

An Post announces phased closure of Cork Letter Sorting Centre and major investment in Parcels Infrastructure

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An Post today announced it is consolidating and reducing its letter processing capacity in line with global industry trends, and switching investment into its e-commerce/parcels network in Cork City and County.

The consolidation of letters operations will see the closure of the Cork Mails Centre (CMC) in Little Island, Cork with the loss of 216 jobs (affecting 240 people). Currently the Cork plant is operating at below 25% capacity as mail volumes decline at about 7% per annum due to customers moving from the old world of letters to the new world of parcels and e-commerce. The closure will be phased between September 2019 and March 2020 and staff will be offered:

- Strong exit packages of 6 weeks per year of service up a maximum of 2 years' pay;
- Redeployment opportunities within An Post's networks in the Cork area (currently employing nearly 1000 people)
- Further education / re-skilling grants up to €3,000 per person
- Help to secure jobs with new employers; a Jobs Fair and outplacement support.

An Post is engaged with the Communications Workers' Union (CWU) to ensure the best possible outcome for all the CMC staff. The closure of a mail centre was considered by the Labour Court in its Recommendation of September 2017.

The €11m annual savings from the plant closure will enable An Post to invest more rapidly in its parcels infrastructure nationally, locally, and in the automation of parcel sorting. Parcel volumes have grown by 60% since An Post actively re-entered the parcels market in 2017.

An Post plans to invest over €15m in parcels infrastructure across Cork City and the wider region over the next three years:

- 1,040 parcel lockers are being installed across Cork City and County to make collections more convenient for customers
- Major upgrade of Cork delivery infrastructure to enable ongoing growth in parcel
- A new, all electric fleet, with zero emissions will be rolled out for deliveries and collections in Cork City within weeks, extending to Kinsale, Bandon, Midleton and Mallow from next year.
- A new €750,000 delivery unit to serve the Skibbereen area will open next month
- Cork's GPO in Oliver Plunkett Street is to undergo a major refurbishment reflecting the rapidly growing range of services being developed for customers.

Commenting on today's news, Garrett Bridgeman Managing Director of An Post Mails & Parcels said:

"This is a very tough day for the staff at Cork Mail Centre who have delivered a consistently high level of performance over the years. The closure is simply due to the global trend of mail volume decline which has led to significant over-capacity in the mails system. Our priority is to look after our employees who have given great service to An Post by providing alternative employment options, good redundancy terms, further education grants and active access to other employers. The switch of investment into parcels

infrastructure will greatly increase the range of services to customers across the region and will ensure that Cork has the best e-commerce delivery service, while ensuring the mails service to customers will be maintained at the current high quality levels.”

David McRedmond, CEO, An Post said:
“An Post is responsible for its own finances and has worked hard to return to profit and growth: the Company’s task now is to develop

long-term sustainability. Closing the Cork letters’ facility is a tough but necessary step as we invest in the new world of parcels for our customers. I want to be sure of two things: first, sustainability is about decent work and we will look after our employees as well as possible; and second, I want Cork to be the first city in Ireland to benefit fully from the new parcels infrastructure for customers.”

Source: [An Post](#)

