

Regional Banking Taskforce Submission

I take exception to ABA CEO Anna Bligh's statement "Where branches are closed, it's because customers no longer need to do their banking face to face".

Regional /rural clients have found access to face to face service being gradually eroded – by stealth.

It starts with lunch-time closures, ostensibly for security reasons.

Then it becomes early closures, with staff going on call center duties.

If you have travelled 60km into town to attend a sale it does not necessarily equate that you will be able to attend your local bank branch in time.

I was advised by a local bank employee (when he pushed me to sign up for internet banking) that a KPI of his progress report was the number of clients he signed up to internet banking.

And as for relief staff to cover annual leave entitlements : "No one wants to come to Roma". What piffle; just an excuse from Head Office. A local bank actually proposed closing for 2 days a week over an 8 week period, commencing on 29th June, 2021. Someone saw sense and rescinded that proposal.

4 banks in Roma now close from 1.30/2.00pm daily whilst another closes between noon and 1.00pm, then calling it a day at 4.30pm.

The big banks have their own agendas but out here no banks equals more localized unemployment and corresponding emotional stress.

Whatever happened to community service obligation? These banks are essential services.

Not everyone has access to, not is comfortable with, on-line banking. We are constantly being warned of the dangers of on-line scams and, in some areas, internet service is sketchy at best.

Due to the impact of the GFC (remember that?) the Federal Government guaranteed deposits with the Big 4 Banks up to a stated amount.

RADICAL SUGGESTION!! Make that continued guarantee conditional upon regional/rural branch numbers remaining static.

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