



0. Communication Key Messages (within TOR)

- We are committed to thoroughly investigating all cases that have been submitted to the scheme.
- We are determined to be as transparent as possible and will provide applicants with a comprehensive report of these investigations.
- We believe our approach is reasonable and fair, and balances the position of applicants with wider public interest
- We have confidence in the Horizon system which process six million transactions every day.
- Applicants in the Scheme represent less than 0.001% of the 68,000 people using the system.
- The on-going investigations and previous reviews over the last two years have found no evidence of systemic issues with the Horizon computer system
- We have recognised that improvements could be made to training and support in wider areas and are implementing improvements
- We will provide a summary report when all investigations are have been completed.
- It would be inappropriate to comment on individual cases as details have been provided in confidence.

**** independent assurance quoted if/when possible***



0. Communication Key Messages (in-house)

- As a responsible business the Post Office is committed to listening and learning from our people. That is why we set up inquiry into Horizon computer system in 2012.
- During that time no evidence of systemic issues with the system has emerged.
- We are concerned at the length of time it is taking to investigate cases and we want to complete this process quickly so that applicants can fully understand what happened in their case. [SO? YOU MADE YOUR BED, LIE ON IT]
- Having investigated 26 of the 70 cases submitted it has now become clear that the Scheme will not work in the interests of those who have submitted cases [WHY?]
- We have therefore decided to move to a new approach where Post Office will investigate all cases and provide applicants with a comprehensive report. We will mediate in cases where appropriate.
- We have full confidence in the Horizon system which process six million transactions every day. Applicants in the Scheme represent less than 0.001% of the 68,000 people using the system.
- Once we have investigated all cases we will provide a summary report and make any improvements that can be made in-light of these findings
- It would be inappropriate to comment on individual cases as details have been provided in confidence.

*** independent assurance quoted if/when possible**



Media assessment

- The following assesses the likely levels of media interest in the issue should we take decisive action over the coming weeks (either becoming more assertive or moving to close the Scheme)
- Now to summer: Allegation of white wash by Post Office resulting in 1-2 days media coverage (poss BBC, Computer Weekly as well as nationals such as Mirror, Mail as well as regional print and broadcast) This will be drive by and include quotes from JFSA, MPs and applicants.
- Over the summer: Potential for media coverage driven by any Fol placed by JFSA on cost of the scheme.
- Summer – Christmas: Possible regional and national stories by those who continue to follow the story e.g BBC and Computer Weekly and regionals
- Run up to election: Potential remains for follow up around any announcement on digital/ITC developments though our judgement is that while the JFSA would continue to seek to generate coverage, media interest in the issue would start to fade, certainly at national level.





Stakeholder handling

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Concerns</u>	<u>Handling</u>
Minister	The Minister will have concerns in relation to the role of Second Sight following the statements made in Parliament in July 2013, and the associated risk of calls for a further ministerial statement and BIS select committee interest. The prospect of adverse media coverage is a further factor as well as: Further issues include: • Value for money and related FOI requests on spend • Potential to play into general election timing: • MPs with cases may become critical of the Post Office • Issue having potential to detract from positioning Post Office across Government as a good partner.	Many of the risks set out here apply whatever decision is made on the Scheme. Indeed it could be argued that the potential for hostile coverage playing out across the next 12 months, up to and including the election in May 2015 is significant. Our proposed approach is to seek opportunities to set out the position as fully as possible to the minister, signalling a preferred approach and associated options, but with clarity that we need to make changes to the Scheme. We will develop a detailed communications strategy (supported by external advice) and ensure approach where timing is carefully considered and the Post Office “fronts up” messaging. We would include within this detailed assessment of MP-related factors.





Stakeholder handling

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Concerns</u>	<u>Handling</u>
Sir Tony Hooper	• May resign as Chair if Post Office approach changes • Will not assist Post Office if it looks to disband the Working Group and end Second Sight's engagement • We do not believe he will take a public stance against or for the Post Office . • Believes Post Office should accept that the Scheme will take around 18 months and that is normal for a Scheme of this type • As Chair, will maintain the status quo rather than managing conflict necessary to redesign the Scheme.	• Continue with one to one meetings • Discuss how we can handle any changes in a way that helps him • Stress importance of putting the business and applicants first • Build a narrative (supported by Linklaters positioning) to assist in handling





Stakeholder handling

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Concerns</u>	<u>Handling</u>
James Arbuthnot MP/other MPs	• Being seen to champion the concerns of subpostmasters • The rate of progress • Receiving progress updates and providing them to MPs • The impact on his legacy as he is standing down at the next election <i>* Oliver Letwin MP, a member of the Cabinet, has a high profile case with decision whether to mediate or not imminent</i>	• Face to face meeting (AP and PV) – use letter as basis • Play back concerns raised by JA in last letter • Stress positive legacy of his involvement • If we don't take action the work will not be completed before the general election when JA stands down • Write to all MPs with a constituent in the Scheme and offer face to face meetings





Stakeholder handling

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Concerns</u>	<u>Handling</u>
JFSA	• This is a very personal campaign • Alan Bates believes there is an issue with Horizon and is determined to uncover it (even though there is no evidence) • He will continue to go to MPs, Ministers and the media to highlight his cause, no matter what we do with the scheme • Will continue to call for a public inquiry and pursue media coverage during or at the end of the Scheme, regardless – this is the case in whatever scenario we pursue	• Stress that we are committed to investigating every case, including yours and progress cases as quickly as possible • Stress the need to manage subpostmaster expectations • Be clear and robust about our decisions on individual cases

