
From: Parsons, Andrew [GRO]
Sent: Wed 27/07/2016 2:17:23 PM (UTC)
To: Anthony de Garr Robinson [GRO]
Cc: Prime, Amy [GRO]
Subject: Remote Access Wording [BD-4A.FID26859284]
Attachment: _DOC_33442637(2)_DRAFT Remote Access Rider.docx

Tony

I'm really sorry to ask this of you because I know you are extremely busy but I should be grateful for your thoughts on the attached wording regarding Remote Access. I think you're in Court today, so tomorrow will be ok.

The previously agreed wording went past the senior management team at POL on Monday and some suggestions were proposed. There is a concern at Post Office about making an equivocal statement on this topic that could then lead to public criticism. I have explained the critical importance of being transparent on this issue (even if that causes short term pain) and made clear that this is your strong advice on this issue.

The new wording is attached and the key amended text is extracted below:

1.3 The majority of transactions that make up the branch accounts are generated in branch. There are however four ways in which Post Office (or Fujitsu on Post Office's instruction) can influence those accounts:

[...]

1.3.4 Administer access to databases. Database and server access and edit permission is provided, within strict controls (including logging user access), to a small, controlled number of specialist Fujitsu (not Post Office) administrators. As far as we are currently aware, privileged administrator access has not been used to alter branch transaction data. We are seeking further assurance from Fujitsu on this point.

This is not as plainly stated as I would wish - I would prefer a more direct statement that the permissions could potentially be used to change branch accounts. I have proposed such wording and Post Office are not comfortable with it.

The risk of the above wording being characterised as further obfuscation is, in my view, just about sufficiently low that we can live with it, particularly given the closing words that make clear that enquiries are continuing, which leaves open the possibility of firming up our position later. This wording also tells Freeths that (i) the permissions exist and (ii) when read with para 1.3, they could be a route used to change the accounts. That said, it is not ideal from a legal perspective, though I can see why Post Office prefer the above formulation from a commercial perspective.

Your thoughts are welcomed.

Kind regards
Andy

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