
From: Mark R Davies [GRO]
Sent: Thur 30/03/2017 1:35:46 PM (UTC)
To: Callard, Richard - UKGI [GRO] Patrick Bourke [GRO]
Cc: Pettitt Josh (Comms & Strat Plan) [GRO] Thompson, Laura - UKGI [GRO] Williams, Jessica - UKGI [GRO] Melanie Corfield [GRO]
Subject: RE: Horizon

Hi Richard

Thanks for this. I've added Mel to the chain: she is leading our comms approach, and hope this is useful.

That's right – the point is that (according to JFSA), 1,000 people have contacted as possible candidates, rather than joined.

In terms of an announcement, this was an announcement by the JFSA, confirming what we already know, in an attempt to drive some coverage. I've pasted it below.

Our line is: *The Post Office welcomes the Group Litigation Order as offering the best opportunity for the matters in dispute to be heard and resolved. We welcome the progress that has been made but will not otherwise comment on litigation whilst it is ongoing. We continue to have confidence in the robustness of the Horizon system which has around 78,000 users across 11,600 branches nationwide to process six million transactions a day.*

JFSA statement

The Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA) announced today that the Group Litigation Order (GLO) against Post Office Ltd has now been approved by the President of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court, which means that the case will continue through the court as a group action. Post Office Ltd is defending the claim.

Over 1,000 subpostmasters from across the UK have now applied to join the action.

While the grounds of the case may be subject to revision as the matter proceeds, the claim focuses on a number of areas – particularly the true nature of the contract between the subpostmasters and Post Office Ltd in terms of the Horizon operating system, and the way in which Post Office has dealt with alleged shortfalls.

The claim covers training and support, the proper recording of transactions, liability for claimants to pay alleged shortfalls of cash or stock and the processes for identifying, investigating and recovering shortfalls. The claim will also look at Post Office Ltd's rights to terminate subpostmaster contracts and will examine issues of "good faith, fair dealing, transparency, co-operation and trust and confidence."

Alan Bates of the JFSA said: "The case is now up and running and we have had over 1,000-plus candidates come forward so far. Subpostmasters now have until 26 July to join the action before the cut-off, which prevents new claimants joining the claim thereafter.

"Subpostmasters have brought the claim to force Post Office Ltd to accept responsibility for the flaws in its Horizon operating system, for its refusal properly to investigate accounting shortfalls and for its shoddy and careless treatment of postmasters who have lost their liberty, livelihood or savings because Post Office Ltd

wrongly accused many of them of theft or fraud. As well as a court finding of responsibility, the claimant group will be seeking appropriate financial compensation in respect of loss and damage suffered.”

The claim also seeks to establish whether subpostmasters were placed under duress by Post Office Ltd when they signed off incorrect accounts or when they resigned.

Bates added: “We are looking to establish that Post Office Ltd acted ‘unconscionably’, in other words harshly, oppressively or beyond what would be considered normal commercial bargaining. If that was the case, we’ll seek to establish whether this has a bearing on either the signing of the accounts or forced resignations. We are also concerned that individuals may have been unlawfully harassed and also whether Post Office can be held liable for damages in terms of the stigma created around the affected subpostmasters, for their loss of reputation and the stress caused as a result of these serious breaches of legal obligations.”

Any subpostmaster who was in post since 1999 and experienced issues with Post Office Limited and its Horizon system including alleged shortfalls or discrepancies or other issues from using the system, may be eligible to join the case. Either go to the website, www.poclaims.co.uk, contact poclain(GRO) or call

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From: Callard, Richard - UKGI

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Sent: 30 March 2017 14:28

To: Patrick Bourke

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Cc: Pettitt Josh (Comms & Strat Plan

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Thompson, Laura - UKGI

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Williams, Jessica - UKGI

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Subject: Horizon

Mark / Patrick

See below. This was also mentioned at the Board, just wondering if there was any more intel (at the Board we

were told that the JFSA or Freeths had been *contacted* by 1,000 SPMs, but not actually joined the action).

Nick Wallis's blog refers to an "announcement", which I can't see on the JFSA website. Was there one, and do you have it?

Many thanks

Richard

Nick Wallis (@nickwallis)

28/03/2017, 10:55

Blimey. 1,000 Subpostmasters have joined the claim against the Post Office in the High Court:
[...atyouwishfornickwallis.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/1000-s...](http://atyouwishfornickwallis.blogspot.co.uk/2017/03/1000-s...)

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