

# Letter to Branches

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General Secretary: Dave Ward

No: 533/15

Ref: 100

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> August 2015

TO: ALL BRANCHES WITH POSTAL MEMBERS

Dear Colleague

## **POST OFFICE: PANORAMA PROGRAMME ON HORIZON ISSUES**

I would like to advise Branches and members that the BBC's "Panorama" programme scheduled for 7.30pm this evening (BBC1) will highlight the issues faced by many Postmasters in relation to alleged problems with the Horizon system.

The synopsis of the programme (as shown on the BBC website) is as follows:

*"Trouble at the Post Office*

*Panorama*

*The Post Office has prosecuted dozens of postmasters after their computers showed that money had gone missing. Some have been jailed, but could there be other explanations for the cash shortfalls? Reporter John Sweeney meets a whistle-blower who says there were problems with the computer system. And he investigates claims that the Post Office charged some postmasters with theft even when the evidence didn't stack up."*

LTB269 dated 21<sup>st</sup> April 2015 gave an overview of the situation surrounding the alleged issues with Horizon and provided an update as to the associated parliamentary activity including an adjournment debate and a BIS Select Committee Inquiry at which the CWU gave evidence. LTB269 is attached for reference.

The subject was also raised during Prime Minister's Questions on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015, when Andrew Bridgen (North West Leicestershire) (Con) asked the following:

*" Owing to ongoing issues with the Post Office's Horizon software accounting system, I believe that many honest, decent, hard-working sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses have lost their reputations, their livelihoods, their savings and, in the worst cases, their liberty. This is a national disgrace. Will my right hon. friend consider the requests from Members across the House for a judicial inquiry into this matter and bring it to a conclusion?"*

The Prime Minister replied: *"My hon. Friend has done a real service in campaigning tirelessly on this issue, and I know that he has led a debate in the House on it as well. The Post Office's answer is to say that it set up an independent inquiry which has not found evidence of wrongdoing, but, clearly, that has not satisfied many Members on both sides of the House who have seen individual constituency cases and want better answers.*

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*What I think needs to happen next is for the Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Norfolk (George Freeman), to convene a meeting involving Members of the House, the Post Office and representatives of sub-postmasters to discuss their concerns and see what should happen next. I would hope that it would not be necessary to have a full independent judicial inquiry to get to the bottom of this issue, but get to the bottom of it we must."*

I will provide an updated comment via a press release and CWU web story following this evening's programme.

Any queries in relation to this LTB should be directed to Lea Sheridan on  or Isheridan

Yours sincerely

**Andy Furey**  
**Assistant Secretary**



15LTB269 - Post  
Office Horizon System

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