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13 January 2004

Mr Alan Bates

GRO



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Dear Mr Bates

Horizon System

Thank you for your letters of 17 December 2003 and 7 January 2004. I note that Betty Williams has written to Allan Leighton.

I can go no higher within the Royal Mail group than Allan Leighton, and I am sure that your Member of Parliament will have as much, if not more, success than I would. Hopefully, therefore, you will have further information from that route.

In relation to errors which members considered were due to Horizon problems, the Executive Council set up a Joint Federation/Post Office Ltd group who visit the Horizon helpline site to discuss and resolve issues. It is my understanding that Post Office Ltd can trace the nature of any error including telephone calls relating to the same when the Horizon System is in question and, therefore, should be able to produce evidence that all is, in fact, correct from their side.

We are not in a position to provide information regarding other Subpostmaster's dealings with Post Office Ltd. We are aware that there were some disputes around the time that offices migrated from the manual system to the Horizon System, but we are now of the view that Horizon works well and that there are no real problems in Post Offices which are operated by the Horizon System.

Yours sincerely,

GRO

COLIN BAKER
General Secretary