
From: Peter D Johnson [GRO]
Sent: Tue 24/07/2012 7:37:37 PM (UTC)
To: Jarnail A Singh [GRO]
Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Thanks Jarnail – we already have some information from Mark Dinsdale from a previous case. We'll initially be seeking further input from Mark. Pete

From: Jarnail A Singh
Sent: 24 July 2012 10:05
To: Chris Darvill; Peter D Johnson
Cc: Hugh Flemington; Susan Crichton
Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

I am advised that Criminal law team have been keeping a database of prosecutions since 2009 (but that is all prosecutions and not by grade) before that any figures might be obtainable from visual files but I don't think it would be a small job to get that information if it's possible at all.

Regards.

Jarnail singh

From: Chris Darvill
Sent: 24 July 2012 08:52
To: Peter D Johnson
Cc: Jarnail A Singh; Hugh Flemington; Susan Crichton
Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Pete

Please can you ensure that Jarnail is kept in the loop regarding the latest request from Mr Bates (if you have not already). Thanks

Regards

Chris Darvill
Legal Services
Post Office Ltd
148 Old Street, LONDON, EC1V 9HQ

[GRO]

From: Peter D Johnson
Sent: 24 July 2012 07:47
To: Mike Granville; Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa; Alwen Lyons; Alana Renner
Cc: Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell; Andrew J Moore
Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures
Importance: High

Good Morning

Thank you to those who have already feedback on the draft response to this case.

I have continued to extend the deadline for this response, however the case has now reached 40 days and as such unless there are any substantial concerns about the information contained within the draft or the structure I shall be despatching today. The draft is included in the email immediately below.

Additionally, Mr Bates has sent a further request for information to POL.

For how many years does Royal Mail/Post Office Limited hold details of the amount of subpostmasters/mistresses prosecuted in a year, and which years do they have records of?

We shall work closely with Mark Dinsdale to identify the information requested.

Kind regards

Pete

Peter D Johnson
Senior Engagement and Involvement Manager

Post Office Ltd

Network Services and Transformation
1st Floor, Bunhill Row Wing, 148 Old Street,
London, EC1V 9HQ

Mobile Number: [REDACTED] GRO

Mobex: [REDACTED] GRO

[REDACTED] GRO

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From: Peter D Johnson

Sent: 23 July 2012 06:37

To: Mike Granville; Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa; Alwen Lyons; Alana Renner

Cc: Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell; Andrew J Moore

Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Importance: High

Hi all

After Ian's recent feedback we have redrafted the first paragraph as below;

"Post Office Ltd identifies a communication incident as an interruption between the service connection or dedicated telephone line between the Post Office branch and the data centre. Whilst interruptions to communications networks are a generic factor for any industry using telephone lines, Post Office Ltd uses industry standard technology, enabling the branch to use the backup communications when the primary communication channel is unavailable. All of our branches currently have a router which gives them a secondary connection method i.e. a wireless mobile connection. Interruptions to service connections do not create an issue for the Horizon system"

These interruptions can be caused by factors such as, utility providers digging through cables, environmental ones such as flooding or high winds damaging overhead cables', damage to the

communication wire or the equipment in the branch, such as wires accidentally being pulled from sockets.

Turning to your request for information; I can confirm that we do hold information relevant to your request; there were 11,862 of such incidents in the period June 2011 to May 2012; in a branch operating network of over 11,800. To reiterate communication incidents are caused by factors as described above, and do not create an issue for Horizon."

Kind regards

Pete

GRO

From: Peter D Johnson

Sent: 20 July 2012 10:00

To: Mike Granville; Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa; Alwen Lyons; Alana Renner

Cc: Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell; Andrew J Moore

Subject: FW: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Importance: High

Good morning

After feedback from Rod and a discussion with Mike I have redrafted the response to Mr Bates' request about Horizon Communication failures. Can I ask you to take another look through the draft and advise me of your views? The text in bold is the pertinent sections that I would like you to review.

Alana/ Alwen, this may be the first time you have seen a draft to the request, so I have attached copies of the request for information and previous the response to Mr Bates for background

Attachments:

- Final Response to previous request 250512
- Fresh request for information 270512
- Draft v4 200712

Dave/ Ian, after the redrafting can you check the any technical statements/ statements about the Horizon system and back up are accurate please?

I am aiming to send the letter by close of play on Monday.

Kind regards

Pete

Peter D Johnson

Senior Engagement and Involvement Manager

Post Office Ltd

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1st Floor, Bunhill Row Wing, 148 Old Street,

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From: Peter D Johnson

Sent: 16 July 2012 12:51

To: Mike Granville; Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa; Alwen Lyons; Simon Baker; Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell

Cc: Andrew J Moore

Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Importance: High

Good afternoon everyone

Please find attached the latest version of my response to Mr Bates. I have taken into account Mike and Chris's comments and hopefully drafted a response that better reflects our position. The RMG review panel are sitting tomorrow and will be discussing a complaint made by Mr Bates about this late response. I would like to give them some comfort that we have responded to the request, and as such would really appreciate a quick turnaround so that I can send this before noon tomorrow, If you would like to discuss any aspect of the response please give me a call.

Please note there are a number of reasons for a communication failure, however I have only included a small selection.

Kind regards

Pete

Peter D Johnson

Senior Engagement and Involvement Manager

Post Office Ltd

Network Services and Transformation

1st Floor, Bunhill Row Wing, 148 Old Street,

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From: Mike Granville
Sent: 09 July 2012 14:53
To: Peter D Johnson; Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa
Cc: Alwen Lyons; Simon Baker
Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Peter

Looking at this reply – can I suggest that we need to include some more context such as an example of what a communication failure actually is – presumably this is things such as a line connection being lost for an individual terminal for a few minutes - to avoid any subsequent populist media line that seeks to wrongly make out that this is a large number – for example claiming to have discovered that ‘there is one failure in every branch each year’. Also, is there any wider context – for example is this the kind of thing that any large company system would have at these kinds of level.

Finally – I suggest that before we send a reply, that this draft is sent to Alwen Lyons and Simon Baker – as we are aware that Alan Bates has some link into the Arbuthnot enquiry type work – it is important that they are sighted on this particular correspondence and the response that is being given.

Thanks

Mike

Mike Granville

Head of Stakeholder Relations

Post Office Ltd

1st Floor, 148 Old Street, London, EC1V 9HQ



GRO



GRO

From: Peter D Johnson
Sent: 07 July 2012 13:46
To: Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Mike Granville; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa
Cc: Cory Alexis; Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell; Andrew J Moore
Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Hi all

Thank you all for your comments. I have taken these on board and adjusted the draft accordingly. Please find attached my latest draft. Again we are hoping to send by close of play on Monday, any and all comments welcome.

With regard to context – would it help if we added detail around the number of Horizon terminals currently live within the open and trading network?

Kind regards

Pete

Peter D Johnson
Senior Engagement and Involvement Manager

Post Office Ltd

Network Services and Transformation
1st Floor, Bunhill Row Wing, 148 Old Street,
London, EC1V 9HQ

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GRO

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From: Chris Darvill

Sent: 06 July 2012 12:43

To: Andrew J Moore; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Mike Granville; Ronan Kelleher; Sabrina Jethwa

Cc: Peter D Johnson; Cory Alexis; Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell

Subject: RE: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Andy

I would delete the reference to "tardy response". If we have missed the deadline for responding, I think it would be sufficient to say that "We apologise for the delay in responding".

I think the explanation regarding communication failures across the network needs to be simplified. It was not entirely clear what point we were trying to make. Needless to say any ambiguity in our response will be seized upon and it is, therefore, important that our response is clear. Otherwise we simply open ourselves up to further requests or challenges.

Going forward, please can you ensure that Sabrina is also copied in on these emails. Thanks.

Regards

Chris Darvill

Legal Services

Post Office Ltd

148 Old Street, LONDON, EC1V 9HQ

GRO

From: Andrew J Moore

Sent: 06 July 2012 11:38

To: Chris Darvill; Mark S Wright; Rod Ismay; Mike Granville; Ronan Kelleher

Cc: Peter D Johnson; Cory Alexis; Dave Hulbert; Ian Trundell

Subject: Alan Bates - Draft FOI Response - Horizon Communication Failures

Hello all,

Please find attached our draft response to Mr Bates regarding Horizon Communication Failures.

REQUEST

In your response (your ref: KFME-8TQJVB) to my Freedom of Information request dated 26th April 2012 where you clearly state that nowhere within The Post Office are you aware or have ever been notified of any Bit Error Rate testing results of Horizon, you do confirm that Horizon does suffer from communication failures.

How many communication failures has Horizon suffered from in the last 12 months or is this information not logged or recorded or ever made known to The Post Office?"

The request comes on the back of the last response Mr Bates received regarding "bit error rate testing" (also attached). Dave Hulbert has provided a figure for the past 12 months (11,862) and also some background to why these failures occur. We have used this in the draft and the finer detail that Dave provided is detailed below.

The response deadline is close of play Monday so I would be grateful if you would provide all your comments by 3pm on Monday for Peter to review and make any changes necessary.

Many thanks
Andy
Andrew Moore
Freedom of Information Team
2nd Floor, 14 St. Peters Street
St. Albans
AL1 3AA

GRO

Incident levels fluctuate between 550 to 2000 per month. Network failures relate to the whole telecoms infrastructure across our Horizon estate, which is vast. Added to this the complexity of the telecoms infrastructure in the UK, plus consideration of all other factors such as environmental ones means that network failures are common in a branch estate of our size. It would therefore seem unreasonable to trawl through the incident logs to pull out these failures, particularly as the vast majority of these will be due to issues outside of Fujitsu and Post Office's direct control.

An example below re incidents out side of POL/Fujitsu's control that may affect our ability to communicate with Branches.

I know that this one is not about a comms failure but an incident similar to this one could have affected telecommunications [remember the fire in the comms tunnel Manchester/Durham] and reinforces Dave's statement.

Other incidents could be the contractor digging up the road and slicing through comms cables !

COMMUNITYSAFE.GOV.UK

Whitehall - fire in EDF substation

Whitehall - Fire in EDF substation has caused a power failure in immediate area. Alarms/lifts have been effected - Please bring this to attention of entry staff as any entry measures may be effected. Update as required

Message sent at June 29, 2012 11:11