

RESTRICTED - POLICY

1/05

To:

**Mr Johnson**

From:

**David Sibbick**  
Director Posts

GRO

**GRO**

20 January 2000

cc: Secretary of State  
Sir Michael Scholar  
Mr Macdonald  
Mr Davis CGBPS  
Dr Hopkins CII  
Mr Tee NEWS  
Mr Brebner PORT  
Mr Leese PORT  
Mr Whitehead CGBPS 1  
Ms Wright CGBPS 1  
Ms Spoor CGBPS 1  
Ms Madson NEWS  
Special Advisers

**POST OFFICE: VARIOUS ISSUES****Horizon**

You will be pleased to learn that after some fairly tense final stages both POCL and ICL have accepted that the problem of data corruption has now been solved to the satisfaction of both sides. As a result the Horizon roll-out programme will resume on the planned date of 24 January. The roll-out will build to a "beat-rate" of some 300 offices a week needed to ensure that every counter position at every post office in the land is equipped with the Horizon platform by the scheduled end date of Spring 2001.

**Horizon Working Group**

I do not see anything in the revised version of the CWU / CMA / NFSP letter to require changes to the draft response you already have. We will hold off arranging a next meeting of the Working Group until Simon gives us the signal to go ahead.

**Timing Issues**

For the benefit of copy recipients, I should record that we discussed briefly the unfortunate timing coincidences of the ballot on the "way forward" package opening on 24 January and closing on 10 February; the projected introduction of the Bill on 28 January; the Board decision on the WAND on 8 February and a public announcement of the decision the

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following day (so that the Board cannot be accused of using the one decision as a cynical reprisal if the ballot goes against them). You concluded that the scenario was perhaps not quite as bleak as it first appeared since traditionally the largest number of votes in the ballot would be cast within the first few days of its opening; and that there was anyway little we could do about the timing.

DAVID SIBBICK