

**RESTRICTED - COMMERCIAL**

**ANNEX B**

**STEERING BRIEF**

Whilst this meeting is intended primarily for you to see the Horizon equipment in operation it will provide an opportunity for you to emphasise to ICL the importance the Government attaches to automation now being achieved on target.

**POINTS TO MAKE**

- As you know, we took a difficult decision to drop the Benefit Payment Card in the light of our concerns about the technical and contractual complexity it introduced to the project. Our impression is that reconfiguration of the project has had the desired effect. Interested to have your perspective on it.
- I am pleased to hear that roll-out has progressed well over the last couple of months and look forward to its resumption in the New Year. Understand that you are working on a technical problem with data integrity, trust this will not delay resumption of roll-out.
- I cannot overemphasise to you the importance the Government attaches to achieving on target roll-out of the system to all post offices within the network.
- Successful roll-out of the automated system is crucial if the Post Office is to retain its existing clients, attract new business and extend its arrangements with the banks to allow benefit recipients and other bank customers to access their accounts at post offices by the time the migration to paying benefits through automated credit transfer (ACT) begins in 2003.
- I would like to establish a regular dialogue with you and suggest that we meet on a regular basis say every 6 months. If you feel the need to discuss any issues in the meantime please contact me.