

Postcomm and Postwatch

Two independent organisations, Postcomm – the Postal Services Commission – and Postwatch – The Consumer Council for Postal Services – were set up by the government under the Postal Services Act 2000.

Postcomm is an independent regulator. Among other things it licenses postal operators, controls Royal Mail's prices and quality of service, promotes competition in postal services and safeguards the universal postal service.

Postwatch is the consumer watchdog for postal services. Postwatch is an independent body, neither part of Royal mail nor the government. It acts as the voice of the consumer in all postal matters, ensuring that customers get the best possible service at realistic prices. For further information see the Postwatch website at www.postwatch.co.uk.

Postwatch also gets involved at a local level on issues such as post office closures, problems on a delivery round or trials of new services in an area.

Customers with a complaint against Royal Mail or any other licensed operator should take it up first with the organisation concerned. If Royal Mail or the other licensed operator does not provide a satisfactory response, the complaint can be referred to Postwatch which will take it up with the organisation concerned on your behalf.

Since January 2004, Royal Mail has to compensate domestic customers whose mail is delayed three days or more beyond the due date. There is a separate scheme for bulk business mailers. Details can be found in the Postcomm document: *Compensation - A brief guide* which is on Postcomm's website under *Licensing/Royal Mail's Licence*, dated 7 October 2003.

Useful contacts:

Royal Mail complaints/enquiries: 08457 740740
Postwatch: 08456 013265