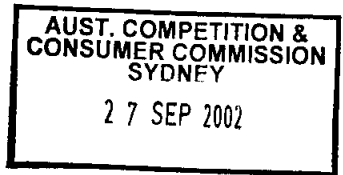


Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2002

The Chairman,  
Australian Competition and Consumer Commission,  
Level 7  
123 Pitt St,  
Sydney, N.S.W., 2000.



FILE No:
DOC: D02/52272
MARS/PRISM:

Dear Sir,

Re Proposed Increase of Basic Postage Rate by 5 cents.

May I submit that there is a strong case for no increase of the basic postage rate, until Australia Post restores two of its basic services to the public, viz.

- (1) Post Offices re-opening from 5 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays.
- (2) Post Offices re-opening on Saturday mornings.

For many years, the provision of these facilities, at vital times, totalling about 5 1/2 hours, used to be the normal, accepted thing.

When they were removed, there was no reduction of basic postage rates.

Because Australia Post has a monopoly of postal services, or nearly so, the public has had to accept the loss of services, however inconvenient.

But surely, they should not have had to.

Apart from the important needs of the community generally, and of rural people who come to towns on Saturday mornings, there are the great numbers of tourists throughout Australia, who rely on Post Offices being open, to send off photos and other items to family and friends in distant places.

This city of Albany is one of many popular tourist centres around Australia.

People who arrive here late on Friday afternoons should not have to wait three days to find out what postage to buy, and purchase it.

### Objection to 5 cents increase.

If stamps were available in twos, the increase proposed need only be 2 1/2 cents each.

The smaller increase would help keep general price rises down, and be a valuable saving for the many welfare and charitable organisations that depend on the mail to contact donors.

(Last December I listed 14 such or other organisations that contacted me through the mail, also the last June - all doing great work, and deserving support. Happily they welcome small donations.)

More could be said, but, thank you for considering this Submission.

Yours sincerely,

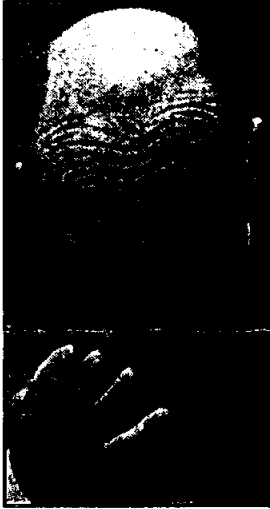
M. H. Dale  
(M. H. Dale - Mr.)  
Retired.

Enclosure: Copy of news report, "Stamps on rise after 10 years"

In THE WEST AUSTRALIAN.

Saturday September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2002.

Page 4.



**Allan Fels:** Decision an appropriate balance.

# Stamps on rise after 10 years

## Australia's post rate one of lowest in world

■ CANBERRA  
By Mark Mallabone

THE price of ordinary stamps is set to rise next year — for the first time in a decade — after the increase passed muster with Australia's consumer watchdog yesterday.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has approved conditional moves by Australia Post to lift its price from 45¢ to 50¢, to take effect in January.

But it torpedoed other proposed price rises relating to bulk mail, big letters and local delivery services.

The public has until September 27 to respond to the commission's draft recommendations, after which the increase requires Federal Government approval.

Commission chairman Allan Fels said the decision struck an appropriate balance between the interest of mail users and the financial viability of basic postal services.

"The (commission) considers the proposed increase in the cost of postal stamps will enable Australia Post to achieve adequate returns for at least the next five years," he said.

The price of regular stamps has not gone up since January 1992.

Australia Post group manager of letters Gary Lee said that even at 50¢,

Australia's basic postal rate would be one of the lowest in the world.

He noted inflation had risen 30 per cent during the time the rate had remained unchanged.

"The proposed 5¢ increase represents a rise of 11 per cent and compares with a 100 per cent increase in the price of a litre of milk and a 50 per cent rise in the price of a loaf of bread over the last 10 years," Mr Lee said.

At 50¢, Australia would continue to have one of the lowest rates of basic postage in the developed world. In equivalent Australian currency, Canadian postage was 53¢, France 61¢, Germany 76¢, Italy 66¢, Japan 71¢ and Britain 54¢.

"The ACCC considers the proposed increase in the cost of postage, stamps will enable Australia Post to achieve adequate returns for at least the next five years," Professor Fels said.

Proposed price increases relating to bulk mail and related services were knocked back because they were already making good profits for Australia Post, he said.

Opposition communications spokesman Lindsay Tanner said the Government was to blame for Australia Post needing to increase stamp prices.

"Last year the Howard Government raided all of Australia Post's record net profits with a special \$109.8 million dividend," he said.

"This left Australia Post with no profits for reinvestment."

—with AAP