

## Message

**From:** Lynn Hobbs [/O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=LYNN.HOBBS44A18517-6C8B-4CCD-BACF-387886484F12]  
**Sent:** 21/07/2010 22:00:22  
**To:** Adrian Wales [GRO]; John Breeden [GRO]; Dave Hulbert [GRO]; Nigel Allen [GRO]  
**Subject:** VERY URGENT - Info needed by 12 noon Thurs 22/7  
**Attachments:** C.htm  
**Importance:** High

Adrian, John, Dave, Nigel

The emails below are pretty self explanatory and I'm hoping that you can provide me with some info to reply to Sue by lunchtime tomorrow. I'm really sorry to have to ask you to do this at such short notice unfortunately we are up against a very tight deadline.

Adrian – can you give me some info on the number of subpostmasters suspended as a result of cash checks and an overview of the process the team are following when cash shortages are found

John firstly can you let me know to date how many subpostmasters have had their contracts terminated as a result of Horizon cash checks. Secondly what can you provide in terms of the info requested on contract terminations (numbers/reasons)

Nigel – can you provide any info to help John with the above

Dave can you provide a summary of the reasons for HNGX outages and the length of time of each outage

My thanks in advance to all of you

Lynn

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**From:** Sue Huggins  
**Sent:** 21 July 2010 20:49  
**To:** Lynn Hobbs; Philippa J Wright  
**Cc:** Paul Budd; Michele Graves; Mike Granville  
**Subject:** FW: VERY URGENT

Lynn, Philippa,

Please see the e-mail below concerning a Channel 4 programme to be run on Monday night concerning the integrity of the Horizon system and our management response.

Philippa, I know that you did a lot of work on this subject some months ago and would be grateful if you could forward to me any intelligence you have on the subject please. I need this by lunchtime tomorrow and I will give you a ring in the afternoon to follow up. Thxs

Lynn, Channel 4 are clearly mixing up two issues here namely: Horizon integrity and the roll-out issues re HNGX. Can I please have a summary of the issues re HNGX – loss of service down time and number of subpostmasters suspended/terminated as a result of cash deck checks. I will also need an overview of the process the team are following when cash shortages are found as the new system rolls out.

Secondly, could you advise what information we hold on the number of Subpostmasters terminated/prosecuted over the last ten years (I know this is a big ask) and the percentage of those who have used failure of the horizon system or other related failures (inadequate training) as the mainstay of their defence. Could you also advise who I should speak to with regard to any cases we have prosecuted – I am particularly interested in what evidence we used to prove the integrity of the Horizon system in these instances.

Thank you both in advance – I am sorry but this is really urgent and must be treated as a priority. I am due to update Dave Smith tomorrow afternoon and would be grateful for any and all assistance you can give me. Please feel free to add any other thoughts/suggestions.

Sue

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**From:** Sarah J Womack  
**Sent:** 21 July 2010 18:00  
**To:** Sue Huggins  
**Cc:** lesley.sewell@GRO; Mike Granville; Michele Graves; Mark Burley; Paul Budd; Mark Burley; Martin Humphreys  
**Subject:** URGENT

Hi,  
Further to Mary Fagan's conversation with you, I am emailing the Channel 4 request and would be grateful if you could liaise with Paul Budd or myself in the morning as a matter of urgency,  
Kindest,

**Sarah Womack**  
**Senior External Relations Manager**  
**Royal Mail Group**  
**100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ**  
**Telephone:** GRO  
**Mobile:** GRO  
**sarah.j.womack@GRO**

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**From:** ruth.barker  
**Sent:** 21 July 2010 16:40  
**To:** Sarah J Womack  
**Subject:** FW: C4 News request

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**From:** Brown, Katie GRO  
**Sent:** 21 July 2010 16:33  
**To:** ruth.barker@GRO  
**Subject:** C4 News request

Dear Ruth,

We intend to broadcast a report on Channel 4 News airing a number of claims made by serving and former sub postmasters about the Post Office's computer system, Horizon. The report will be broadcast on Monday 26 July.

In our research, serving and former sub postmasters have made a series of complaints about the reliability of the Horizon computer system. Furthermore, they have registered their dissatisfaction with the training and support provided by the Post Office in regard to the operation of the Horizon system and the high number of criminal prosecutions brought rather than addressing the issue of possible problems with the computer system or other forms of action.

We understand more than 60 former sub postmasters have now approached

legal specialists and an initial 35 intend to seek compensation for losses and have criminal convictions quashed.

Specifically, we seek your response to the following comments / issues raised by current and former postmasters:

1. The Horizon system is felt to be unreliable. A wide range of failings were described to us including the suggestion that it is prone to freezing during transactions. We were told that banking transactions can "get lost" between the local Post Office's computer, the Post Office's centre server and the high-street banks' computers.

2. We have been told that it is "extremely difficult" to rectify human errors, for example when a cashier miskeys a number. We have also been told that support staff at the Network Business Support Centre are "over-run". Support staff are "frequently unable to solve problems" that local post masters bring to them. Local postmasters claim they were frequently told by NBSC staff and Business Development Managers that errors and discrepancies will "work themselves out" and are "not a cause for concern". One litigation lawyer told us that the Post Office should have determined that there were problems with the Horizon system from the call logs at the NBSC centre in Chester.

3. Increasingly the Post Office has turned to prosecution as a means to seek redress when sub postmasters accumulate debts. Currently, a number of former sub postmasters are at risk of prison sentences for failure to repay monies to the Post Office. Legal specialists and former sub postmasters have called this approach heavy-handed and disproportionate. They argue that the Post Office should concentrate on providing better computer equipment with superior training and support systems as a means of resolving these issues.

4. We would also like to know, how many sub postmasters have you prosecuted for Theft and False Accounting arising out of the Horizon system in the period 2000 to 2010? Please could you provide us with a breakdown of the yearly figures?

5. Have you conducted an investigation into the Horizon computer system as a result of complaints? If so what are the results of the inquiry?

We want to include the perspective of the Post Office in the report. To that end we seek your response to the above points.

We would be happy to conduct an interview with a representative from the Post Office. As mentioned, the report will be broadcast on Monday 26 July between 7-8pm. We would hope that you would put a spokesperson forward for interview by close of business on Friday 23 July or alternatively a statement on the above issues by 12noon on Monday 26 July.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email, my contact number is

GRO

GRO

Yours sincerely,

Katie Brown

[[http://www.itn.co.uk/images/ITN\\_NEWS.gif](http://www.itn.co.uk/images/ITN_NEWS.gif)]

KATIE BROWN

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P Please consider the environment. Do you really need to print this email?

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Thank You.

(See attached file: C.htm)