

BERR

Department for Business
Enterprise & Regulatory Reform

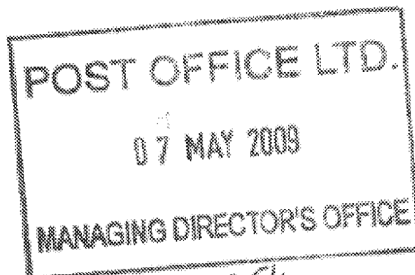
Pat McFadden MP

Minister for Employment Relations
& Postal Affairs

Our ref: AOK/124136

Your ref:

Alan Cook
Managing Director
Post Office Ltd
80-86 Old Street
London
EC1V 9NN



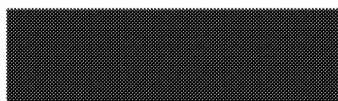
30th April 2009

Dear Alan,

Please find enclosed correspondence from Brian Binley MP, on behalf of his constituent, Ms Rebecca Thomson, concerning the accounting system at Post Office Ltd (POL).

Pat McFadden has asked that you look into this matter and reply directly to Brian Binley MP.

Yours Sincerely



ROBERT PORTEOUS

Private Secretary

1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET

www.berr.gov.uk

Enquiries

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124136 -



Brian Binley MP
Northampton South Constituency

House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Tel: **GRO**

Pat McFadden MP
Minister for Employment Relations and Postal Affairs
Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform
1 Victoria Street
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24th February 2009

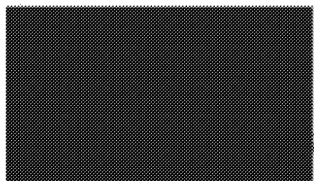
BB/GD/831

Dear Pat,

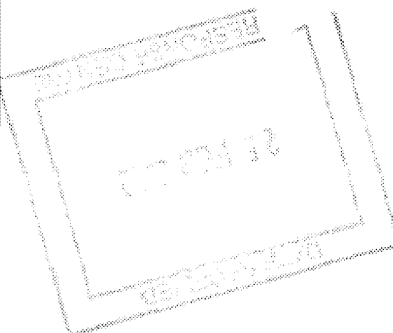
I write to you having received an email, which I have enclosed, from Rebecca Thomson regarding the accounting IT system at the Post Office. The content of her email is worrying and I would be very grateful if you could address the points she is making and let me know the exact situation regarding this matter.

I look forward to your response.

Yours,



Brian Binley MP
Northampton South



From: Thomson, Rebecca (RBI-UK) [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 February 2009 17:31

To: BINLEY, Brian

Subject: Post Office IT article

Dear Mr Binley

I have spoken to several current and former sub-post masters, who say that random flaws in the IT are causing deficits in their weekly accounts, sometimes of thousands of pounds at a time. Their complaint is that, instead of listening to their problems and investigating the software or equipment, the Post Office is making them pay back this money without any investigation into what is going wrong. Neither they, nor I, have any way of proving that it is the IT that is causing the deficits. Their problem is that the Post Office refuses even to entertain the possibility that their system could be going wrong.

The consequences for some of the Post Masters have been extremely serious. Of the group I am in contact with, two have been forced to file for bankruptcy. Others have lost their life savings. If post masters cannot pay the deficits back, because their savings have been depleted, the Post Office takes it out of their wages. In desperation a couple of the post masters I've spoken to turned to false accounting: they were not getting help when they asked for it from the company, and they did not have the money to pay the deficits back. So they signed the weekly accounts, affirming the money was there when it was not. The Post Office has then prosecuted these people, although no-one that I have heard of has ever been prosecuted for theft.

This is a link to a website set up by one former post master, [REDACTED] B034 -
<http://postofficevictims.org.uk/> which goes into the issue in more detail.

I know the BERR select committee is currently conducting an investigation into the future of the Post Office, but as a separate matter I'd like if at all possible to talk to you to get your comments on the allegations of these post masters.

Thanks a lot for your time

Rebecca

Rebecca Thomson

Reporter

Computer Weekly
[REDACTED]

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