

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
GPO Box 594
CANBERRA ACT 2601
Attention: Director, Postal Policy—Communications Services and Consumer Division

Dear Director,

There are several contemporary issues that impact on our postal services:

- Increasing pressure on citizens by companies and authorities to protect their own personal data from scammers, phishing, and other novel criminal activities.
- Companies that are cyber-attacked often place considerable onus on their clients by asking them to change their passwords, check their bank accounts and increase their time and surveillance of their valuable data, funds and other duties—often at great inconvenience and considerable time to urgently attend to those tasks. The consumer takes the brunt of the data breach.
- Housing affordability and demographic changes in society are driving people towards apartment living as an affordable alternative for many families. We have downsized to live near hospitals due to my failing health. There are four new high rise buildings under construction near our home in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- Many government and utility organisations have turned to automated address finding software, with wide variation in their programming of address nomenclature, sometimes with no option on some websites to manually enter details. In our case there is over a dozen different ways to record our address with various companies and organisations.
- Postal delivery officers are faced with apartment building mail with widely varying versions of individual apartment addresses.
- Letter mail out systems from hospitals, government, and other companies are inadequate at correctly addressing apartment mail, with letters often undeliverable due to incomplete addresses generated by poor, automated mailing software. In our building at [REDACTED] there are over 40 apartments on 6 levels—it is not uncommon to see mail addressed to a resident with no unit or level number. e.g. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- In the 12 months living in our apartment building, I have seen mail routinely thrown on the mailroom floor, with residents' personal details and business freely viewable by everyone that lives at and enters the building.
- The apartment numbering system is not that complicated, so I regularly pick up residents' "thrown" mail and place it in their mailbox.
- My four complaints to Australia Post 2022-2023 have not yielded a permanent solution.
- Parcel collection notices usually have an indecipherable name scribbled on a card, then thrown on the floor. Some of these parcel collection cards left unattended for weeks.
- There is a significant number of NDIS clients in our building, many in wheelchairs, that do not have the capacity to monitor their mailbox frequently, so it is not unusual for their personal details and source of mail to be left on the mailroom floor for days or weeks. These people are vulnerable to cyber attack, and deserve better protection of their personal information.

Since the recent implementation of automated address generating software, I have experienced frustration changing addresses, as many organisations simply do not know how to find our address on their computer system, due to the lack of standardisation of apartment addresses. Organisations increasingly compel their clients to update personal details online, and others are difficult to contact by phone. Customers are at the mercy of online Chat Bots, online address finders, and automated systems that abide by no particular rules for addresses.

The only way for myself and my partner to protect our personal data was to pay for a post office box, and request all of our contacts to send electronic mail. This is an imperfect system, since Telcos must send SIM cards to a residential address, and large organisations often do not have a centralised system to change postal address. I received an A4 letter from a WorkCover authority, thrown on the mailroom floor for all to see—that was very upsetting.

I hope this information helps in bringing Australia Post forwards into the future, but recommend that Australian standards be adopted for apartment addressing, to help residents and postal officers alike.

Regards

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