

Letter to Branches

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General Secretary: Billy Hayes (www.billyhayes.co.uk)

No: 269/15

Ref: 250

Date: 21st April 2015

TO: ALL BRANCHES WITH POSTAL MEMBERS

Dear Colleague

POST OFFICE: HORIZON SYSTEM – SECOND SIGHT FINDINGS

Branches will be aware of the publicity surrounding the serious situation faced by many Postmasters with regards to alleged problems with the Post Office's Horizon computer system. This contentious issue has received a significant amount of media coverage over the course of the last year, including two relatively long features on BBC1s "The One Show" in December last year and "Inside Out" in January 2015 which were broadly critical of the Post Office.

In turn, the issue has led to significant Parliamentary activity including:

- An adjournment debate on 17th December 2014 in Westminster Hall.
- BIS Select Committee inquiry on 3rd February 2015 at which the CWU gave evidence.
- A question being asked to the Prime Minister during PMQs on 11th March by Conservative Backbencher James Arbuthnot (Hampshire North East) who asked if the Prime Minister was aware of the situation regarding the Post Office Mediation Scheme.

Yesterday, 20th April, the Post Office published its response to the report from Second Sight, the forensic accountant appointed by the Post Office to investigate the merits of each Postmaster applicant's case as part of the Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme. The Union has a number of Postmaster members involved in the mediation scheme and are we are seeking justice for these particular members. As expected, our Postmasters Branch is fully supporting these individuals.

The plight of the affected Postmasters has attracted a significant amount of press coverage over the last couple of days, which is not surprising as the Post Office has dismissed the findings of Second Sight's second report in a 92 page rebuttal document and insists that "*Investigations over the past three years have confirmed that the Post Office's Horizon computer system is operating as it should.*", despite evidence from Second Sight, noted in its report findings which disputes this.

As a consequence of this impasse and the current attitude of the Post Office, the Union has called for an independent inquiry into the Horizon debacle and justice for those Postmasters who are claiming they have been accused of wrong-doing. We are also calling upon the Post Office to formally recognise the CWU to represent Postmasters with immediate effect (a theme which we pursued at the BIS Select Committee).

COMMUNICATION WORKERS UNION
URGENT INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Our press release from yesterday and various related documents for background reading are attached to this LTB for your information including a hard-hitting Private Eye article.

Yours sincerely

Andy Furey
Assistant Secretary



2015.04.20 Sian Jones - Press release



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Post Office



PMQs 11th March 2015.docx



Private Eye 18th March 15.pdf

Recording of the BIS Select Committee Inquiry 3rd February 2015:
<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=17184>

CWU web story from December 2014
<http://www.cwu.org/news/archive/mps-brand-post-office-debacle-national-scandal.html>

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