



## Publication of Finding in Postal Dispute

The Regulator today published a summary of the findings of her Office in a dispute in relation to the closure of the Arcade Post Office. The OUR received a complaint alleging that the absence of this facility in St Peter Port was of serious detriment to the elderly and disabled members of society and carried out an investigation into the matter.

“Although the closure of the Arcade Post Office does not constitute a breach of any Licence Condition or indeed Guernsey Post’s Universal Service Obligation” said Regina Finn “my Office did investigate the concerns raised in the dispute about the effect on the availability and accessibility of postal services for the more vulnerable members of society as well as the availability of services and ease of access for business and residential users generally”.

The report concludes that many of the services provided at the Arcade are available from other sources and that all of the postal services that are exclusive to GPL retail outlets continue to be available to users at Smith Street and other postal outlets. When considering the proximity of Smith Street to the old Arcade, it was concluded that the availability of postal services in Town was not impaired for general postal users. In addition, all services formerly provided at the Arcade are available at Envoy House where dedicated parking facilities and disabled access provide access for mobility impaired customers.

Both parties accepted the findings but the complainant continues to have concerns about the social aspects of the closure of the Arcade Post Office in the context of more general changes in shopping patterns and impact on the traditional “way of life”. “While we understand the points being made, the OUR investigation has concentrated on the effect that the closure has had on the provision of postal services”, said Regina Finn.

The finding also notes that during the course of the investigation it became apparent that GPL had not collected any accurate or reliable customer information and could not therefore provide the OUR with the full set of information requested to facilitate this investigation. The OUR concluded that decisions affecting customers should not be taken without adequate consideration of what those effects are, which in turn cannot be determined without the collation and analysis of comprehensive customer information.

Therefore the OUR has issued a formal direction to GPL to provide the OUR with a project plan and timetable for the development of a customer statistic compilation programme so that future decisions can be analysed thoroughly having regard to their effect on customers.

The summary of the finding is available on the OUR website – [www.regutil.gg](http://www.regutil.gg) – or from the OUR office at Suite B1&B2, Hirzel Court, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 2NH, Tel 01481 711120.

**ENDS/  
2<sup>nd</sup> April 2003**

For further information call the Office of Utility Regulation on 711120