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www.gov.uk/bis
Our ref: MCB2014/08461

April 2014

Thank you for your letter of 16 April, about the Initial Case Review and Mediation Scheme.

I am conscious that the Scheme, which is jointly overseen by the Working Group comprising representatives from the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance, Post Office Ltd, and Second Sight, has an independent Chair in Sir Anthony Hooper.

The Government, as shareholder in Post Office Ltd, does not play a role in the operation of the Working Group. As an independent Chair whose appointment was approved by the members of the Working Group, Sir Anthony Hooper must be allowed to perform his duties independently and free from influence.

However, as shareholder, the Government is supportive of the Working Group and the ambitions of the Scheme, and understands that it is in the interests of all parties, especially those who have lodged applications for their cases to be considered, for there to be a timely resolution.

I would like to propose forwarding a copy of your letter to Sir Anthony Hooper so that he can make an informed response to the issues that you have raised. If you have any objections to my doing so, please contact my Private Secretary, Claire Rannard, who would be pleased to discuss any concerns you might have with that course of action.

JENNY WILLOTT MP

Jenny Willott MP
Minister for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs



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Sir Anthony Hooper

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April 2014

I have recently received a letter from Alan Bates, Chair of the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance ("JFSA") regarding the Initial Case Review and Mediation Scheme, of which the JFSA plays a role as a member of the Working Group, of which you are independent Chair.

The Government, as shareholder in Post Office Ltd, does not play a role in the operation of the Working Group, and is keenly aware that you must be allowed to perform your duties independently and free from influence.

The Government is supportive of the Working Group and the ambitions of the Scheme, and believes it is in the interests of all parties, especially those who have lodged applications for their cases to be considered, for there to be a timely resolution.

In that spirit, I am forwarding to you correspondence from the JFSA that sets out their concerns about the operation of the Scheme. This is provided without prejudice, and I have previously informed the JFSA that I would be sharing their letter with you.

More widely, at an appropriate point in the future, I would be pleased to meet to discuss the Working Group and the operation of the Scheme.

JENNY WILLOTT MP