

Australia

Current postal regulatory landscape

National legislation

- Name of the act/law/rule: Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989
- Year of enactment: 1989
- Year of last amendment: 2024
- Website link to the text of the act/law/rule: www.legislation.gov.au/C2004A03812/2011-12-27/text
- All the postal legislation in place (Conventions/Rules/Regulations, etc.)
 - Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989
 - Australian Postal Corporation Regulations 2021
 - Australian Postal Corporation (Performance Standards) Regulations 2019

Coordinating body for postal policies

- Name of the coordinating body/ministry/committee/agency: Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
- Level (Ministry or other): ministry
- Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-communications-arts/post/australia-post

Regulatory authority

- Name of the coordinating regulator: Australia has different government agencies that provide regulation and oversee Australia Post's performance against the standards and other reporting obligations as part of its shareholder function, including:
 - Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC);
 - Postal Industry Ombudsman (PIO);
 - Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.

Licensing body

Is there an agency/authority that issues licences/registration to postal service operators: No

Universal service obligations

- Products and services covered by universal service obligation: Community Service Obligations (CSOs), which stipulate that Australia Post shall supply a letter service following particular requirements, including making "the letter service available at a single uniform rate of postage for the carriage within Australia, by ordinary post, of letters that are standard postal articles."
- Prescribed number of post offices: minimum of 4,000 post offices, with 2,500 in rural and remote areas
- Prescribed number of letter boxes: at least 10,000 street posting boxes
- Exceptions to universal service obligations: No
- Name of the universal service provider providing USO: Australia Post
- Status of the universal service provider providing USO: Government Business Enterprise

Financing of universal service obligations

Is there a well-defined procedure for financing the universal service provider: Yes

Australia Post is a government business enterprise and is wholly owned by the Australian government. The Australia Post Board and management are responsible for the day-to-day running of the organization. Australia Post is required by law to operate commercially and does not receive funding from the government.

How does the government support the Universal Service Provider in your country: through the shareholder departments – the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts and the Department of Finance.

Quality requirements

The performance standards concerning the frequency, speed and accuracy of mail delivery were recently amended and have been operational since 15 April 2024. These standards stipulate that:

- For 98% of locations within Australia, ordinary letters will be delivered every second day;
- Australia Post has an extra day to deliver ordinary letters across Australia; and
- Australia Post can change the way it manages priority mail so it can deliver services at a more commercial rate and work with customers to set appropriate terms and conditions.

The geographic classification for post office outlets was also updated to more accurately reflect recent population changes.

Frequency of collection/delivery of postal services

- a At least every second day (disregarding a Saturday, a Sunday or a public holiday in the place where the delivery point is located) to 98% of all delivery points; and
- b At least two days each week to 99.7% of all delivery points.

Any other relevant information

Mail must be delivered in accordance with the prescribed delivery timetable stipulated in the Regulations, and follow an accuracy timetable.

Grievance redressal

Name of the body/organization designated for grievance redressal

Postal Industry Ombudsman at the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Reserved areas/Exclusive privilege

Australia Post has the exclusive right to carry letters within Australia, whether the letters originated within or outside Australia. Australia Post also has the exclusive right to issue postage stamps within Australia.

Price regulations

The ACCC provides regulatory oversight of letter pricing. The price of letters is mandated by the basic postage rate (BPR). The BPR is currently 1.50 AUD.

Australia Post must notify the ACCC and the Minister of Communications about any proposed price increases. Non-reserved services are outside the scope of price notification. Australia Post operates commercially for parcels and other postal services.

Taxation

- Are postal products and services liable for taxation: Yes
- Goods and services tax (GST) – a tax of 10% on most goods, services and other items sold or consumed in Australia.

Cross-border regulations

- Are there clear regulations regarding the import and export of items through the postal channel: Yes
- List the authorities that are stakeholders in the cross-border postal exchanges:
 - Australia Post
 - Department of Home Affairs, through its Australian Border Force arm
 - Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
- Threshold value regarding import duties: 1,000 AUD
- Threshold value regarding VAT: 1,000 AUD
- Is there any national legislation mandating electronic advance data for cross-border transfer of items: No