

# ***Legislation (Deferral of Sunsetting—Australian Postal Corporation Regulations) Certificate 2018***

## **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT**

Issued by the Attorney-General in compliance with  
section 15G of the *Legislation Act 2003*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The *Legislation (Deferral of Sunsetting—Australian Postal Corporation Regulations) Certificate 2018* (the certificate) was made under paragraph 51(1)(c) of the *Legislation Act 2003*. It is a legislative instrument for the purposes of the Legislation Act and must be registered on the Federal Register of Legislation. The certificate is not subject to the disallowance provisions of the Legislation Act as the deferred sunsetting day specified in the certificate is on or before the first anniversary of the sunsetting day (subsection 51(4) of the Legislation Act).

### **OUTLINE**

Sunsetting is the automatic repeal of legislative instruments after a fixed period. The Australian Government's sunsetting framework is established under Part 4 of Chapter 3 of the Legislation Act. The purpose of the sunsetting framework is to ensure that legislative instruments are kept up to date and only remain in force for so long as they are needed.

Subsection 50(1) of the Legislation Act provides that a legislative instrument is automatically repealed on the 1 April or 1 October immediately on or following the tenth anniversary of its registration, unless it was registered on 1 January 2005. Legislative instruments registered on 1 January 2005 are subject to the staggered sunsetting timetable set out in subsection 50(2) of the Legislation Act.

Under paragraph 51(1)(c) of the Legislation Act the Attorney-General can issue a certificate to defer the sunsetting day of an instrument for a period of either six, 12, 18 or 24 months. The instrument will then be repealed on the day specified in the certificate instead of the scheduled sunsetting day.

This allows instruments to continue to be in force for a further but limited period of time when they would otherwise sunset. This removes the administrative burden of remaking instruments which would have a limited duration prior to their repeal and potential replacement, or where circumstances prevent the making of replacement instruments prior to the sunsetting day.

The certificate defers the sunsetting date of the *Australian Postal Corporation Regulations 1996* (Australia Post Regulations) from 1 April 2019 to 1 April 2020.

### **STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY WITH HUMAN RIGHTS**

A certificate of deferral of sunsetting for six or 12 months issued by the Attorney-General under paragraph 51(1)(c) of the Legislation Act is not subject to disallowance (subsection 51(4) of the Legislation Act). As such, a statement of compatibility with human rights is not required (section 9 of the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011*).

## **PROCESS BEFORE CERTIFICATE WAS MADE**

### **Regulatory impact analysis**

Certificates of deferral of sunseting are machinery of government instruments, and are therefore not subject to the regulatory impact assessment requirements set out by the Office of Best Practice Regulation (OBPR). The OBPR reference for this standing exemption is ID19633.

### **Consultation before making**

Before the certificate was issued, the Attorney-General considered the general obligation to consult imposed by section 17 of the Legislation Act.

Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, Minister for Communications and the Arts (the Minister), advised the Attorney-General of the reasons in support of issuing the certificate. The Minister is responsible for administering the *Australian Postal Corporation Act 1989* (Australia Post Act), the enabling legislation under which the Australia Post Regulations were made. The Minister is the relevant rule-maker for the purposes of section 6 of the Legislation Act.

The certificate is consistent with the policy intent of the sunseting arrangements. Accordingly, further consultation was unnecessary.

### **Statutory preconditions relevant to the certificate**

If the statutory conditions in section 51 of the Legislation Act are met, an instrument's sunseting day can be deferred for either six, 12, 18 or 24 months by means of a certificate made under that section. In terms of process, the Legislation Act requires:

- a) the responsible rule-maker to apply to the Attorney-General in writing
- b) the Attorney-General to be satisfied that:
  - i) the instrument would (apart from the operation of the sunseting provisions) be likely to cease to be in force within 24 months after its sunseting day, or
  - ii) the proposed replacement instrument will not be able to be completed before the sunseting day for reasons that the rule maker could not have foreseen and avoided, or
  - iii) the dissolution or expiration of the House of Representatives or the prorogation of the Parliament renders it inappropriate to make a replacement instrument before a new government is formed, or
  - iv) the Attorney-General has approved Part 4 of Chapter 3 of the Legislation Act (sunseting) not applying to the instrument, and
- c) the Attorney-General to issue a certificate. The explanatory statement for the certificate to include a statement of reasons for the issue of the certificate.

On the basis of the information contained in the statement of reasons below, the Attorney-General is satisfied that the instrument would, apart from the operation of Part 4 of Chapter 3 of the Legislation Act, be likely to cease to be in force within 24 months after their sunseting day. As such, the criterion in subparagraph 51(1)(b)(i) of the Legislation Act is met.

## **Statement of Reasons for issuing of the Certificate**

For the purposes of subsection 51(5) of the Legislation Act, this section sets out the statement of reasons for the issue of the certificate.

The Australia Post Regulations are made under the Australia Post Act. Part 2 of the Australia Post Regulations describe processes by which Australian Government officials may open a postal article they reasonably believe to contain illegal drugs, chemicals or other quarantine material and the records to be kept in these circumstances. Part 3 of the Australia Post Regulations describe processes by which the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission may inquire into disputes between Australia Post and commercial mailing houses over rates negotiated for bulk mail services.

The Australia Post Regulations are currently being reviewed to ensure that they remain fit for purpose, are operating efficiently and effectively and are drafted consistently with modern drafting practices. It is expected that, as a result of the review, the Australia Post Regulations will be repealed and remade within the next 24 months.

A 12 month deferral of the sunset day for the Australia Post Regulations will avoid the need to remake the regulations in their current form for the short period before they cease to be in force.

## **More information**

Further details on the provisions of the certificate are provided in [Attachment A](#).

The instrument which is the subject of the certificate, and which will now sunset at a later day as specified in the certificate, is available on the Federal Register of Legislation.

Further information may be requested from the Attorney-General's Department about the operation of this certificate, and from the Department of Communications and the Arts about the instrument to which the certificate applies.

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **NOTES ON THE CERTIFICATE**

#### **Section 1      Name**

This section provides that the certificate is named the *Legislation (Deferral of Sunsetting—Australian Postal Corporation Regulations) Certificate 2018*. The certificate may be cited by that name.

#### **Section 2      Commencement**

This section provides for the certificate to commence on the day after it is registered.

#### **Section 3      Authority**

This section provides that the certificate is made under paragraph 51(1)(c) of the Legislation Act.

#### **Section 4      Deferral of sunsetting**

This section provides that the Australia Post Regulations for which the sunsetting day is 1 April 2019, is taken to be repealed under section 51 of the Legislation Act on 1 April 2020.

#### **Section 5      Repeal of this instrument**

This section provides that the certificate is repealed at the start of 2 April 2020.