
From: Parsons, Andrew [GRO]
Sent: Wed 16/11/2016 8:14:23 PM (UTC)
To: Rodric Williams [GRO]
Subject: RE: Legally Privileged - Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody [BD-4A.FID26896945]
Attachment: _DOC_34352409(1)_BAU response.DOCX

Rodric

Apologies – got tied up on the Freeths letter.

Draft BAU response attached. I've gone for a very soft tone. Although I'm 99% sure this is a fictional case, we just can't take the risk.

I've not made any express reference to the KEL. Even the phrase "known error" could set hares racing so I've avoided it entirely. I hope however the key message ("cart before horse") still comes across.

Kind regards
Andy

From: Rodric Williams [GRO]
Sent: 16 November 2016 19:16
To: Parsons, Andrew
Subject: FW: Legally Privileged - Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody

Maybe something for Jonny to draft if you're not able?

From: Rodric Williams
Sent: 16 November 2016 19:16
To: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd
Cc: FOITEAM; Parsons, Andrew
Subject: RE: Legally Privileged - Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody

Hi Angela – I do not think this is a genuine request. It has all the hallmarks of Tim McCormack mischief, and indeed these FOIA requests were recently cited in a blog which thanked Mr McCormack "for his work and help in relation to the Horizon system".

Nevertheless, we need to respond prudently, which I think we can do as follows:

1. I would use the FOIA response as drafted, concluding the letter as follows:

We deal with requests that do not fall under the FOIA through standard business enquiry processes rather than as a formal request for information, ~~therefore in answer to your question, (insert BAU answer)~~. You will therefore receive a response from the relevant Post Office business unit directly.

2. In terms of the BAU response, the point we want to get across is that asking for the Known Error Log to try to identify whether anything in it impacted a branch's accounts is to put the cart before the horse.

The KEL is a substantial electronic record, very little of which will have any bearing on an individual branch's accounts, and none of which (Fujitsu tells us) has ever affected the Core Audit Log, i.e. the record of transactions as entered by the branch.

The PMR however is in the branch looking at his accounts all the time, and even if he can't tell precisely what has gone wrong (though Kath and Shirley's guidance will help), he must at least know when things started to

go awry.

Without even that most basic of information from the PMR, asking for the KEL is a bit like asking Sainsbury's for a list of all prices ever charged for all products to work out why he's spent more on his weekly shop, when really he should start by looking at what he's put in his basket.

Given that that is not the greatest analogy, but more importantly how central this allocation and sequencing of responsibility for branch account anomalies is in the Freeths litigation (where we should assume this will end up), I have asked Bond Dickinson (Andy Parsons cc'ed) to draft something setting this out, which we can then dovetail with Kath and Shirley's guidance for them to send.

3. On the false accounting point, it is in PMR's interest (and arguably also his duty) to raise with us anomalies in his branch accounts. If he has instead acted in a way which he is concerned gives rise to criminal liability, he should seek independent legal advice.

I hope that helps. Please let me know if you would like to discuss.
Kind regards, Rod

From: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd
Sent: 14 November 2016 20:13
To: Rodric Williams
Cc: FOITEAM
Subject: FW: Legally Privileged - Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody
Importance: High

Rodric,

Could you respond to me email of 3rd November so that we can formally respond to the follow up request from this postmaster.

Thanks,
Angela



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From: FOITEAM
Sent: 14 November 2016 17:33
To: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd <[redacted]>
Subject: FW: Legally Privileged - Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody
Importance: High

Hi Angela,

Do you have the response ready you were working on in relation to this request?

Many thanks,



Kerry Moodie

Information Rights Manager

1st Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London EC2Y 9AQ

GRO

From: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd

Sent: 03 November 2016 08:30

To: Rodric Williams; Patrick Bourke; Melanie Corfield; Mark R Davies

Cc: FOITEAM

Subject: Legally Privileged - Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody

Importance: High

Rod,

This postmaster clearly thinks that the answer to their problem is in this list of errors and in all likelihood is therefore not looking/or does not know how to look for any discrepancies in branch. I really want to try and help this postmaster but clearly we cannot say that we will not address what they have confirmed to us ie that they have falsified their account.

My preference would be to explain to this postmaster what the errors to which he refers are and that if these were affecting his branch we would be able to identify that. And as per my request to Shirley below offer some guidance on how to look for discrepancies and accounting irregularities and importantly how to control the balancing of their branch.

On the false accounting point could we say something along the lines of "each case is treated on its merit and therefore we could not say until we were aware of the facts of the situation what action if any would be taken contractually or legally. But it could be possible that an error or errors within the branch could have contributed to any loss and there is a possibility that with proper scrutiny of the Horizon data we could establish what had happened in branch"

What's your view?

Patrick, Mel, Mark – any thoughts welcome.

Thanks,
Angela



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From: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd

Sent: 03 November 2016 08:07

To: Shirley Hailstones <[redacted] GRO>

Subject: FW: Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody

Importance: High

Shirley

Would you pull some pointers together for me to send to this postmaster. I have no idea what the size of this loss is or over what period it has built up but in the absence of them talking to us I want to offer some guidance on how to look for discrepancies and perhaps staff theft/manipulation of transactions. Also guidance on how to run a tight ship eg accurate cash declarations; weekly balancing etc. I know you'll get my drift.

Could you do this today please as this postmaster is sounding desperate and making references to taking their own life.

Thanks,
Angela



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From: FOITEAM

Sent: 01 November 2016 11:01

To: Angela Van-Den-Bogerd <[redacted] GRO>; Melanie Corfield

<[redacted] GRO>; Mark R Davies <[redacted] GRO>; Patrick Bourke

GRO

; Rodric Williams <

GRO

Subject: Further Enquiry on Horizon Errors from Anobody
Importance: High

Good Morning All,

Please see the reply received from Mr Obody below.

In light of the Court Action I think legal should draft the response to this, we have provided the 'anonymous' person options to resolve the alleged issue pursue and cannot do much else in this public arena and advised what they should do if they want an internal review.

I think the response should be based on the fact that this is not a request for recorded information and whatever context are felt to be required – therefore I have attached the basic response to this for amendment.

I will acknowledge the request and await further instructions.

Regards,



Kerry Moodie

Information Rights Manager

1st Floor

Finsbury Dials

20 Finsbury Street

London EC2Y 9AQ

GRO

Dear Post Office Limited,

I thought i sent a reply to you but it doesn't seem to have got through.

I cannot talk to anyone about this because I have signed off my branch accounts with the wrong figures and I can go to prison for doing that. I haven't taken any money. I want to know what errors to look for. I read all this talk about errors in horizon on the internet I want to know what they are. YOu say you have that information but you won't give me it so what is my alternative. I don't have that sort of money to give to you. Will you prosecute me for my accounts if I talk to mrs Bogard? Please tell me, surely you have to tell me what these errors are?

Yours faithfully,

A.N. Obody

Please use this email address for all replies to this request:

request-368411-1ddf6d3c

GRO

Is foia GRO he wrong address for Freedom of Information requests to Post Office Limited? If so, please contact us using this form:

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/change_request/new?body=post_office

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<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/help/ico-guidance-for-authorities>

If you find this service useful as an FOI officer, please ask your web manager to link to us from your organisation's FOI page.

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