Australia Post CEO escalates “Post 30” restructuring drive

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13 July 2026

Australia Post CEO Paul Graham recently used an internal video address to tell the corporation’s more than 60,000 workers that the next four years will be a “battle for our lives,” in which the business must be radically restructured or “die on the vine.”

Citing intensifying competition with Amazon and other new companies providing fast on demand delivery, seven days a week, Graham’s statement was a clear threat that Australia Post workers confront a race to the bottom on wages and conditions with the gig economy.

Emphasising that the coming period would be even more “tumultuous” than the last, Graham said the four-year restructuring program, Post30, was “probably the most important strategy in the 215 years of Australia Post.”

Post30 represents an escalation of the Post26 program, aimed at transforming the public postal service into a profit-driven parcel logistics corporation subordinated to the demands of e?commerce giants and major retailers.

This is the latest stage in an endless restructuring and cost-cutting process at Australia Post, which has increasingly been forced to function as a profit-making commercial entity by successive Labor and Liberal-National governments, since its corporatisation under the Hawke-Keating Labor government in 1989.

Under Post26, Australia Post halved ordinary letter delivery to every second business day, after the Albanese Labor government, with the Communication Workers Union (CWU)’s blessing, removed the legal requirement for daily mail service.

The CWU leadership worked with management to devise a New Delivery Model (NDM) that nominally fit within the parameters of “one beat, one postie”—that is, that one delivery worker covers the same route each day. This was necessary because of lingering opposition to the disastrous union-management Alternative Delivery Model (ADM), Australia Post’s previous attempt to slash costs by assigning posties two beats to deliver on alternate days. The ADM was ultimately abandoned because it did not deliver what big business demanded—a low-cost parcel service with delivery times that could compete with Amazon.

The reality of the NDM is that posties have been called upon to deliver more, bigger and heavier parcels, significantly increasing the workload. While letters are only delivered to half of the beat each day, parcels are delivered to the entire round.

Since this change came into effect in April 2024, Australia Post has twice raised the price of stamps, increasing the cost of sending an ordinary small letter from $1.20 to $1.70. A further increase, to $1.85, has been approved by the federal government for later this year.

In other words, customers will soon be paying over 50 percent more than they were two years ago, for a service that is half as good. This is clearly intended to deliberately hasten the decline of regular letter delivery, the part of Australia Post’s operations that requires a large full-time workforce and which stands in the way of the carrier’s total transformation into a parcel-delivery business.

Underscoring this, Graham said Australia Post was already “working with our government on the next phase of reform”—that is, a further reduction in mandated delivery frequency—and that he believed the “last letter” would be delivered “potentially within the next decade.”

The core of Post30 is the remodelling of Australia Post around e?commerce and ultra?fast parcel delivery. Graham cited the corporation’s 2026 eCommerce Report, which shows Australians spent $82.6 billion online in 2025, up 14 percent year?on?year, with 9.8 million households shopping online. He pointed to Amazon’s expected $10 billion in Australian revenues after just 11 years and its Prime model of “free” same?day delivery within narrow delivery windows as the standard customers now demand.

To meet these demands, Australia Post has acquired Rendr, a last?mile “delivery orchestration” platform that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to coordinate deliveries across multiple courier services, placing posties on an equal footing with gig-economy operators like DoorDash. The company boasts that this will allow merchants to offer same?day and on?demand delivery across much of the

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country, with 1–2 hour windows and weekend and evening delivery.

Graham disparaged these gig-economy operators, saying, “The driver may not be safety checked, there may not be the usual protocols that we would have in place, the type of pay that we pay our people, but that’s the competition.” But he emphasised that Australia Post has to “play in that space.”

In other words, management is using the existence of a super?exploited layer of gig-economy workers as a battering ram to undermine secure, full-time jobs at Australia Post.

This signals a decisive shift toward the “Amazonification” of postal work. Same?day, seven?day, narrow?window delivery requires a flexible, heavily monitored workforce, combining direct employees, contractors and gig?style couriers, whose work is driven and tracked in real time by algorithms.

Graham also hinted at the broader cost-cutting measures to be implemented under Post30. He declared, “if we are not ‘cost fit’ and we are not efficient and we are too expensive, we will not be in business. That’s a responsibility every single one of us has to have.

“When it comes to a process, either eliminate it… simplify it or automate it. We’re going to go on that journey with AI as a tool in a very, very big way.…

“If we don’t have great people, passionate every day, getting out of bed and working really, really hard to deliver on Post30, then we won’t make it.”

Graham was sending a clear message to Australia Post workers: Accept whatever cuts to jobs, wages and conditions management seeks to impose, along with demands for speed-ups and increased productivity, or you’ll be out of a job.

The CEO’s video address, threatening the livelihoods of Australia Post workers, has been met with total silence from the CWU bureaucracy, because the union fundamentally agrees with the transformation of Australia Post into an Amazon-style gig-economy parcel delivery service. It endorses the framework of “competitiveness” and “sustainability,” seeking only to secure a seat at the table and preserve the union’s dues base and bureaucratic privileges. Its function is to police the workforce, isolate opposition and prevent any independent struggle against restructuring.

The CWU bureaucracy has for years worked hand?in?glove with management to impose successive rounds of restructuring. Postal workers are constantly told by the CWU bureaucracy that this is inevitable due to the decline in letters and that to keep their jobs, workers must accept the changes insisted on by management.

In 2020, the union smothered opposition to the Alternative Delivery Model with a no?strike deal. When Post26 was rolled out, the CWU collaborated in designing—and played the lead role in imposing—the NDM. Central Branch secretary Shane Murphy hailed this as the “complete opposite” of the “slashing and burning” taking place in other countries. But it in fact involved the biggest “slashing and burning” of Australia Post’s service offering in its history—the ending of everyday delivery.

Today, the CWU continues to serve as a “partner” in managing change. It has publicly welcomed improved financial results and “modest profits,” hailing them as due to the “hard work” of staff and “constructive engagement” with management. The union boasts of “significant consultation” over new conduct and performance regimes, indicating that the bureaucracy will play a key role in imposing the intensified productivity regime of Post30.

This means postal workers need to build their own organisations of struggle—rank-and-file committees run by workers themselves, not highly paid union bureaucrats—in every depot.

The fight against cost-cutting and restructuring at Australia Post (AP) is inseparable from the fight for decent wages and conditions for the super-exploited drivers and riders at Amazon, Uber, DoorDash and other gig-economy operators. In a race to the bottom, only management can win! Through rank-and-file committees, postal and delivery workers, whoever their employer, can link up in a unified struggle for better pay and conditions.

The Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (PWRFC) was formed by a group of AP workers in 2021 to fight for this perspective and take forward the struggle against the ongoing restructuring operation, in opposition to the complicit CWU bureaucracy. We encourage all postal and delivery workers, whether at AP or elsewhere, to contact us today to discuss building a rank-and-file committee at your facility and how you can join this fight.

Above all, the fight to defend jobs, conditions and universal postal service poses the necessity for a socialist program: taking Australia Post and the broader logistics and communications sector out of profit?driven hands and placing them under genuine public ownership and democratic workers’ control, organised to meet social need, not corporate gain.

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