

Dave Ward
General Secretary
CWU
150 The Broadway
Wimbledon
SW19 1RX

29 April 2020

Dear Mr Ward,

Thank you for your letter of 28 April 2020 in which you raised your concerns about Royal Mail's decision to temporarily suspend Saturday letter delivery as part of its response to the COVID 19 emergency.

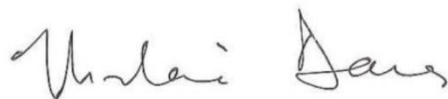
I have asked Jonathan Oxley, who is a member of Ofcom's Board and has executive responsibility for our postal programme, to arrange a call with you to discuss the situation. In the meantime, I thought it would be useful to clarify Ofcom's role in this recent decision.

Under the Postal Services Act 2011, the regulatory conditions that require Royal Mail to deliver letters 6 days a week as part of the universal postal service also provide that Royal Mail is not required to sustain these services without interruption, suspension or restriction in the event of an emergency.

We are in an unprecedented time and acknowledge in this context that the Covid-19 pandemic is an emergency situation. The statutory framework allows Royal Mail to modify its operations, including reducing the frequency of the delivery of letters, without formal authorisation – if it considers this necessary to respond to the emergency challenges it faces in sustaining the universal postal service.

However, Royal Mail's delivery obligations remain important elements of the universal service. The company has been very clear this is a temporary change. We will therefore keep these, and any other measures taken in response to the emergency, under review as the situation develops, including, in particular, to consider at what point we are no longer in an emergency situation.

Yours sincerely,



Melanie Dawes