



148 Old Street
LONDON
EC1V 9HQ

For the attention of Mrs S Berlin
Criminal Case Review Commission
5 St Philip's Place
Birmingham
B3 2PW

Date 5th June 2014

Dear Mrs Berlin

Horizon Computer System

I refer to your email dated 16 May 2014 and confirm that my predecessor, Susan Crichton left the business at the end of October 2013. I apologise for the fact that you have not received an update on the progress of the review undertaken by POL and hope to rectify that with the information set out below.

I confirm that Brian Altman QC completed his review of POL's strategy and process for reviewing past/current prosecutions given the findings of the Second Sight interim report to which Susan Crichton referred in her letter to you dated 26 July 2013.

As you would expect, Mr Altman's review was thorough, leading to a detailed report, and I am pleased to confirm that overall, his view was that the review (carried out on behalf of POL by an external firm of criminal specialist solicitors) was fundamentally sound, and he did not detect any systemic or significant flaws in the review process, or in the evidence arising from it. He did however highlight that because POL has a continuing duty of disclosure, both POL and the external firm of solicitors with vast experience of managing and prosecuting these cases, must remain prepared to keep under review, and reconsider, past case reviews and disclosure decisions.

To give you some detail, the process involved reviewing all cases (both Crown Court and Magistrates' Court) going back to 1 January 2010 (this being the earliest date on which Horizon Online was migrated into all post office branches and is a start date which Mr Altman QC considered to be logical, proportionate and practicable in light of the known circumstances). Essentially the scheme involved POL's solicitors identifying every case within the above mentioned review period in which the primary or main evidence against the defendant was based on Horizon data, and included also those cases involving suggested problems with Horizon training or support. This was done by a rigorous sift review process. Once a potentially affected case was identified, senior in-house prosecutors at the external firm of solicitors carried out a full case review to determine the essential question "Had POL been possessed of the material contained within the Second Sight interim report during the currency of any particular prosecution should/would POL have been required to disclose some or all of that material to the defence?" In cases in which convictions had been obtained, this also meant considering material for disclosure, which might cast doubt on the safety of the conviction.

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The process involved POL's external solicitors carrying out a sift of 308 case files, a second sift of 229 cases, a full review of 53 cases (in which disclosure was advised in 26 cases), and the discontinuance of 4 cases.

I can confirm that since the publication of the Second Sight interim report on 8 July 2013, and despite POL's thorough review, POL has, to date, not received any application for permission to appeal to the Court of Appeal.

I appreciate that the above is a short precis of a very extensive procedure and should you have any further questions/require any further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



GRO

Chris Aujard
For and on behalf of
Post Office Limited