



**Business, Innovation,
Science and Trade
Committee**

20 October 2026

Sir Ian Cheshire
Chair
Ofcom
[by email]

Dear Sir Ian,

Subject: Royal Mail: service standards and regulatory accountability

Thank you for meeting me in September.

The Committee is today publishing the Government's response to our report on the regulation of postal services and, as promised, I write to set out the Business, Innovation, Science and Trade Committee's continuing concerns about Royal Mail's performance, and to request a response to the numbered points below.

In May, we concluded that Royal Mail's service was unacceptable and that Ofcom's regulatory approach had failed over several years to secure the necessary improvement. Households and businesses continue to bear the cost of unreliable deliveries.

We therefore called for a clear roadmap for better regulation, including proposals for any additional powers Ofcom needs.

1. **Responsibility for regulatory reform.** Ofcom's response states that changes to its powers and remit are matters for Government and Parliament. The Government, meanwhile, says it would give serious consideration to proposals from Ofcom. This leaves unanswered who will take responsibility for identifying and closing the gaps in postal regulation. Has Ofcom submitted proposals to the Government for additional powers or duties? In your view, what are the additional powers and resources Ofcom needs to ensure Royal Mail improves? Please provide any proposals you have submitted to Government and their response. If not, please explain why, whether you intend to do so, and by when.



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Please also commit to informing the Committee when any proposals are submitted.

2. **Parliamentary access to performance data.** What assessment has Ofcom made of changes needed to enable it to share data on actual delivery volumes with Parliament, including information deemed commercially sensitive? Please identify any legal barriers (such as section 56 of the Postal Services Act 2011 as previously flagged), the changes that would be required to address them, and how appropriate confidentiality safeguards could operate without obstructing parliamentary scrutiny.
3. **Unannounced inspections.** What assessment has Ofcom made of conducting unannounced inspections of delivery offices to establish how contingency procedures affect delivery performance? Please explain whether Ofcom has sufficient powers to undertake these inspections, whether it intends to use them, and what additional powers or resources would be required.
4. **Delivery against Royal Mail's improvement plan.** Royal Mail published its improvement plan on 21 April following agreement with the CWU, but does not envisage meeting its targets until April 2027. Although its first-quarter results for 2026–27 show some progress towards the reduced targets, it has failed to meet any of its annual delivery targets for six years.¹ Our report gave Royal Mail and Ofcom six months to demonstrate meaningful change, a period that expires on 22 November. What measurable improvements will Ofcom require by that date, and what evidence supports your assessment of whether Royal Mail will deliver them?
5. **Protecting postal users at Christmas.** What specific measures is Ofcom putting in place to ensure an acceptable service over Christmas 2026? Please set out the assurances you have required from Royal Mail on staffing, capacity and contingency arrangements, how performance will be monitored, and what will trigger intervention. The exclusion of the Christmas period from normal delivery targets must not leave households and businesses without effective regulatory scrutiny when demand is greatest.

¹ Citizens Advice, [Citizens Advice responds to Royal Mail's latest Quality of Service results - August 2026](#), 21 August 2026



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6. **Assessment of Christmas performance.** Ofcom has committed to publishing an initial assessment of Royal Mail's progress against its improvement plan by the end of 2026. Will that assessment include performance during the Christmas period, notwithstanding its exclusion from normal targets? If the publication timetable prevents a full assessment, please commit to publishing a supplementary assessment and specify when it will appear.
7. **Consequences for further failure.** Ofcom has already announced an investigation into Royal Mail's failure to meet its 2025–26 delivery targets. A further fine would be the fourth in successive years for poor performance. If your initial assessment finds that Royal Mail is failing to deliver its improvement plan, what immediate enforcement action will you take? Please explain how that action would secure improvements that previous penalties have failed to achieve.
8. **Stamp prices and service standards.** Citizens Advice has called on Ofcom to use stamp price caps to incentivise compliance with delivery targets.² What assessment has Ofcom made of this proposal? Please explain what scope exists within your current powers to link permitted price increases to service performance, whether additional powers would be necessary, and whether you intend to act.

Please reply by **22 November 2026**, which takes us to six months after publication of our report.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair of the Business, Innovation, Science and Trade Committee

² Ibid.