

Message

From: Mark Underwood1 [GRO]
Sent: 20/04/2015 09:33:16
To: Patrick Bourke [GRO]; Angela Van-Den-Bogerd [GRO]
Subject: RE: Statement
Attachments: Briefing_Report_Part_Two.pdf; 150415 1048 FINAL Response to SS Pt 2.pdf; image001.png

Hi Angela – please find attached,

Mark

Mark Underwood
Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme
[GRO]

From: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd
Sent: 20/04/2015 09:56
To: Patrick Bourke
Subject: FW: Statement

Patrick,

I don't seem to have a final copy of the SS report and our response. Would you send to me asap.

Thanks,
Angela



Angela Van Den Bogerd
Head of Partnerships

1st Floor, Ty Brwydran,
Atlantic Close, Llansamlet
Swansea SA7 9FJ

M: [GRO]
L: [GRO]

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From: Mark R Davies
Sent: 20 April 2015 08:04
To: Paula Vennells
Cc: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd; Rodric Williams; Jane MacLeod
Subject: Re: Statement

And the team has successfully had the headline changed on the radio now, in relation to this very point.

Sent from my iPad

On 20 Apr 2015, at 07:49, Paula Vennells [GRO] wrote:

Mark/Jane, hi.

Thanks both for the work on this and for the media statement. However, the latter doesn't cover the main angle they are reporting this am - that we didn't investigate root causes before prosecuting. See the BBC website.

What is our statement on that and the detailed explanation? I'd like to have it clear in my mind.

Copying Angela and Rod, as I assume you have them both in the loop as the experts on the detail. Can you make sure we have a brief together for me and the GE asap.

Thanks, Paula

Paula Vennells
Chief Executive
Post Office Ltd

GRO
Paula.vennells@GRO

Sent from my iPad

On 19 Apr 2015, at 22:12, Mark R Davies@GRO wrote:

Paula

This is our statement on the report and lines. I will send you the reports themselves.

cheers

Mark

In strictest confidence and legally privileged for purpose of legal advice

Draft media statement [Reactive]

Investigations over the past three years have confirmed that the Post Office's Horizon computer system is operating as it should. It is used successfully by 78,000 people to process six million transactions every working day in communities throughout the UK.

Both the Post Office and independent forensic accountants Second Sight have found that the majority of the branch losses in complaints put forward to the mediation scheme were, in fact, caused by errors at the counter. A tiny fraction of the overall 500,000 people who have used Horizon since it was introduced have put forward complaints. That does not constitute evidence that the IT system is flawed or unfit for purpose; indeed, if anything, it demonstrates that the system is highly reliable.

It is therefore unfortunate that Second Sight's report includes a number of assertions and opinions which, because of their inaccuracy and/or absence of evidence to support them, will not assist the resolution of the small number of remaining complaints. To address these concerns, the Post Office has produced a

response to the Second Sight report which has also been provided to all remaining applicants to the scheme.

Following the completion of its investigations, the Post Office announced last month that it will put forward all remaining cases to mediation, with the exception of those which have been subject to a previous court ruling. Those cases will continue to be considered on a case-by-case individual basis.

Our full response to the report about the complaints provides the detail but to summarise regarding the main points put forward by the BBC:

Investigations and prosecutions: We naturally take any allegation of miscarriages of justice extremely seriously. In none of Post Office's own work, nor through any of Second Sight's work, has any information emerged to suggest that a conviction is unsafe. Post Office as a prosecutor has a continuing duty to disclose immediately any information that subsequently comes to light which might undermine its prosecution case or support the case of the defendant.

Although it has never been Second Sight's role to review prosecutions (this being for the legal process), we nevertheless agreed to provide them with anything held which the Post Office relied on to support a criminal charge or which could undermine the prosecution or support the defendant's case. We also agreed to provide, where held, other Court documents such as memoranda of conviction. That's what we have continued to do.

'Remote access': As we have always made clear, neither the Post Office nor Fujitsu can edit or delete transactions as recorded by branches.

We've provided extensive information about security and data integrity and no evidence at all has been put forward which demonstrates that transactions recorded by a branch can be, or indeed have been, altered through remote means.

None of the processes for correcting or updating a branch's accounts involve editing or removing previous, recorded transactions and are all transparent to postmasters.

We have comprehensively addressed the allegation, made in one case, of Horizon being accessed remotely from a basement in Bracknell to alter branch accounts. There was no connection to any live data from what was a separate and secure test environment.

In May 2013 we supplied Second Sight the email data we were able to retrieve from the accounts of a number of Post Office employees, dating from 2008 and more recently we supplied emails from key staff during August 2008 when the key events that triggered the line of enquiry were said to take place.

Notes to editors

In 2012, the Post Office commissioned Second Sight Support Services Limited to carry out an independent review of its Horizon computer system, which is supplied to the Post Office by Fujitsu Services Limited, in response to allegations by a small number of former postmasters about the integrity of that system. Second Sight reported on their investigation in July 2013.

The investigation found no evidence of system-wide issues with the Horizon software. However, it did point to areas where the Post Office could have done more to support postmasters using Horizon, for instance with training.

The Post Office therefore established a Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme to provide an avenue for postmasters to raise specific, individual concerns.

Of the nearly 500,000 users of the system since it was introduced in 2001, there were 150 applications to the mediation scheme, covering events spanning over a decade. A number were resolved at an early stage.

The Post Office published a detailed report about the investigations and the scheme in March 2015. This is available on the Post Office website [\[link\]](#).

Sent from my iPad