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**POST OFFICE COUNTERS LTD - NORTH EAST REGION**

To: Mena Rego  
Head of Programme Development

cc: David Miller  
John Main  
Jonathan Evans  
Paul Rich  
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From: Don Grey  
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Subject: HORIZON IMPLEMENTATION - EMERGING ISSUES

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There are some important issues which have surfaced recently and which need to be factored in to our implementation activity, namely:-

1) Live Trial Review

One of the actions Paul Rich took away from his recent visit to Newcastle was to agree with Jonathan a mechanism for formally reviewing the live trial. Some of this review will be embedded in the work commissioned by Jonathan after the CEC Awayday in May. I understand you have recently asked trial region RLMs to provide comment on experience to date. How does this fit with other activities and how are we ensuring a co-ordinated and comprehensive review of all elements of the live trial?

2 Implementation Resourcing

I know you have expressed concern that regions "were progressing in their individual sweet ways." I am sure all regions, and definitely ours, do follow the national resourcing policy guidelines and Margaret Beaumont has acknowledged that appropriate processes were used. I would suggest this is more a case of regions developing approaches in the absence of any specific national activity. I doubt if anyone, however, would argue against a co-ordinated approach and consistent deployment and perhaps your concern highlights the need to ensure due provision is made for handling such issues within our new implementation arrangements.

As you may know, we have trawled our subpostmasters to scope the likely interest in temporary contract employee status as POs to supplement the internal resourcing for our field support team and have been pleasantly surprised by the responses. Despite the not unexpected but unnecessary intervention of the NFSP we are now in a position where we need to move on assessing the quality of these candidates and give them some response on suitability of selection. I am, however, keen that we should be developing an early and consistent approach across all regions in the context of job evaluations for field support posts.

3 Pathway Work Quality

What measurement systems are we putting in place to verify the standard and sufficiency of implementation? This is particularly pertinent in the context of the WTL and sub contractors where we stand to incur additional costs if we do not exercise proper control. Have we any plans to establish a clearly defined fitness for purpose specification nationally, which satisfies not only Horizon implementation but also supports our business requirements in the longer term?

Perhaps some of these issues will be addressed at next week's Workshop but if not your thoughts on how we can take them forward would be welcomed.

DON GREY  
2 July 1997

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