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**IN THE MATTER OF THE POST OFFICE HORIZON IT INQUIRY**

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**SUBMISSIONS ON THE HSS APPEALS PROCESS***On behalf of* **POST OFFICE LIMITED**

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1. These brief submissions are made on behalf of Post Office Limited ('POL') further to the Chair's invitation dated 2 May 2025 to make submissions regarding the Horizon Shortfall Scheme Appeals ('HSSA') process.
2. POL wholeheartedly welcomes the introduction of an independent appeals process, having recognised for some time that independence was an essential component in building Postmasters' trust and confidence in the Horizon Shortfall Scheme ('HSS').
3. By way of brief background, POL first proposed an appeals mechanism to the Department of Business and Trade ('DBT') in early December 2023.<sup>1</sup> Nick Read, then CEO of POL, explained to the Business and Trade Committee in February 2024 that Post Office remained "*very keen*"<sup>2</sup> for an appeals process to be established. Simon Recaldin, Remediation Director, also explained to the Committee that POL recommended the introduction of an appeals process.<sup>3</sup> Mr Recaldin reiterated the same support for an independent appeals mechanism in both his oral<sup>4</sup> and written<sup>5</sup> evidence to the Inquiry, and again to the Business and Trade Committee in November 2024<sup>6</sup>.
4. As set out in POL's Closing Submissions for Phases 5, 6 and 7, it has been a long-held view of both Mr Read and Mr Recaldin that in fact the overarching compensation scheme, not just an appeals process, should be run independently from POL.<sup>7</sup> Nigel Railton, interim Chair of POL, has also been very clear that POL should not be involved in redress and the payment of compensation and has advocated for both the HSS and Overturned Convictions Process to be transferred to DBT.<sup>8</sup>
5. In light of POL's view that independence is needed, POL welcomes the HSSA and is grateful for DBT's efforts in establishing it. POL remains fully committed to supporting and cooperating with DBT, to the extent required, including in resolving any initial operational matters that arise. POL is engaged with DBT to identify issues and play what part it can in assisting DBT to resolve them. This includes, for example, ensuring that the tax position is consistent between the HSS and HSSA.
6. As stated above, POL fully supports an independent appeals process and remains committed to working with DBT to ensure that Postmasters receive full, fair and prompt redress.
7. POL stands ready to provide any further information that would assist the Chair.

**14 May 2025**

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<sup>1</sup> WITN09890600, §147.

<sup>2</sup> POL00448410, Question 496.

<sup>3</sup> POL00448410, Questions 506 and 516.

<sup>4</sup> INQ00001200, SR T 04/11/24 [117 – 118].

<sup>5</sup> WITN09890600, §144.1, §145, §149.

<sup>6</sup> RLIT0000507, Question 256.

<sup>7</sup> SUBS0000064, §267-272.

<sup>8</sup> SUBS0000064, §273.