling in full. Recommendation six on complaint-handling was partially accepted on the basis that Australia Post had already undertaken some of the activities detailed in the recommendation.

The purpose of this report is to review the progress Australia Post has made in implementing the commitments it made in response to the recommendations and to consider what further monitoring may be required.

Australia Post has made significant progress towards implementing our recommendations, including:

- making it easier for customers to lodge complaints and enquiries online
- improving online information on common delivery issues, such as locations which are not suitable for a Safe Drop parcel delivery
- enhancing responses to complaints about missing items including reducing processing timeframes from ten days to five and improving access to compensation, if required
- reviewing and improving a number of its quality assurance measures for complaints
- undertaking a review of complaints made to the Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman (the Office) and repeat customer contacts to Australia Post to better understand the reasons for multiple contacts, resulting in changes to call centre training and evaluation methods.

Despite this implementation work, the number of complaints Australia Post received in 2017–18 was 1.1 million, which remained unchanged from 2016–17. However, over the same period, parcel volumes grew by over 10 per cent<sup>1</sup>, and the number of complaints received by the Office decreased by 10 per cent.

While the reduction in complaints to the Office is an encouraging sign, as it suggests that more individual complaints are being resolved by Australia Post, the large number of complaints to Australia Post in the first instance remains a concern.

Implementation of a number of commitments remain underway by Australia Post, including the development of a public complaint-handling policy, a trial of an internal review process and consideration of a parcel service with in-built transit warranty.

The Office is of the view that Australia Post has made significant progress in addressing the report recommendations. We also note the number of actions already underway will take time to fully implement.

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<sup>1</sup> Australia Post Annual Report 2018 page 31.

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The Office looks forward to receiving regular updates and will continue to work with Australia Post as the implementation process continues.

We would like to thank Australia Post for the commitment it has displayed over the last year through initiatives it has implemented to improve its complaint-handling performance and service delivery to its customers.

## THE INVESTIGATION REPORT

1. On 3 April 2018, the Office published the report '[Review of Australia Post complaints about carding, Safe Drop and compensation](#)'<sup>2</sup>. The report recognised that the postal environment has changed rapidly in the last decade and that Australia Post has embraced a number of technology solutions and implemented reforms to improve its performance. However, in the area of complaint-handling, it was our view that greater focus and attention was required on the part of Australia Post to improve its complaint-handling performance.
2. The report made six recommendations to Australia Post regarding complaints about carding, Safe Drop, compensation and complaint-handling. Australia Post accepted five recommendations in full and one in part, as set out in **Appendix A**.
3. A key objective of the Office is to influence systemic improvement and provide public assurance on the integrity of the administration of entities we oversight. This assurance includes actively monitoring and following up with entities to ensure that agreed recommendations are implemented.

## REVIEW METHOD

4. In conducting this review, we requested information from Australia Post on actions it had taken to implement the recommendations made in the report. We also met with senior executives from Australia Post who provided the Office with an update on the implementation progress and other service improvements. These actions were analysed against Australia Post's response to the report and evidence of the actions was obtained, either through publically available sources, such as updated website content or through updated internal policy and guidance documents.

## COMPLAINTS TO AUSTRALIA POST

5. Australia Post first published its annual complaint statistics in 2016–17. The number of complaints Australia Post received in 2017–18 was 1.1 million, which was unchanged from 2016–17, despite parcel volumes growing by over 10 per cent in the same period.

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<sup>2</sup> [Review of Australia Post complaints about carding, Safe Drop and compensation—01 | 2018](#)

## Follow-up on Australia Post's response to the Ombudsman's recommendations

6. A significant portion of Australia Post's complaints were about the status of parcel deliveries, with Christine Holgate CEO of Australia Post recently revealing 700,000 complaints were customers querying 'where is my parcel and when will it arrive?'.<sup>3</sup>
7. Australia Post has clearly identified this as an area of focus strategically going forward and in 2017-18 it has taken action to streamline the missing item enquiry process.

## COMPLAINTS RECEIVED ABOUT AUSTRALIA POST

8. In 2017-18 the Office received 3,772 complaints about Australia Post (including StarTrack), down 10 per cent from 2016-17 (4,203). Complaints received have been reducing since a peak in 2014-15, as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

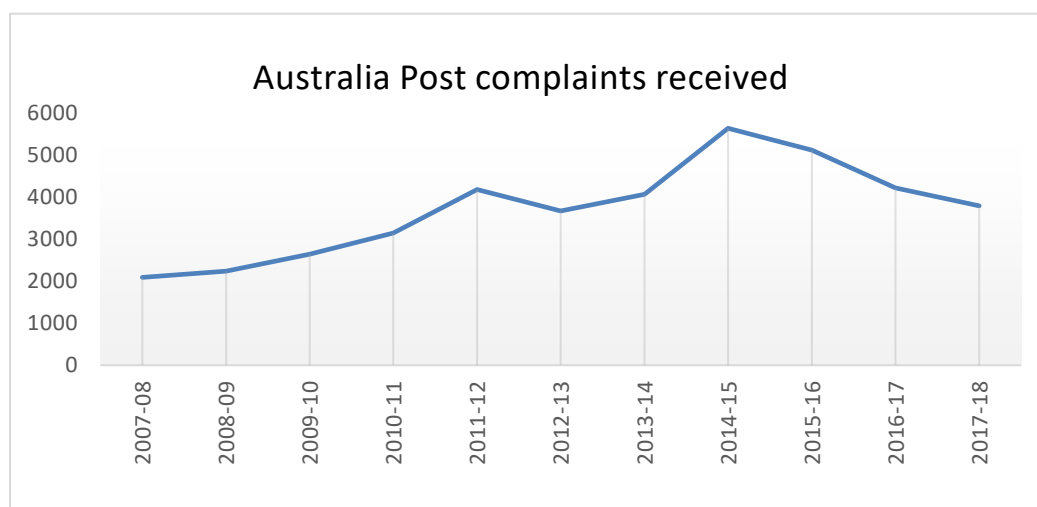


Figure 1 Australia Post complaints received 2007-2018

9. Although we received less complaints last financial year, complaints relating to delivery, delay, loss and compensation, continue as the main issues.
10. Complaints received about Australia Post in the first half of 2018-19 were around 30 per cent lower than the same period in 2017-18.
11. We will continue to monitor the trend in complaints to the Office and consider whether they are the result of Australia Post's improvements in complaint-handling or other factors.

## OVERVIEW OF THE STATUS OF AUSTRALIA POST'S ACTIONS AND COMMITMENTS

12. Australia Post made 18 commitments in its formal response<sup>4</sup> to address the recommendations in the report.

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<sup>3</sup> AustPost CEO says its biggest challenge is thinking about the future of the workforce, Trailer Magazine, <http://www.trailermag.com.au/news/article/auspost-ceo-says-its-biggest-challenge-is-thinking-about-the-future-of-the>, 6 December 2018.

<sup>4</sup> [Review of Australia Post complaints about carding, Safe Drop and compensation-01 | 2018](#), page 53

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13. We have categorised the status of the commitments Australia Post made in response to the report recommendations, as follows:

- Implemented—the intent of the recommendation has been fully addressed by Australia Post.
- Work in progress—Australia Post has made significant progress in implementing the commitments made in response to the recommendation. Consistent with its continuous improvement operating model, Australia Post's actions in this regard are either ongoing or still in a trial phase therefore cannot as yet be considered as fully implemented.

14. Table 1 below summarises the implementation status of each commitment.

*Table 1—Summary of the status of Australia Post's implementation of recommendations*

Recommendation	Commitments	Status at April 2019	
		Implemented	Work in progress
1	2	1	1
2	2	2	n/a
3	2	1	1
4	5	2	3
5	3	1	2
6	4	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>

15. A detailed explanation of Australia Posts actions so far in relation to each commitment is set out in Table 2 below.

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**Table 2—Australia Post’s progress in implementation of its commitments in response to the report recommendations**

Recommendation	Australia Post’s commitment in response	Australia Post’s actions	Status
<p><b>1. Carding</b></p>	<p>1. Publish by end of June 2018 on its website types of locations/households/delivery points/premises which may not be suitable for parcel delivery.</p> <p>2. Review guides and training for enquiry and complaints staff to ensure they can readily identify if an address may not be suitable for parcel delivery.</p>	<p><b>Updated online content</b>—updated online content on carding including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publishing information on the types of locations/households/delivery points/premises which may not be suitable for parcel delivery and what <u>alternative delivery options</u> are available.</li> <li>• Frequently asked questions in the <u>Help and Support</u> web area to include common complaint delivery scenarios and disputed deliveries.</li> <li>• <u>Published a frequently asked question</u> to address the common complaint scenario where a notification card has been left but a person was home at the time but no attempted delivery was made.</li> <li>• <u>Published information</u> for customers on what to do when a postal article is missing.</li> <li>• <u>Providing information</u> to customers on what steps Australia Post takes when an investigation into a missing item enquiry is lodged.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff guidance</b>—Australia Post has made changes to promote consistent handling of carding disputes with updates made to staff internal guidance on ‘Roadside Delivery (RSD)’, ‘Parcel Delivery Experience Expectations’ and ‘How to handle a delivery issue’.</p>	<p><b>1. Implemented</b></p> <p><b>2. Work in progress*</b></p>

\* (2) Includes ongoing improvements to staff (agent) training policy and procedures to better explain the investigation process at the enquiry stage. Australia Post is also considering publication of a complaint-handling policy so customers can know what to expect if they need to complain.

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**Table 3—Australia Post’s progress in implementation of its commitments in response to the report recommendations (Cont.)**

Recommendation	Australia Post’s commitment in response	Australia Post’s actions	Status
<p><b>2. Carding</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publishing information on its website by the end of June 2018 about the general steps undertaken when investigating a missing or lost item.</li> <li>2. Reviewing its customer interaction framework and the quality assurance processes that support it. Including a new quality framework, supporting scoring metric, improved complaint handlers’ accountability to provide accurate and tailored customer experiences.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Streamlined the missing item process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints about lost parcels are one of the most common complaints received about Australia Post. A number of significant advances have been made to the way in which complaints about lost items are managed by Australia Post. It has streamlined the missing item enquiry process with the end result being a faster resolution time for customers.</li> <li>• By bringing forward the date for a complaint to be lodged from five days after expected delivery, to the expected delivery day, this has allowed Australia Post to work with the postal network to deem a parcel lost after five days past the expected delivery, rather than 10 days. This has resulted in investigations of missing item enquiries being closed with compensation (if appropriate) in half the time.</li> <li>• This reform to the missing item process has seen a reduction in complaints about missing items in the monthly average volume of complaints compared to the period before the reforms were implemented.</li> <li>• Feedback from staff and customers on changes to the missing item investigation process indicate staff conversations with customers are easier and from a customer experience, a 15 point increase in Net Promoter Score relative to last year.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Implemented</b></li> <li><b>2. Work in progress*</b></li> </ol>

\*(2) **Quality Assurance**—Australia Post advised that it had conducted a successful dispute delivery trial and that it is considering a full rollout across other domestic enquiry types, pending some technology updates that are required before a full rollout can occur.



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**Table 4—Australia Post’s progress in implementation of its commitments in response to the report recommendations (Cont.)**

Recommendation	Australia Post’s commitment in response	Australia Post’s actions	Status
<p><b>3. Safe Drop</b></p>	<p>1. Reviewing guidance to staff on relevant considerations for investigating Safe Drop complaints.</p> <p>2. Undertake a review of how we communicate Safe Drop Deliveries with our customers.</p>	<p><b>Online content</b>—updated webpage content on <a href="#">Safe Drop</a> by publishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Information online</a>—What addresses and locations are suitable for a safe drop parcel delivery and what ones are not suitable for Safe Drop.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information online</a>—Safe Drop ‘Have it left in a safe place’.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information online</a>—Safe Drop ‘What can I do if my item was delivered using Safe Drop and it was stolen or damaged?’</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff guidance</b>—Australia Post has updated staff guidance material on handling Safe Drop disputes including ‘How to handle a disputed delivery or disputed signature’ and ‘How to handle a delivery issue’.</p>	<p><b>1. Implemented</b></p> <p><b>2. Implemented</b></p>

**Table 5—Australia Post’s progress in implementation of its commitments in response to the report recommendations (Cont.)**

Recommendation	Australia Post’s commitment in response	Australia Post’s actions	Status
<p><b>4. Compensation</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implementing a new process for missing items, which is more proactive on first contact and aims to reduce additional contacts by customers.</li> <li>2. Exploring the option of network staff responding directly to some complaint types, simple investigations and compensation claims.</li> <li>3. Raising customer awareness of additional compensation options including Extra Cover.</li> <li>4. Undertaking a review of its compensation and transit warranty communications.</li> <li>5. Considering the development of additional product lines with inbuilt transit warranty as a feature.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Updated online content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website information such as frequently asked questions on <a href="#">compensation</a> and <a href="#">Extra Cover</a>. Information available online now clearly sets out a <a href="#">defined pathway</a> for customers to follow on complaint issues such as missing item enquiries, delivery enquires and compensation requests.</li> <li>• Website also now provides information for its customers on <a href="#">compensation</a>, <a href="#">refunds</a>, <a href="#">items not eligible</a> for compensation or Extra Cover and the process it applies when responding to a compensation request from a customer.</li> </ul> <p><b>Staff guidance on compensation</b>—internal staff guidance documents on compensation claims including ‘Applying compensation’, ‘How do I handle claims of Express Post delays’, ‘How do I compensate a wine sender’ and ‘ How to handle a claim of missing or damaged contents’. Australia Post has reported these changes have made it easier for agents to understand and follow the rules and the processes on when compensation should be provided to customers.</p> <p><b>Streamlined</b>—commenced processing payments by Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) following a successful pilot, as opposed to sending payment to the customer via a money order in the ordinary mail, enabling faster finalising of payments.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implemented</li> <li>2. Work in progress*</li> <li>3. Implemented</li> <li>4. Work in progress*</li> <li>5. Work in progress*</li> </ol>

\*(2) Expansion into the Licensed Post Office network is currently being considered.

\*(4) Recent changes to the consumer guarantee regime in the Australian Consumer Law currently being considered.

\*(5) A trial is currently underway on a new product which includes an in-built transit warranty for domestic tracked letters.

**Table 6—Australia Post’s progress in implementation of its commitments in response to the report recommendations (Cont.)**

Recommendation	Australia Post’s commitment in response	Australia Post’s actions	Status
<p><b>5. Complaint-Handling</b></p>	<p>1. Online complaint lodgement improvements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. New and updated frequently asked questions</li> <li>b. Easier way for customers to understand and navigate various channels</li> <li>c. Raise a complaint without an account</li> <li>d. Simplified enquiry forms that can be lodged with any device</li> <li>e. Uplift of the help and support sections of Australia Post’s website</li> </ul> <p>2. Implementing a process to identify customers who have repeated contacts by any channel and exploring the options of a specialised team to handle such contacts</p> <p>3. An improved business customer service function through more consistent and informed experience for businesses</p>	<p><b>Simplification/Access</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduced <a href="#">online lodgement</a> of complaints or enquiries that are easy and quick to use. This has removed the requirement for customers needing to first create an account with Australia Post before they can lodge a complaint online.</li> <li>• Released a number of new tools and initiatives that are designed to provide further options to customers, these include live chat 24/7 with Chatbot, ‘Text your choice’ launched for parcel delivery and introduced system and software changes such as interactive voice and call routing functions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improved information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Released updated common complaint issues through frequently asked questions and a revamped <a href="#">Help and Support section</a>, which has been designed for easy mobile device use.</li> <li>• Clarified its website content to provide concise explanations about how customers can manage their <a href="#">delivery options in transit</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Expectation setting</b>—Improved its management of customers’ expectations through providing information to customers on what steps and processes Australia Post will take, for example when it receives a <a href="#">complaint</a>, <a href="#">missing item enquiry</a> or a request for <a href="#">compensation</a>.</p> <p><b>Complaint-handling performance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced the call-waiting time in 2017–18, by 21 per cent compared to 2016–17 and it has also seen a reduction in the average time taken to resolve customer issues.</li> <li>• Enabled network staff access to key databases which is allowing simple consumer queries and compensation matters to be responded to quickly.</li> <li>• Made changes to the way it has structured the business and government customer service function.</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. Implemented</b></p> <p><b>2. Work in progress*</b></p> <p><b>3. Work in progress*</b></p>

\*(2) Australia Post commenced a trial aimed at identifying repeat callers, analysing reasons for repeated contacts and exploring how to resolve these customers’ issues on first contact wherever possible. A technology solution has been implemented to assist with this process.

\*(3) Since November 2018 a number of updates have occurred to improve the Business Support Portal for business customers.

**Table 7—Australia Post’s progress in implementation of its commitments in response to the report recommendations (Cont.)**

Recommendation	Australia Post’s commitment in response	Australia Post’s actions	Status
<p><b>6. Complaint-Handling</b></p>	<p>Australia Post accepted recommendation six on complaint-handling in part, on the basis that it had already implemented a number of the quality assurance measures the recommendation suggested.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continuing the formal root cause investigation process that commenced in 2017, with a view to deliver continuous improvement.</li> <li>2. Continuing to invest in greater tracking capability for domestic and international items.</li> <li>3. Continuing to conduct customer surveys and trends and data is fed back to Australia Post’s senior management.</li> <li>4. Continuation of the option for customers to request an internal review of their complaint, which is then escalated to a senior manager.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Quality assurance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved a number of quality assurance measures for complaints. For example, the Quality Team which monitors complaints that may escalate to this Office will take over a complaint and action it with a view to resolving the complaint.</li> <li>• Launched a number of quality assurance measures to promote improvements in agent performance, these include every agent receiving a minimum of three quality evaluations per month.</li> <li>• Continuing to conduct root cause analysis to identify improvements. For example, current issues being considered for improvement include sale of Extra Cover for postal articles that are ineligible for compensation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Greater tracking capability</b>—In December 2018, Australia Post improved its IVR technology to enable better tracking updates.</p> <p><b>Repeat customer contacts</b>—Commenced a trial of repeat customer contacts which identified six reasons for repeat contacts by customers. Australia Post has advised it is seeking to target the six identified reasons through training and has also employed technology to identify repeat callers and transfer them to a specialised team of complaint-handlers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Work in progress</b></li> <li>2. <b>Work in progress*</b></li> <li>3. <b>Implemented</b></li> <li>4. <b>Work in progress*</b></li> </ol>

\*(2) Australia Post continues to make investments in tracking capability and processing automation throughout its network.

\*(4) **Right to Review**—Commenced a trial in December 2018 to offer customers the right of a review at closure of a complaint. At the conclusion of the trial Australia Post will consider if this process should be rolled out as a business as usual practice. Australia Post has also updated the web content on its ‘Complaints and Feedback’ webpage to offer to [escalate the complaint](#) within Australia Post.

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16. The review reveals that Australia Post has made significant enhancements to complaint accessibility for its customers, including the introduction of the following reforms:

- Allowing customers to quickly and easily lodge complaints and enquiries online.
- Updating its Help and Support webpage and also revamping the frequently asked questions to specifically address common complaint scenarios we identified in the report.
- Clearly set out defined pathways for customers to follow to seek resolution to common complaint issues such as missing item enquiries, delivery enquires and compensation requests.
- Providing clear online information to customers on what actions and processes Australia Post will take when responding to complaints, compensation requests and missing item enquires.
- Publishing information online, on what addresses and locations are or are not suitable for a Safe Drop parcel delivery and also revised frequently asked questions on Safe Drop.
- Streamlining the missing items enquiry process to deliver faster resolution to customers.

17. The Office is also mindful of the following indicators of change in service and culture as reported by Australia Post:

- Since the launch of Australia Post's online complaint and enquiry portals in August 2018, it is reported that there has seen a rise in the proportion of customers that are choosing to make a complaint online compared to other methods.
- Australia Post's renewed customer centric approach was also borne out in its Net Promoter Score<sup>5</sup> (NPS) results of +17.1 (uncalibrated) which was an improvement of 5.9 points on the results in 2016–17.<sup>6</sup> There was also an improvement in the parcel receive delivery experience NPS, up four points to +67.
- In 2018, Australia Post rolled out a pilot program 'The Delight Program' which aims to develop a positive mindset and a common customer service language amongst staff to help them delight customers in their interactions with Australia Post.<sup>7</sup> Following the pilot Australia Post has committed to rolling out this cultural change program over the next three years.
- In 2017–18, Australia Post has reduced call-waiting times in its Customer Contact Centre by 21 per cent compared to 2016–17. On average Australia Post resolved issues within 33 minutes, an improvement of 47 per cent compared to 2016–17.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> An NPS can be as low as -100 or as high as +100. Any positive score means an organisation has more advocates (promoters) willing to recommend them than critics (detractors). Australia Post Annual Report 2018, page 36.

<sup>6</sup> Australia Post Annual Report 2018, page 36.

<sup>7</sup> Australia Post Annual Report 2018, page 32.

<sup>8</sup> Australia Post Annual report 2018, page 31.

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- We have observed that Australia Post has placed a renewed focus on customer satisfaction and it has launched a number of initiatives designed to improve complaint performance and customer satisfaction, including the Group Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Christine Holgate publishing her personal telephone and email contact to enable customers to contact her directly.<sup>9</sup>

## CONCLUSION

18. Australia Post has made significant progress and displayed a high level of commitment towards improving its complaint-handling performance and customer service experience.
19. Australia Post is currently finalising the implementation of the 2018 report recommendations. The Office's own 'Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling'<sup>10</sup> identifies that people and culture are important pillars for organisations looking to build and maintain best practice complaint-handling performance. These principles do not happen overnight, they take time to sustain before they become part of ongoing business.
20. While a number of the commitments are still underway by Australia Post, we acknowledge that it is not unusual for the rollout of significant organisational and cultural change to take a number of years. We encourage Australia Post to continue to expedite the implementation of these measures.
21. Our Office will continue to monitor Australia Post's efforts to improve its complaint-handling performance through our business as usual processes and a further update will be included in our 2018–19 Annual Report.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://auspost.com.au/about-us/corporate-information/executive-leadership-team/christine-holgate>

<sup>10</sup> Better Practice Guide to Complaint Handling, Office of the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Originally published in 1997, [http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/35615/Better-practice-guide-to-complaint-handling.pdf](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0020/35615/Better-practice-guide-to-complaint-handling.pdf)

## Appendix A - Australia Post’s response to the Report recommendations

Recommendation	Australia Post’s response
<b>Carding (Recommendation 1)</b>	
<p>1. Australia Post should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Publish clear advice for customers regarding addresses which may not be suitable for parcel delivery which may then only receive a notification card.</li> <li>ii. Review guides and training for enquiry and complaints staff to ensure they can readily identify if an address may not be suitable for parcel delivery.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>Australia Post will publish information on its website by the end of June 2018 about the types of locations/households/delivery points/premises which may not be suitable for parcel delivery. This information will be general in nature, given the variety of practical and physical considerations impacting parcel delivery options and the associated difficulties with being definitive. We anticipate this information will direct customers to contact us to obtain specific clarification about local delivery arrangements, where required.</p> <p>Australia Post has implemented a continuous improvement program for reviewing and reconsidering our processes, information and training to ensure we meet the changing needs of our customers and community. Information relating to the parcel delivery suitability of particular addresses is currently available to our enquiry and complaint handlers, but we will continue to review the information available to ensure our staff are empowered with the right information to assist our customers. Our enquiry and complaint handlers are able to obtain specific clarification about local delivery arrangements from our delivery network, where required.</p>

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<b>Carding (Recommendation 2)</b>	
<p>2. Australia Post should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Publish information which outlines the steps it follows when conducting a search for an item and provide the information to customers at the commencement of an investigation.</li> <li>ii. Review its quality assurance process to ensure that advice provided by enquiry and complaint staff is accurate and consistent.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>Australia Post will publish information on its website about the general steps undertaken when investigating a missing or lost item. This information will be published by the end of June 2018, and will be constructed cognisant that each individual investigation is undertaken on a case- by-case basis, and to allow for the fact that our investigation processes need to be somewhat agile as technology and our customers' expectations evolve more and more rapidly.</p> <p>Australia Post has recently undertaken a review of its customer interaction framework and the quality assurance processes that support it, with a view to improving the customer experience. This review led to a new quality framework, and supporting scoring metrics, which improve enquiry and complaint handlers' accountability in providing an accurate and tailored customer experience.</p> <p>This framework is currently being rolled out across customer enquiry and complaint functions. In addition, staff coaching, education and disciplinary action is maintained in p database, allowing for identification of ongoing or even wilful deviation from Australia Post's expectations. In such cases, a manager will take action to address any short falls.</p> <p>The following processes are also in place to assist to ensure the advice provided by enquiry and complaint staff is accurate and consistent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• regular quality checks to identify areas for improvement</li> <li>• additional, more targeted quality checks looking for trends or best practice examples as well as any interactions which may contradict Australia Post policies or procedures</li> <li>• calibration sessions between managers and quality assurance staff to ensure scoring metrics and related arrangements are optimised;</li> <li>• side-by-side staff monitoring and interactions</li> <li>• individual coaching sessions with staff to discuss areas of focus, improvement and development</li> <li>• team briefings, which include upcoming changes to products, services and processes; discussion of trends and identification of areas of focus for the team</li> <li>• assessment to reinforce new processes and identify any gaps in staff knowledge.</li> </ul> <p>It should also be noted that Australia Post also undertakes root cause analysis of known issues, the outcomes of which can then be used to help educate both our customers and our commercial senders - for example, in relation to addressing, labelling, packaging and lodgement practices that are likely to minimise issues.</p> <p>Australia Post is constantly monitoring and reviewing its quality assurance processes to ensure we continue to meet our customers' expectations, and meet the changing needs of our customers and community; we will continue to undertake these reviews going forward.</p>



**Follow-up on Australia Post’s response to the Ombudsman’s recommendations**

<b>Safe Drop (Recommendation 3)</b>	
<p>3. Australia Post should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Provide enquiry and complaints staff with a standardised check list of relevant steps to follow in the investigation process including evidence that should be considered before finalisation.</li> <li>ii. Publish externally, a policy concerning the steps taken and evidence considered as part of the investigation process and make this available to customers at the initial enquiry stage.</li> <li>iii. Monitor staff performance to ensure compliance with this policy.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>A checklist is available to enquiry and complaint handlers that contains detailed information on processes to follow in the investigation process, including relevant considerations for investigating Safe Drop enquiries or complaints. Australia Post will review this document again to identify any further improvements that may be able to be made.</p> <p>As referred to in Recommendation 2, Australia Post will publish information on its website about the general steps undertaken when investigating a missing or lost item. This information will cover items missing or lost, or other enquiries or complaints, relating to the Safe Drop program.</p> <p>The monitoring, performance and quality assurance initiatives referred to above in relation to Recommendation 2 also apply to the handling of customer enquiries and complaints relating to the Safe Drop program.</p>

**Follow-up on Australia Post's response to the Ombudsman's recommendations**

<b>Compensation (Recommendation 4)</b>	
<p>4.1. Australia Post should review its enquiries and complaints concerning compensation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Identify claims which should generally be compensated without the need for the customer to make repeated contacts to access reasonable compensation.</li> <li>ii. Use this information to improve consistency in decision making and resolve compensation matters early.</li> <li>iii. Improve the quality and consistency of advice provided to customers.</li> <li>iv. Determine if the current levels of compensation offered formed a significant factor in disputes about the amount of compensation offered in settlement of a dispute.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>Enquiries and complaints concerning compensation are regularly reviewed to improve the speed at which customer issues are resolved. Specifically, for those involving a claim for compensation, we have empowered our complaint and enquiry staff to pay compensation to resolve issues when appropriate. This has subsequently reduced the average age of a complaint at resolution, and reduced the number of complaints whose resolution is delayed. In recent years we have reduced and minimised the documentation required for compensation claims, whilst also strengthening and reinforcing the objective rules relied upon by our complaint handlers when considering a claim for discretionary compensation.</p> <p>We recently implemented a new process for enquiries and complaints involving missing items that allows more proactive logging of approaches on first contact, preventing the need for additional contact whilst halving the time taking to complete an investigation. We expect the number of repeated contacts regarding missing items to decrease by almost half as a consequence. We have also enabled our network to respond directly to customers for some complaint types and are investigating the possibility of Post Offices undertaking some types of simple investigations and compensation claims.</p> <p>The monitoring, performance and quality assurance initiatives referred to in Recommendation 2 also apply to the consistent and speedy handling of compensation claims, and the quality of advice provided to our customers.</p> <p>We have considered the recommendation relating to disputes about the amount of compensation offered, and have identified that such disputes are often burdened by a lack of understanding about the nature, availability and limitations of discretionary compensation available, and the nature, availability and benefits of our Extra Cover transit warranty, at the time of lodgement of an article. To assist our customers to better understand these arrangements, we are currently reviewing the information made available in our customer facing channels (including our website, our Post Office network, and our customer contact centre), with the objective of ensuring our customers clearly understand the services and extra features available.</p> <p>Work is underway to maximise customer awareness of the additional options available regarding compensation, including Extra Cover. Australia Post aims to both improve our publically facing material and reinforce opportunities for customer facing staff to offer advice on the availability of the extra cover service.</p> <p>Furthermore, Australia Post is considering the development of additional product lines which come with an inbuilt transit warrantee as a feature. Whilst these plans are at a feasibility study stage, we would be happy to share more information on developments when any product offering is closer to a go to market stage.</p>

**Follow-up on Australia Post's response to the Ombudsman's recommendations**

<b>Compensation (Recommendation 4) - Continued</b>	
<p>4.2. Australia Post should provide further guidance to all staff responsible for considering compensation claims to ensure appropriate procedures are followed and all available information is considered before making a decision.</p>	<p>4.2 In addition to the monitoring, performance and quality assurance initiatives referred to in Recommendation 2, Australia Post has robust measures in place to provide further training, guidance, and coaching to staff when shortfalls, either individually or systemically, are identified.</p>
<p>4.3. Australia Post should review its quality assurance process to ensure consistency in decision making.</p>	<p>4.3 The monitoring, performance and quality assurance initiatives referred to in Recommendation 2 also apply to the consistent and speedy handling of compensation claims, and the quality of advice provided to our customers.</p>

**Follow-up on Australia Post’s response to the Ombudsman’s recommendations**

<b>Complaint-handling (Recommendation 5)</b>	
<p>5. To reduce complaints Australia Post should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Simplify the method for customers to lodge an online complaint by providing a specific complaint and feedback option.</li> <li>ii. Review online access to customers to allow them to quickly and easily lodge a complaint without the requirement for customers to create an account.</li> <li>iii. Review the classification method for recording of complaints to ensure that complaints are appropriately recorded as complaints rather than investigations or feedback and are appropriately escalated.</li> <li>iv. Ensure learnings from complaints are adequately captured to allow continuous improvement.</li> <li>v. Improve its management of enquiries and complaints to identify customers who have repeatedly contacted and enquired (all channels) on the same issue and escalate that matter as a complaint.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Accepted</b></p> <p>On the two aspects of this recommendation relating to online complaint lodgement, this year we will be delivering improvements to the way we support our customers online. This will include: new and updated FAQs to help customers with the most common types of enquiries; an easier way for customers to understand and navigate escalation channels; the ability to raise a complaint without creating an account, simplified enquiry forms that can be lodged on any device; and an uplift of the help and support section of our website. These improvements will provide an additional benefit of strong foundation for further digital customer service initiatives.</p> <p>On the aspect of this recommendation relating to classification, Australia Post acknowledges the Australian Standard ISO 10002-2006 definition of a complaint. Australia Post applies and expands upon this definition by classifying an approach as a complaint even where a response is neither implicitly nor explicitly expected. This expansive approach provides a consistent framework for our conversations with our customers and staff, and is expected to further evolve over time to meet our commitment to continuous improvement.</p> <p>A number of years ago, we began encouraging the use by our enquiry and complaint handlers of more neutral language when dealing with customers. Words like 'case' and 'enquiry' are preferred over 'complaint' - language which was found to unnecessarily agitate customers given the associated negative connotations (i.e. that someone with a valid concern is a 'complainer', rather than providing important and valuable feedback). For similar reasons, our enquiry and complaint handlers are referred to during interactions as 'agents', rather than 'complaint handlers'. Notwithstanding the softer language, all customer approaches are given consideration as a complaint, regardless of whether the complainant is making a complaint, enquiry or seeking investigation.</p> <p>We note that 'feedback' and 'investigation' classifications are internal terms used to inform and manage how particular approaches are handled. The classifications operate alongside, but separate to, our application of the definition of a complaint and do not minimise or negate our management of approaches as complaints.</p> <p>On the aspect of this recommendation relating to continuous improvement, this is currently undertaken and will continued to be actioned on two levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at a macro level, by proving trend data from our complaints management system to senior stakeholders within the organisation to permit appropriate monitoring and management, and to ensure continuous improvement of our services</li> <li>• on a micro level, by the identification and escalation of any individual shortfalls to management for ameliorating with relevant staff.</li> </ul> <p>On the aspect of this recommendation relating to repeated contacts, in addition to the improvements identified in Recommendation 4.1, we have recently developed a process to identify customers who have repeatedly contacted Australia Post, by any channel. We are now investigating the creation of a specialised team with the capability and knowledge to correct and reduce instances of repeated or recurring contact about similar issues.</p> <p>Furthermore, Australia Post recognises that business customers often have specific and reoccurring needs. Australia Post will be investing more in an improved dedicated business customer service function. We intend to improve the quality of experience for business customers by providing a more consistent and informed experience.</p>

**Follow-up on Australia Post’s response to the Ombudsman’s recommendations**

<b>Complaint-handling (Recommendation 6)</b>	
<p>6. Australia Post should:</p> <p>i. Conduct a review of complaints for customers who also contacted the Ombudsman to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ why its complaint system was unable to resolve the matter at either the enquiry or complaint stage</li> <li>▪ root cause issues which give rise to disputes</li> <li>▪ opportunities for improvement to its processes and guidance for staff</li> <li>▪ if its quality assurance practices adequately identify unsatisfactory complaint management practices amongst staff.</li> </ul> <p>ii. Consider introducing a customer survey to measure the effectiveness of its complaint management program and to capture feedback.</p> <p>iii. Expand the use of its review process to provide customers with an opportunity to have their matter considered by a more senior officer who is independent of the existing enquiry and complaint process.</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b></p> <p>On the aspect of this recommendation relating to a review of complaints for customers who also contacted the Ombudsman, the four considerations identified are already taken into account when Australia Post investigates complaints relating to Australia Post received by the Ombudsman. Any shortfalls, trends or root causes are raised at the appropriate levels of management. A more formal root cause investigation process was established in 2017 and, while it continues to be refined in connection with our commitment to continuous improvement, this process has already aided in improving the customer experience.</p> <p>Australia Post recognises many complaints are initially prompted by concerns with tracking a particular delivery. We will invest in a greater tracking capability for both domestic and international items. Australia Post anticipates that improvements to tracking would both provide additional reassurance and visibility for customers, and offer opportunities to proactively leverage data to identify and remedy issues early. We believe such an approach will also help limit complaints.</p> <p>Australia Post recognises many complaints are initially prompted by concerns with tracking a particular delivery. We will invest in a greater tracking capability for both domestic and international items. Australia Post anticipates that improvements to tracking would both provide additional reassurance and visibility for customers, and offer opportunities to proactively leverage data to identify and remedy issues early. We believe such an approach will also help limit complaints.</p> <p>On the aspect of this recommendation relating to applying a more expansive senior review process, Australia Post has previously trialled the use of a dedicated escalation team to perform this function, as well as the use of senior floor support or subject matter experts. These trials proved that the use of team managers for this senior review function was the most satisfactory and reliable to customers.</p> <p>Customers are currently able to request an escalation of their complaint to a team manager for the investigation, and for the original enquiry and complaint handlers' management of the approach to be reviewed. This escalation option exists both during and after an investigation has taken place.</p> <p>The team manager is then responsible for reviewing the actions undertaken during an investigation to identify and correct any short falls, with a view to resolving the complaint to the customer's satisfaction if any short falls were identified. Should a customer remain dissatisfied, the matter can then be escalated further up the chain of management to a senior manager, supported by an experience national resolutions team This process ensures that any shortfalls identified as part of the escalation are immediately understood and swiftly addressed for customers, and with staff.</p> <p>This immediate accountability ensures that any misunderstandings or knowledge gaps are corrected before they can replicate, whilst minimising the likelihood of impact to future customers. Australia Post acknowledges the spirit of this aspect of the recommendation, and will begin exploring ways to ensure escalation options are made clearer to customers.</p>

## **Appendix B - Australia Post's response to the Follow-up Report**



4 April 2019

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Dear Mr Manthorpe

**Draft Follow-up report on Australia Post's response to Ombudsman's recommendations**

Thank you for your letter to our Group CEO and Managing Director dated 20 March 2019, which Ms Holgate has asked me to respond to on behalf of Australia Post.

Your letter enclosed your Office's draft report on Australia Post's implementation of recommendations following your Office's review of complaints about carding, Safe Drop and compensation. We appreciate you providing Australia Post the opportunity to comment on the draft report

Our substantive comments on the draft report are contained in the enclosure to this letter.

As you have noted, Australia Post accepted the significant majority of recommendations from your April 2018 report. Since that time, Australia Post has been working actively to implement those recommendations, while also implementing a number of other initiatives aimed at improving our customers' experience of our services, and the quality of our engagement with those customers. The implementation updates provided to your Office by Australia Post in late 2018 detail a number of those actions and initiatives, and further updates are provided now.

We agree that the number of complaints made to Australia Post in the first instance remains a concern, notwithstanding the pleasing material downward trend in the number of complaints relating to Australia Post or StarTrack received by your Office. We provide comments in the enclosures that we hope go some way to addressing your concerns.

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to comment. Our Group CEO and Managing Director and I are available to assist with any further information required, and with any related public statement your Office proposes to release in relation to your final report.

Our Group CEO and Managing Director has asked me to extend an invitation to you and your staff to visit our facilities. If you are interested, please let me know and we can then discuss what you would like to see and then make the necessary arrangements.

Yours sincerely

**Nick Macdonald**  
Acting EGM Corporate Services

Encl.

## ATTACHMENT 1

### *Substantive comments on Draft Follow-up report on Australia Post's response to the Ombudsman's recommendations*

#### **Complaint volumes**

Australia Post acknowledges the Ombudsman's observation about the volume of complaints made to Australia Post.

Australia Post has begun a review of how Australia Post classifies complaints. This review is not investigating how Australia Post defines a complaint. Instead it is investigating how accurately our classification and reporting arrangements reflect the volume of complaints received. Early indications suggest that we may be over classifying (and therefore over reporting) the volume of complaints received by Australia Post. That is, our current reporting methodology may be resulting in a number of non-complaint contacts being classified as complaints. The review remains incomplete, however we would be pleased to provide further information on our findings of the review – and any changes proposed as a consequence of those findings – at a later stage.

Complaint volumes are, naturally, influenced by the volume and profile of parcels carried by Australia Post. At the half-year, our domestic parcel volumes were up approximately 10% year-on-year. For eCommerce parcels, the growth rate is approximately 30%. It is these parcels (where express services are more commonly used) that tend to see more customer complaints – as there is greater time sensitivity and customer expectations are understandably higher.

#### **Proactive notifications and emergency assistance**

Australia Post has recently begun exploring means to proactively contact our customers where we know an issue is likely to arise. During the November 2018 bushfires in Queensland, the February 2019 floods in Townsville, and the March 2019 fires in Victoria, we identified potentially impacted customers to proactively offer our reassurances that we had their articles, and that we would arrange delivery when we were able to do so, despite the difficult circumstances. These proactive notifications, particularly in Townsville, enabled us to reach out to the community to let them know that we were there for them, and to offer assistance wherever possible.

After the Townsville floods, we deployed a mobile Post Office at Idalia, which was received very positively by the community and the local licensee. We are investigating the possibility of establishing the mobile Post Office as an ongoing facility that we can deploy to support communities to access services during emergencies.

While the technology and processes to enable proactive notifications more consistently are still in their infancy, we are committed to exploring other areas and applications to keep our customers as informed and up to date on their deliveries and services.

#### **Network optimisation and investments in capacity and automation**

We continue to optimise our operational network in order to improve customer experience. Our philosophy is to reduce touchpoints and drive network efficiencies by moving from single hubs to a multi-hub processing network. The benefits include: faster deliveries, increased capacity, cost reduction, improved visibility (with more automated scanning) and a safety uplift (through removal of manual sortation and handling).

We are configuring our network for growth, having gone live with automation upgrades at Sydney West, Melbourne West, Chullora and Westringia ahead of the 2018 peak period. These upgrades supported us meeting our peak period delivery requirements despite



extreme adverse weather. Over that period we had 11 days of parcel volumes exceeding 2 million and a record day of 3 million parcels (17 December 2018).

In 2019, we are continuing to invest in infrastructure and automation across new parts of our network. This includes a new Brisbane Parcel Facility (at Redbank) and upgrades at other facilities, all planned to be ready for the 2019 peak period.

### **Other actions to speed up delivery and improve customer experience**

We are taking a range of actions focused on speeding up delivery and improving customer experience, including:

- We are preparing for further growth in next day deliveries through securing additional domestic air freight capacity and accessing the right mix of air and road linehaul between facilities.
- We have 27,770 free 24/7 parcel lockers across 340 locations, and we are working with a major retailer to roll out more. We are planning a trial with that retailer for 1,000 simple parcel lockers at 50 locations.
- We are adding 30 customer service staff in the Deliveries team to respond to customer complaints regarding delivery. They will be able to provide same day or overnight responses on enquiries that currently can take up to 3 days to resolve.

### **Providing more information to customers through the delivery process**

Australia Post provides information to customers awaiting delivery of a parcel through text messages and emails, including the opportunity to make choices regarding delivery (e.g. Safe Drop, Parcel Lockers, etc.). This information is highly valued by customers, but only possible where Australia Post has the customers' mobile number (or email addresses) to contact them. Otherwise, customers' expectations (including around delivery timeframes) are largely framed by the information provided by merchants.

We therefore continue to work with merchants to provide this customer data when they are lodging parcels, so that we can meet our customer's expectations for information and delivery choice, and improve our service levels. This action involves providing merchants with assurances regarding the use of customer data and updating merchant contracts with relevant provisions.

**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**Comments on Specific Commitments**

Updates on specific Commitments referenced in your Office’s draft follow-up report are set out in the table below.

Commitment	Comments
<p><i>Recommendation 1, Commitment 2</i></p> <p>Review guides and training for enquiry and complaints staff to ensure they can readily identify if an address may not be suitable for parcel delivery.</p>	<p>The status of this Commitment could potentially be recorded as “Implemented”, although our actions in this area are ongoing.</p> <p>As part of the Australia Post’s continuous improvement operating model, guides and training materials are regularly updated as new information, feedback and understanding of use and efficacy is received.</p> <p>While we are still considering a published complaint handling policy, we are investigating whether the information might be better suited as an inclusion to our complaints and feedback online content rather than a standalone document. As noted by the Ombudsman, some changes, such as the option to escalate – have already been incorporated into our processes and communications.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 2, Commitment 2</i></p> <p>Review customer interaction framework and the quality assurance processes that support it. Including a new quality framework, supporting scoring metric, improved complaint handlers’ accountability to provide accurate and tailored customer experiences</p>	<p>In early March, the Customer Experience Team (CET) doubled the size of its Quality Team. Four assessors have commenced with the intent they gather insights and observations on agent behaviour – with a current focus on Disputed Deliveries, Missing Items and Delivery Complaint Investigation types. The Quality Team will be enabled to report more accurately on widespread behavioural opportunities that are affecting the overall customer experience and will feed into Senior Managers and Team Managers for coaching conversations. The extra evaluations provide the Quality Team an opportunity to work more collaboratively with Team Managers to ensure consistent marking of evaluations and identifying gaps in the behaviour toolkit to be improved upon.</p> <p>The First Call Resolution (FCR) Trial, detailed below, further evidences Australia Post’s commitment to empowering our Service Consultants to be accountable for customers, their enquiries and resolution of complaints.</p> <p>The CET continues to investigate further roll-out of expedited resolution. We now expect that the next trial will focus on disputed deliveries for inbound international articles. While we plan to extend the shorter SLA in June 2019, the decision to extend this, or another complaint type, will be dependent on ensuring the additional capacity and efficiencies are available to deliver on the promises that will be made to customers.</p>

Commitment	Comments
<p><i>Recommendation 4, Commitment 2</i></p> <p>Explore the option of network staff responding directly to some complaint types, simple investigations and compensation claims</p>	<p>Australia Post continues to explore the option of expanding availability of the MyNetwork system into a number of Licensed Post Offices to enable this functionality, noting the recent success of doing so via Australia Post-owned Post Offices. In addition to being able to respond to some complaint types and pay compensation immediately, this would improve our licensees' ability to lodge investigations and complaints for customers in store.</p> <p>We recognise the valuable role that Post Offices play in communities all across Australia, and are committed to ensuring they have the best tools available to service those communities.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 4, Commitment 4</i></p> <p>Undertake a review of compensation and transit warranty communications</p>	<p>Australia Post has undertaken a review of its current service offering with the objective of developing a new, simple and easy to understand, product range for our customers. This product redesign will include clearer communication of both the built-in compensation and the additional optional transit warranties available. This redesign will also accommodate recent changes to the Australian Consumer Law. Further updates in relation to this redesign can be provided as the work program progresses.</p> <p><b>Attachment 3</b> is an illustration of the product simplification philosophy of “easy to choose, easy to buy and easy to use” that is being developed.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 4, Commitment 5</i></p> <p>Consider the development of additional product lines with inbuilt transit warranty as a feature</p>	<p>See above.</p>

Commitment	Comments
<p><i>Recommendation 5, Commitment 2</i></p> <p>Implement a process to identify customers who have repeated contacts by any channel and explore the options of a specialised team to handle such contacts</p>	<p>Australia Post has recently implemented a technology solution to identify customers who have called our customer contact centre frequently over a short period of time. These repeat calls are being directed to a specialised team tasked with taking extra steps to resolve the matter – during the call, if possible. This has provided a number of learnings, and resulted in the development of our FCR trial.</p> <p>The inbound agents in the FCR trial are challenged to investigate and resolve a customer’s issues at the time of their call, without the need for further action or contact from the back office teams where possible. To date, this trial has been successful both with our agents, who are responding positively to the additional accountability and empowerment we’ve enabled, and our customers, evidenced by an increase in net promoter scores for these interactions.</p> <p>Australia Post is taking these learnings and applying them to the wider customer contact centre, as we transition to a culture of further enabling meaningful experiences for our customers and doing more to resolve issues the first time, more often.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 5, Commitment 3</i></p> <p>Improve the business customer service function through more consistent and informed experience for businesses</p>	<p>Since November 2018 Australia Post has updated in business support platform in a number of ways to enable greater self-service, including the option to receive delivery information, signatures or Safe Drop images without the need for any contact to Customer Service staff.</p> <p>We have also upgraded our live chat functionality for MyPost Business, to provide an additional channel of communication with our customers and allow them to communicate with us in their preferred way.</p> <p>Australia Post remains further committed to simplifying customer interactions. To that end, we continually look for new functionality in our MyPost and MyPost Business platform to improve the engagement experience for all Australians.</p>
<p><i>Recommendation 6, Commitment 1</i></p> <p>Continue the formal root cause investigation process that commenced in 2017, with a view to deliver continuous improvement</p>	<p>The status of this Commitment could potentially be recorded as “Implemented”, although our actions in this area are ongoing.</p> <p>Root cause investigations form part of our continuous improvement operating model, with the objective of improving our complaint handling across the organisation.</p>

Commitment	Comments
<p data-bbox="163 326 415 386"><i>Recommendation 6, Commitment 2</i></p> <p data-bbox="163 407 464 526">Continue to invest in greater tracking capability for domestic and international items</p>	<p data-bbox="520 326 1877 386">The status of this Commitment could potentially be recorded as “Implemented”, although our actions in this area are ongoing.</p> <p data-bbox="520 407 1824 467">Australia Post will always seek to improve the information and communication it provides to customers, including in the way we track articles in our network and communicate this to customers.</p> <p data-bbox="520 488 1892 581">In addition to investing in handheld scanning technology, improving automated scanning through our parcel facilities, and adding further parcel visibility through additional scanning and tracking events for our parcels, we are improving the transparency of an article’s location for our customers.</p> <p data-bbox="520 602 1877 695">In December 2018, we improved our IVR technology to better enable customers to receive tracking updates when calling us. Since then, we have had over 100,000 customers benefit from this, 62,000 more than the same period previously.</p>
<p data-bbox="163 724 415 784"><i>Recommendation 6, Commitment 4</i></p> <p data-bbox="163 805 474 989">Continue the option for customers to request an internal review of their complaint, which is then escalated to a senior manager.</p>	<p data-bbox="520 724 1892 849">Under the Right of Review trial currently underway, Australia Post has sent communication about a right of review to 2910 customers, with 177 responding to pursue that right. Of the cases reviewed and resolved, 97% of customers have expressed satisfaction with the outcome provided, and only four customers remained dissatisfied and stated that they would seek an independent review from the Ombudsman.</p> <p data-bbox="520 870 1902 963">While a number of cases have required additional investigation to be undertaken, only 33% of reviews have resulted in an alternate outcome; 56% of cases upheld the original resolution and 11% of customers did not respond to our requests for additional information to address their concerns.</p> <p data-bbox="520 984 1902 1109">While the Right of Review trial is ongoing, we have already identified opportunities for improvement; the first opportunity identified is to improve how we communicate with customers in writing. We have begun reviewing the templates used by our staff, and are working with our agents to better personalise correspondence to ensure all aspects of a complaint’s resolution are effectively communicated to our customers.</p>