



Information Rights Team
Post Office Limited
1st Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London EC2Y 9AQ
GRO

Our reference: FOI201604010946

Mr Tim McCormack

GRO

29 April 2016

Dear Mr McCormack,

Freedom of Information Request - FOI201604010946

I am writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited ("**Post Office**") on 1 April 2016, which I am dealing with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("**FOIA**").

In your email you have requested information regarding the updating of the Horizon system.

I can confirm that Post Office does hold information related to your request. However we believe that this information is exempt from disclosure under Section 43(2) of the Act, concerning likely prejudice to commercial interests and Section 31(1)(a) Law Enforcement.

Commercial Interest

Post Office considers that disclosure of information requested about updates to the Horizon system would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Post Office and other commercial partners, in that software updates for the Horizon system are released on a regular basis to ensure that operational performance is maintained at optimal levels, as you would expect for any large IT system. Such updates include, for example, upgrades and improvements to functionality; and the introduction of new business capabilities for products & services and are, therefore, considered to be commercially sensitive.

Post Office in this respect considers that disclosure of the information would weaken its position in a competitive environment, by revealing information which could be unfairly used by its competitors.

Law Enforcement

Post Office also relies upon the exemption under Section 31(1)(a) of the FOIA, concerning law enforcement. Post Office considers that disclosure of this information would be likely to inhibit its abilities to prevent and detect crime, in that software updates for the Horizon system are released on a regular basis to ensure that operational performance is maintained at optimal levels, as you would expect for any large IT system. Such updates include, for example, security-related matters and upgrades.

Depending on the nature and extent of changes they are applied in carefully managed periodic releases, following thorough impact assessment and testing. The Post Office

cannot make public information that could compromise the security of its systems and I am unable therefore to provide you with technical details of our software updates.
Public Interest

As information has been exempted under Section 43(2) and Section 31(1)(a) of the act, a public interest test applies. This involves weighing the balance of public interest in maintaining the exemption or releasing the information. Post Office understands that there is public interest in promoting the transparency and understanding of matters which are of interest to the public. However, there is also strong public interest in ensuring that Post Office is able to operate in a fair marketplace in relation to its commercial activities and that the integrity its process and systems is protected from fraudulent or other criminal activity. This is equally applicable to the interests of its commercial partners, who should not suffer security or commercial detriments as a result of inappropriate disclosure of the information.

Accordingly, Post Office considers that the public interest is best served by maintaining the exemption respect of the information requested.

I hope the information I have provided on this occasion is useful, however if you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address below stating your reasons for your internal review request.

Information Rights Manager
Post Office Limited
Information Rights Team
1st Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London
EC2Y 9AQ
foia: GRO

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: GRO
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

GRO

Martin Humphreys
Information Rights Team
foia: GRO
<http://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/access-information>
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