

27 JUN 2023

CANBERRA

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19/6/2023.

The Chair ACCC..Ms Gina Cass-Gotlieb,

Dear Ms Cass-Gotlieb,

SUBJECT: MY OPPOSITION TO SUNCORP SELLING OFF ITS BANKING ARM
TO THE ANZ BANK.

I oppose the sell off for a number of reasons:

- *....reduction in competition in the banking industry.
- *....loss of jobs in the finance sector.
- *....concern about a planned Disaster Response Centre of Excellence which might not have a legal responsibility to the community if the information it supplies is not correct.

I will address the competition aspect first using a scenario in my own area...the Redcliffe/Kippa Ring area.

I suggest these observations would be replicated across much of Queensland.

We have adjoining shopping centres, Peninsula Fair and Kippa-Ring Village. (linked by a travelator)

They have already seen St George Bank close and NAB to soon close its doors.

Meanwhile the administrative hub of the region, the Redcliffe CBD, has no banks at all...They were closed down over recent years.

The Peninsula Fair has a Suncorp branch while the Village has an ANZ

branch.

Under the sale I would see the Suncorp bank close with its duties taken over by ANZ.

I could see the ANZ being swamped with customers and unable to satisfy their needs.

Redcliffe has 55,000 residents and a third of them are aged.

There are 23 nursing homes and retirement villages on the Peninsula and because of their reluctance (security fears) and inability to use IT banking many of these folk still want face to face banking. (One ABS estimate suggests 2.6 million Australians do not have IT capability.)

I did a check today of both branches and found three tellers hard at work at Suncorp but just one teller's cage at the ANZ.

There was even a line waiting for face to face service at Suncorp.

Other staff were busy in booths and offices helping customers with their inquiries and problems.

Suncorp staff numbered around eight.

ANZ staff numbered around five...a teller and four support staff.

(I noted Bank of Queensland recognises the need for face to face banking and has four teller's cages.)

Because of the need for face to face banking I have coined the phrase "Kash Still King in Kippa Ring."

The community has a strong loyalty bond to Suncorp many having grown up with the Queensland based bank.

I think they will be crushed if Suncorp's banking arm is sold off and their accounts transferred to a much smaller branch at Kippa-Ring Village.

I, for one, must consider churning our seven accounts from Suncorp to other providers.

For example ANZ does not offer a "trustee" style Kid Saver Account to which I contribute to help my grandchildren.

Nor does it have a Growth Saver Account like Suncorp.

*....Loss of jobs in the finance sector.

Referring to the Kippa Ring situation, what will happen to the excess staff....that is, eight Suncorp members joining five ANZ staffers when only say six people are needed....will the seven extras be made redundant?

*....Suncorp talks of committing \$19 million to developing a Disaster Response Centre of Excellence with state of the art technology enabling Suncorp to communicate with customers and to monitor weather alerts and talk with communities.

This is re-inventing the wheel because Queensland already has a number of organisations providing weather information and advice, before, during and after a natural disaster.

Firstly we have the Bureau of Meteorology, then the Disaster Co-ordination Centre at Kedron, the Disaster Recovery Authority and finally councils including Brisbane City and Moreton Bay who provide alerts electronically.

Shortly we will have a new emergency management operating through the police.

Should the Suncorp Disaster Centre go ahead I ponder if the information provided was not correct if Suncorp could be sued by community members for damages as occurred with SE Water and the Wivenhoe Dam flood disaster?

For the reasons above I appeal to the ACCC to block the sale of the banking arm of Suncorp to ANZ.

Yours sincerely,

J.Graham Davis.



Our enduring commitment to Queensland.

A message from Suncorp Group

When we announced the difficult decision to sell Suncorp Bank to ANZ in July last year, we said Suncorp was committed to maintaining its strong presence in Queensland and further investing in the state.

Today we're pleased to reinforce that commitment through a \$25 million jobs and investment package for Queensland, as agreed with the Queensland Government should all the necessary approvals be received.

Further to our commitment to maintain our headquarters in Brisbane, the package will ensure Queensland jobs are prioritised with a guarantee there will always be more Suncorp jobs in Queensland than any other state. In addition, Suncorp has committed to jobs for a further 120 people in Townsville through the creation of a 'Suncorp Regional Hub' which will support the growth of this important regional centre.

The package is a positive step towards Suncorp Group becoming a dedicated Trans-Tasman insurer at a time when both the value of insurance and the need for a vibrant, sustainable insurance sector has never been greater. Queensland is the most disaster impacted state in Australia, and we know the increasingly complex challenges of climate change, extreme weather and insurance affordability require our full attention and investment.

This is why Suncorp has committed to investing at least \$19 million as part of the package to developing a Disaster Response Centre of Excellence out of our Brisbane headquarters, with state-of-the-art technology enabling us to monitor weather alerts, proactively communicate with our customers and impacted communities and improve Suncorp's response before, during and after major weather events - not only in Queensland, but right across Australia and New Zealand. This will see us continue to grow Suncorp's Disaster Response Team in Queensland, with the creation of an additional 20 full-time roles to support this activity, while a fully functional mobile hub will also be purpose-built to assist

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Queensland has a strong economic outlook and a prosperous future, but this must be underpinned by a strong and viable insurance industry. We remain of the firm belief that Suncorp's ability to tackle the challenges ahead and help Queenslanders build their futures and protect what matters will be significantly enhanced as a dedicated insurance company. That is our purpose after all.

Christine McLoughlin, AM
Suncorp Group Chairman

Steve Johnston
Suncorp Group CEO

The Suncorp Group includes Suncorp Bank, AAMI, GIO, Apia, Suncorp Insurance, Vero, Shannons, Bingle, Terri Scheer, CIL Insurance, and Essentials by AAL.