
From: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd [GRO]
Sent: Thur 18/07/2013 6:03:21 PM (UTC)
To: Kevin Gilliland [GRO]; Susan Crichton [GRO]; Nick Beal [GRO]; Gayle A Peacock [GRO]
Subject: RE: Nelson Post Office Mid Glamorgan Horizon technical issues.

Kevin,

There is a process for logging and acknowledging the case. The second part of the process ie how we work with the Spmr to get to the bottom of the issues needs to be reviewed.

Gayle – would you track this case through the process making the necessary improvements as appropriate. We'll need to log any process improvements as we go along so that we can demonstrate the changes we've made and why.

Thanks,
Angela

Angela Van Den Bogerd | Head of Partnerships



148 Old Street, LONDON, EC1V 9HQ



[GRO]

Mobex:

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From: Kevin Gilliland
Sent: 18 July 2013 13:59
To: Susan Crichton; Nick Beal
Cc: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd
Subject: Fwd: Nelson Post Office Mid Glamorgan Horizon technical issues.

One to discuss.

Is there a process now for handling these?

Thx

K

Sent from my iPad
Begin forwarded message:

From: Mark Baker [GRO]
Date: 18 July 2013 12:47:15 BST
To: <colin.burston [GRO]>
Cc: Paula Vennells [GRO] Kevin Gilliland
[GRO] Angela Van-Den-Bogerd [GRO]
[GRO] Lin Norbury [GRO] Andy Furey
Subject: Nelson Post Office Mid Glamorgan Horizon technical issues.

Dear Mr Burston

Mr Steve Phillips is the Postmaster of the above PO Branch, he is one of my members. He has reported to me that he has been experiencing problems with his Horizon system since April of this year.

His records show that his system reports daily discrepancies of random amounts these being both surpluses as well as losses. Currently the losses exceed the surpluses and you are in the process of pursuing him for the repayment of the current outstanding minus figure of £3,203.2. You have apparently ignored his calls for help and his insistence that it is not his or his staff's actions that have caused these discrepancies, instead you appear to be engaged in a default action of holding him liable without proving that these losses were actually caused by his carelessness, negligence, or error, or that of his staff, and further more you have written to him to inform Mr Phillips that you intend to recover this money from his remuneration.

In one phone call to Mr Phillips I was able to establish that he has had a new security alarm system installed (I believe the system is called Tyron?) this was about 18 months ago.

This system shares the same communication line as Horizon.

The alarm system started to malfunction soon after installation, some stability was established, but in June, Romec arrived at the Branch to tell Mr Phillips that in the space of 4 weeks his alarm system had reported low or loss of connection of the line 470 times. The huge peak of these reports prompted Romec to investigate, the engineer who called said that these loss of signal reports are common but unless they reach a certain level no action is taken.

Mr Phillips has reason to believe that his new alarm system has not been working correctly since the time of installation, and he has no idea what it was that that Romec did to the communications line in order to seemingly resolve the problems that were occurring during the first 6 months following installation, but it appears that intermittent loss of communications have occurred ever since.

Given Mr Phillips balancing record prior to April of this year which was normal, and the problems with a another communication system that shares the same line as Horizon causing loss and or low signal during the period of discrepancy reporting, we have to ask what impact has all this had on the smooth flow of data generated by Horizon?

Mr Phillips daily reporting of Horizon discrepancies since April is indeed indicative of a technical failing, and we have reason to believe that there is a connection between the Horizon discrepancies and the communication issues with the Romec alarm system that shares the same line.

As we are aware there is currently work underway by forensic accountancy firm Second Sight into technical issues surrounding the Horizon system. In their interim report, they said that although there appears to be no systemic problems with the Horizon software, meaning generally the system performs as it should do, this does not preclude that individual units within the Network cannot develop faults, and they did highlight that some of the reported problems are hardware related rather than software.

Given the commitment made by Paula Vennells in her response to the Second Sight report to set up 3 working groups, which are to be independently Chaired, to find a suitable way forward to resolve technical/accounting problems that a Postmaster reports, something that is not currently available, I would like an assurance that no abatement of Mr Phillips pay is made until further enquires are made into the problems at his Branch. I would also like an assurance that as the discrepancies are continuing that all further discrepancies found at balance period end, both surpluses and losses are placed in the suspense account until we can get to the bottom of what is causing this erratic accounting.

I have copied in the senior team at Old St, given the circumstances, as I am sure that they may wish to take a view on how Mr Phillips case should be handled.

The present approach you are advocating is unacceptable, knowing what we now know, particularly as the lack of independent processes for a Postmaster to use to defend him/herself against losses that they believe have not been caused by their own actions was heavily criticised in the Second Sight report.

I would appreciate your urgent attention to this matter.

I trust that I am not going to be treated to the usual deflective response that Post Office Ltd does not recognise the CWU and therefore will not communicate with us when trying to resolve issues with our members. Recognition is granted for collective pay bargaining reasons, this is not a pay or even a contractual matter, this is a matter where representation is required by a member to try and resolve an unusual set of circumstances, where no internal resolution procedures exist.

Working with the CWU to help Mr Phillips does not imply or set any precedent in relation to Trade Union recognition which is an entirely separate issue .

Yours sincerely

Mark Baker

National Branch Secretary
Postmasters Branch
CWU