

Message

From: Sian Jones [/O=CWUHQ/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=SJONES293]
Sent: 4/20/2015 11:17:01 AM
Subject: Press release: Full transparency on Horizon needed to protect postmasters, says CWU

20 April 2015

For immediate release



Full transparency on Horizon needed to protect postmasters, says CWU

The CWU is extremely concerned over the findings of forensic accountants Second Sight's finalised report into the Horizon computer system and the way in which the Post Office has dismissed its findings in a 92 page rebuttal document. CWU recognises that much of what Second Sight raises in its report will resonate strongly with many postmasters and as such is concerned that postmasters and Crown Office employees are still vulnerable to errors that the Horizon system can cause and is calling for an independent inquiry.

Andy Furey, CWU national official, said: "This is another damning report which reiterates the serious concerns of many postmasters. The Horizon system has been an emotionally charged subject for years now so we're disappointed in the way in which the Post Office has responded to this report. Part of the problem throughout has been the bullish behaviour of the Post Office towards postmasters who feel they are helpless victims of a computer system gone wrong.

"CWU is not convinced by the claims made by the Post Office in their own investigations which effectively call into question the professional integrity and competence of Second Sight. We find it unfair that the Post Office challenges this report whilst having gagged Second Sight so that they cannot defend themselves.

"We believe the lack of independent union representation is the root cause of many of the problems that have befallen postmasters. With proper representation we believe that many of the cases that ended up with the dismissal and prosecution of postmasters would not have escalated that far.

"We call upon the Post Office to recognise the CWU to represent postmasters and to do so as a matter of urgency. We are also calling for an independent inquiry as the situation with Second Sight leaves many questions unanswered and raises concerns about the Post Office's transparency."

The Second Sight report raises serious questions over the integrity of the Horizon system and highlights significant amounts of unreconciled sums of money that have been held in its central suspense accounts with no attempt being made to find out if this money belongs to postmasters or indeed Crown post office branches.

The widening of the scope of the investigation to include training and Helpdesk support was not communicated to postmasters and would explain the low numbers of postmasters to date that have complained about Horizon faults.

CWU has postmaster members involved in the mediation scheme and represents staff throughout the post office network.

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