

**From:** Communications Team [GRO]  
**Sent:** Thur 25/06/2015 12:59:32 PM (UTC)  
**To:** Communications Team [GRO]  
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**Subject:** in the loop - a message from Mark Davies



**GRO**

**Mark Davies**  
Communications &  
Corporate Affairs Director

Hello

As I think most colleagues are aware, we are facing further media and parliamentary scrutiny about the Horizon system and allegations about how we have handled a small number of cases where losses have been identified in branches.

I wanted to update you with the latest picture and ask you to update your teams.

BBC Panorama had been planning a programme for next Monday, 29 June. Yesterday afternoon they contacted me to let me know they have postponed that programme. They now expect it to air later, possibly on July 6. I will keep you updated and we will continue to engage with the programme and its questions.

What is still due to happen on Monday is a Parliamentary debate about the issue. This has been called by Andrew Bridgen MP. It will take place late on Monday evening. A Government minister, George Freeman MP, will respond to the allegations we expect Mr Bridgen to make.

This could lead to media coverage in itself.

I have held teleconferences over the last couple of days to update colleagues across the business on this new activity in relation to this issue. I am really grateful to all who took part and asked questions. A key request was for a short script for use in response to questions from customers, postmasters, potential new operators, stakeholders and others.

The key points are below and I hope these are helpful. I wanted to reiterate a point I made on the call: if any colleague has any other question or point to make please drop me a line at [mark.r.davies](mailto:mark.r.davies@postoffice.co.uk) **GRO**

In addition if any colleagues come across/or are contacted by postmasters with specific questions about Horizon then they should be asked to ring NBSC so that assistance can be offered.

The allegations being made are very serious and have the potential to damage our business. I don't want anyone to feel unsighted on the key issues or facts behind the allegations.

I would really welcome your help in ensuring that they are cascaded to colleagues, particularly those who may get questions from customers or postmasters (and potential new operators).

The key points to make are as follows:

- extremely serious, untrue allegations about the Post Office and the Horizon system have continued to be repeated over the past few years by a small number of mainly former postmasters.
- the clear evidence we have in these cases does not support the allegations being made
- we committed to confidentiality to people who put grievances to us, so we cannot share details about individual cases
- what we can say is that we do not prosecute people for making innocent mistakes
- where missing cash has been dishonestly and systematically covered up we take action, based on the facts and circumstances. This happens rarely but when it does it is right we may take action as custodians of customers' money
- there is also no evidence that the Horizon system does not work as it should. This is the finding of independent investigators. It has been shown to be robust and effective in dealing with six million transactions a day, with some 70,000 people using it, and it is

regularly audited

- if there were systemic problems with branch accounting, it is reasonable to expect them to have been more widely experienced across the Post Office network than the 136 individual complaints spanning more than 10 years, during which there have been 500,000 Horizon users.
- During the past three years we have done everything and more than we committed to do to investigate the concerns put forward about our computer system. That was the right thing to do.
- We set up an independent inquiry, established a mediation scheme and provided financial support for people to obtain independent, professional advice.
- But no evidence has emerged to support the serious allegations being made

I hope this is helpful. I stand ready with my team to support colleagues further on any element related to this.

The logo consists of the letters "GRO" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are centered within a rectangular box that has a dashed border.