



POLICY DOCUMENT
Advertising Vacancies
During Network Transformation.

Reference information

Policy type	Policy
Ref	WP36 – Contractual - Advertising vacancies during Network Transformation.
Date	19/04/2013
Status	Final
Author	Steve Utting, Contract and Policy Advisor.
Owner	Paul Inwood, Agents Contract and Policy Development Manager.
Policy type	Contractual.
Version authorisation date	19/04/2013.
Review Date	19th October 2013.
Expiry Date	31st March 2015.
Key stakeholders	Angela Van Den Bogerd, Regional Managers, Area Managers, Field Change Advisors, Lin Norbury, John Breeden, Contract Advisors, Contract Admin Team, Steve Northey, Kjetil Fugelstad, Ketul Patel, Nick Beal, Neil Ennis, Tracy Marshall, Chris Howard.

Approval

Role	Name(s)	Date
Business input	Tracy Marshall, Lin Norbury, John Breeden, Chris Howard, Stewart Barclay, Denise Reid, Jessica Madron, Sabrina Jethwa.	Various
Assurance	Paul Inwood, Agents Contract and Policy Development Manager.	19/4/2013
Authorised	Steve Utting, Contract and Policy Advisor.	19/4/2013

Version control

Version No.	Reason for issue	Date
Final	Final version issued to distribution list members.	19/4/2013

SUBJECT: Advertising Branch Vacancies during Network Transformation.

PART 1

1.0 Purpose

This Policy Change document explains how Post Office Ltd will handle and advertise vacancies for new and legacy contracts during the lifetime of the Network Transformation (NT) programme; according to the circumstances of the vacancy. It discusses model change and how such changes will be advertised.

This document is issued to replace policy information previously supplied in ACC 12/09 and updated in ACC 08/11 which was specific to an operator's termination of contract or resignation to avoid that outcome during the pilot stages of Network Transformation. It ensures that Post Office Ltd can work towards the implementation of Local Post Office and Main Post Office operating models during the Network Transformation programme, where appropriate.

2.0 Glossary

Word/term	Definition
'At', 'Near' or 'At or Near'.	Where the vacancy will be advertised. 'At' means at the current premises, 'Near' means at other premises in the community and 'At or Near' allows for either.
ACC	Agency Changes Communiqué. A document issued to advise Post Office Ltd policy to stakeholders involved in the deployment of operators contracts.
BAU	Business as Usual.
Commercial Transfer	This is where the outgoing operator has agreed the commercial sale of their premise and or retail business to another party; subject to their acceptance by Post Office Ltd.
DF	Discretionary Fund
Model	The type of operating model and contract that Post Office Ltd would wish to implement at vacancy.
Modelling	This is the system that Post Office Ltd uses to determine which is the most appropriate type of model to implement at the location according to the Network Transformation decision manual.
NT	Network Transformation
Operator	Refers to the term Subpostmaster, Agent,

	Operator or Franchisee.
Review Panel	This is a panel of Post Office Ltd and National Federation of Subpostmasters personnel who will consider representations from operators regarding the model determined for their branch during a commercial transfer.
Subpostmaster	The holder of an SPSO Contract and includes the term Subpostmistress.
Vacancy	This follows an action that requires Post Office Ltd to find a new operator to run a Post Office® branch.

3.0 Background

ACC 12/09 and ACC 08/11 set out Post Office Ltd's policy during the pilot stages of NT to process vacancies at branches following the summary termination of an operator's contract, an operator's resignation to avoid termination of contract or abandonment of service.

These ACCs did not provide advice on business policy for any of the other types of vacancy that Post Office Ltd handle during the pilot stages of NT as these continued to be handled in line with BAU processes.

Also these ACCs did not provide policy guidance for dealing with branches that did not fall within the scope of the Local Post Office model; for example Main Post Office branch, Community Subpostmaster, Satellite, Restricted Hours or Outreach within the communities it serves as these contract models had their own business as usual processes.

Historically, where an operator has resigned, and the premises have been made available, vacancies have been advertised 'At' existing premises, or not advertised at all as the agent has already found a buyer for their ancillary business. In cases where we have not allowed a commercial transfer by closing or relocating the Post Office branch, payments from the Discretionary Fund (DF) have been made.

For clarification; cases where the operators contract has been summarily terminated, or where they had resigned in order to avoid that outcome would not be treated in this way i.e. we have taken a more flexible approach to who is appointed, and where by advertising the vacancy as 'At or Near', with no call on the DF.

This document is issued to replace policy information that was previously supplied in ACC 12/09 and updated in ACC 08/11 and will become Post Office Ltd policy from launch through to the end of the NT programme in March 2015. It ensures that Post Office Ltd can work towards the

implementation of Local Post Office and Main Post Office operating models, where appropriate, during the Network Transformation programme and supports Post Office Ltd's policy that all branch vacancies are initially passed to the Network Transformation Team.

In all cases where Post Office Ltd has a vacancy the Network Transformation Team will model the branch in line with the requirements of the Network Transformation Decision Manual to determine Post Office Ltd's requirements for the vacancy and pass this to the relevant team, i.e Contract Admin Team, Agency Network Change, Network Transformation Implementation Team. Post Office Ltd teams will then determine how to advertise the vacancy and progress the case based on the criteria detailed in Documents A and B at Section 7.

When passing a vacancy notification to the Network Transformation Team it is important to detail the reasons for the vacancy and whether the premises continue to be available for Post Office Ltd use. Post Office Ltd teams can include the following wording in letters when investigating whether the premises remain available:

"Post Office Ltd will need to assess what to do in respect of the vacancy that has been created. Post Office Ltd will conduct a review of service provision in the area to ensure that Post Office® services are provided by the most appropriate means available to us.

It would assist us in our task of reviewing the provision of Post Office® services in the locality if you could advise us of your intentions regarding the provision of your premises. "

To ensure a commercial transfer on the current operating model e.g. Subpostmaster; the outgoing operator will need to provide evidence to Post Office Ltd that they were actively marketing their business prior to the 1st April 2012 and Post Office Ltd must receive an application from a prospective applicant before midnight on the 30th June 2013 (extended from 31st December 2012 and 31st March 2013). Applications that do not meet these criteria will transfer on to the appropriate operating model; however the outgoing operator will have the opportunity to make a representation regarding this decision to the Review Panel.

It has been agreed that in all cases where an existing operator has already secured a buyer it is up to the operator to decide whether they want Post Office Ltd to advertise the vacancy for a 4 week period. If the agent does not wish Post Office Ltd to advertise the vacancy for 4 weeks then Post Office Ltd will not advertise the vacancy.

4.0 Applicability

The contents of this policy must be implemented by all Post Office Ltd teams involved with the handling of vacancies at Post Office branches and the implementation of them.

5.0 Related policies




- 5.1 Family Transfers (ACC 01/2011)
- 5.2 Vacancies at Mailwork branches. (ACC06/2011)
- 5.3 Network Transformation Recruitment Process
- 5.4 Post Office Ltd Recruitment Process

For the avoidance of doubt, and except where expressly communicated, these policies remain unaffected by Network Transformation

PART 2**6.0 Implementation procedures**

- 6.1 Document owners, process owners and IRIS owners should ensure that all standard letters, documents, processes and advertising are updated to reflect the requirements of this policy. This will include acknowledgement of resignations, letters advising of termination of contract, call scripts regarding resignation at branches and external advertising of branch vacancies.
- 6.2 Document A in Section 7 illustrates the advertising policy for commercial transfers and Network Transformation volunteers for conversion during the duration of the Network Transformation Programme.
- 6.3 Document B in Section 7 illustrates the branch advertising approach by operating model for the scenarios not included in Document A. Columns three and four are the contract held by the operator for whom the 'Event' in column two is relevant. This table includes some of the less frequent cases that Post Office Ltd teams may deal with
- 6.4 Document C in Section 7 illustrates the basic process to follow for vacancies during the Network Transformation Programme and should be used alongside the processes used within the Network Transformation processes.

7.0 Documents

A	Guidance chart for how to advertise the vacancy in the case of a commercial transfer or a Network Transformation volunteer for conversion.	
B	Guidance chart for how to advertise all types of vacancy by contract and vacancy type.	 Vacancy Matrix - Final190413.doc
C	Flowchart illustrating the process to follow for vacancies during the Network Transformation Program.	

8.0 Further information and Contact Details

Further information about this policy can be obtained from:

Steve Utting
Contract and Policy Advisor, Post Office Ltd.

Mobile: **GRO**
Mobex
E-mail: steve.utting **GRO**

Final