

OC*Potential Claimants*

Simon Recaldin (SR) said that once HRC approves the cases that the triage exercise deemed to be Horizon related, POL will issue letters. He asked whether DBT require sight of these cases. Carl Creswell (CC) said DBT did not given POL was not making a financial commitment.

James Gourlay (JG) asked whether POL will pay postmasters' legal fees for criminal appeals upfront. Stuart Lill (SL) said a paper will go to HRC on this question, but there is a strong argument not to do so. CC said DBT should be sighted on this.

SR said POL has commissioned Peters and Peters for advice on the cases that the triage exercise did not deem Horizon related.

# IRRELEVANT

*Financial Provision*

SR said the current provision is based on an estimate of 293 overturned convictions. He said the new estimate from Peters and Peters for overturned convictions is 134 but he is uncomfortable with this figure as it does not account for 'unknown unknowns'. He also highlighted risks associated with publishing a lower provision figure.

JG asked whether the argument Paul Marshall has made about non-Horizon issues being a basis for overturns has been considered. SL said POL has received informal advice that this argument is misconceived.

*Pecuniary Claims RFI*

Steve Barlow (SB) said he is confident POL will be able to meet the KPI of 3 weeks for RFIs moving forward.

*Remediation: Principles Consultation*

Neil McDaid (NMD) said:

- Hudgell has said he will provide comments on both tranches of principles by W/C 15 May, provided his fees are agreed.
- A ToR for the IA has been drafted.
- It is likely that not all experts will be needed continuously.

CC asked about HSF continuing to play a role. NMD said POL were considering how best to approach the Independent Assessor engagement, including whether HSF could play a role in the administration function of the IA. NMD agreed with CC that there could be issues with such a move, especially given the comments about HSF in the Inquiry hearing.

SR highlighted that IA resource is scarce.

*Remediation: Process*

Regarding the shortfall analysis format, SB said he was nervous about taking data out and is keen to ensure consistency with the HSS format.

JG said it would be helpful for the OC format to be aligned to financial years (not calendar years). JG also asked if the format was sufficient for disclosure. SB said POL has aligned with HSS in terms of disclosure and Hudgell has accepted the format in two cases so far.

#### *Current Claims*

NMD said POL is paying up to offered amounts and doing everything it can to speed up settlement.

#### **HSS**

CC opened the meeting by noting that the latest Inquiry hearing on compensation had been broadly positive and the update from the Post Office seemed to be well received.

CC and SR agreed that good comms would continue to be important in demonstrating progress on the HSS.

#### *Progress update*

SR gave an overview of the remaining HSS cases, noting that there are 20 cases from the original cohort with offers outstanding. 4 of these are expected on 11 May with a further 6 going out on 26 May. SR added that the remaining cases are among the most difficult and require careful handling.

#### *HSF resourcing*

SR noted that HSF are reducing resource allocated to work on the HSS, but that POL are confident that sufficient resource is in place to hit delivery plans.

#### *Top-up payments*

SR flagged that there are two issues which will require top-up payments following full and final settlements. The first involves 8 claims where an error was made in calculating remuneration. This involves relatively small amounts. The second relates to 26 cases involving civil proceedings, where the panel want to revisit the D&I awards.

Sisi Zhang (SZ) highlighted that SteerCo will need to approve the top-up payments and may want to consider whether the payments should be made together given the different issues that have been raised.

#### *Wrongful death cases*

SR flagged that there are two wrongful death cases that are currently being reviewed. They differ in that one of them has clear causation and the other does not. There are potentially three more cases in late application cohort. POL are putting together a paper to take through governance, with case examples, and case assessment principles will be developed accordingly.

The group agreed that these cases are very sensitive and would need careful handling.

#### *Financial provision*

Victor Turner (VT) noted that the HSS provision was currently being prepared to go through audit in June.

Beth White (BW) asked whether the latest provision reflected potential tax implications.

VT stated that tax will be included in the summary based on assumptions.

#### *Dispute Resolution Process/Consequential losses*

The group discussed concerns raised at the Inquiry about consequential losses being missed because it was not sufficiently clear what could be claimed for.

SR noted that postmasters always have the right to introduce new heads of loss at any stage in the process, including in the dispute process. POL also pick up on potential losses in its shortfall analysis.

POL are developing a paper to consider the audit around how consequential losses were considered historically, including when guidance went out. This will be supported by some analytical work looking at offers made and relationship with legal representation.

SZ highlighted that UKGI/DBT are happy to help with the analytical work.

More broadly on the DRP, SR noted that POL are considering how the Good Faith Meeting (GFM) can work more constructively, following feedback from Hudgell in particular.

SZ suggested that where cases are going to an Escalation Meeting (EM) anyway, we should try and streamline the process as far as possible so they can arrive at that point sooner.

SR acknowledged that progress on the DRP cases has been slowing and that this can be partly explained by the reliance on legal representatives and interim payments reducing the incentive to engage with the process. POL are taking this to HRC to consider next steps.

CC added that it was noteworthy that Hudgell said at the Inquiry that none of his 125 cases could be settled. There could also be a chilling effect on acceptance rate if claimant solicitors say that offers may be improved after recommendations from the Horizon Inquiry.