

Message

From: Melanie Corfield [GRO]
on behalf of Melanie Corfield [GRO]
Sent: 16/12/2014 14:39:46
To: Mark R Davies [GRO]; Rodric Williams [GRO]
CC: Susan.BARTY [GRO]; Belinda Crowe [GRO]; Patrick Bourke
 [GRO]; Tom Reid [GRO]; Tom Wechsler
 [GRO]; Ruth X Barker [GRO]; Andrew Parsons
Subject: RE: Queries

Mark

I think be careful re the phrase "prove a negative" because some of the postmasters have been saying that tables have turned because that is what they were asked to do. Ruth is just emailing you I think about Tweets we'll pick up from postmasters today about the new POCA contract. So I suggest let's hold fire and send something later today when we have that and other material.

Mel

From: Mark R Davies
Sent: 16 December 2014 14:33
To: Rodric Williams
Cc: Susan.BARTY [GRO]; Belinda Crowe; Patrick Bourke; Tom Reid; Tom Wechsler; Melanie Corfield; Ruth X Barker; Andrew Parsons
Subject: Re: Queries

My suggested response:

If I may say, with respect, you are now asking us to prove a negative when all the evidence runs contrary to the unfounded assertions made in what little of your film you have chosen to share with us.

Today the Government announced a new seven year contract for the Post Office Card Account, delivered through our branches to millions of vulnerable customers. The unfounded suggestions around Horizon, for which there is no evidence, could have the impact of causing needless concern for all those people who use the account.

Last month we raised more than £1m through our branches for the BBC Children In Need Appeal. Those payments were made through the Horizon system.

We deliver products and services, through Horizon, for Royal Mail, Bank of Ireland, all the high street banks (95pc of services are available through Horizon), DWP, DVLA, the Passport Agency and First Rate, among others.

We also have major franchise partnerships with all of the big retailers including WH Smith, Tesco, McColls and Asda. Horizon is used in all these outlets.

Like all major businesses dealing with a large network of franchisees we don't always get things right. But we operate a Branch User Forum, a range of helplines and other support and other channels to give our colleagues to chance to raise concerns.

And then, of course, where we have had these specific complaints we set up the Second Sight review and the Mediation Scheme.

To your point about whether SPMRs are satisfied with Horizon, we proactively advertised twice for people to come forward with concerns. This was done with the JFSA. As you know around 150 people came forward.

Mark Davies
Communications and Corporate Affairs Director
Mobile: **GRO**

Sent from my iPhone

On 16 Dec 2014, at 14:16, "Rodric Williams" **GRO** wrote:

Without having read them closely, only that this is getting ridiculous - we're being asked to address an ever expanding range of serious issues, on a piecemeal basis, with constantly shifting goal posts, in an attempt to get Nick Wallis a story which is "news".

On the upside, they suggest we're starting to land our points – this line of enquiry is focussed on the "user friendliness" of the Horizon, not the accuracy of what it records or what we do with that information.

I'll revert on the substance shortly.

Rod

From: Mark R Davies
Sent: 16 December 2014 13:59
To: Susan.BARTY **GRO** Belinda Crowe; Patrick Bourke; Tom Reid; Tom Wechsler; Melanie Corfield; Ruth X Barker; Andrew Parsons; Rodric Williams
Subject: Fwd: Queries

Hi

Another email from the BBC, now raising a series of new questions.

Any thoughts?

Mark

Mark Davies
Communications and Corporate Affairs Director
Mobile: **GRO**

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Nick Wallis **GRO**
Date: 16 December 2014 13:55:50 GMT
To: 'Mark R Davies' **GRO**
Cc: Melanie Corfield **GRO**, Ruth X Barker
GRO Jane French **GRO** "Clare Hoban"
Subject: Queries

Hi Mark

I wonder if you or your colleagues could help me with a few queries.

When was the last time the Post Office did any research into how satisfied or otherwise SPMRs are with the Horizon system? It would be very helpful to know the scope of that research and its results.

Is your statement about the vast majority of SPMRs not having any problems with Horizon based on customer feedback or purely on the volume of successful transactions?

I get the sense from speaking to a number of SPMRs that they don't like the system, they don't trust it and they live in fear of what the Post Office might do if they get something wrong with it. It may be because I only come into contact with SPMRs who are having problems that I keep hearing this, so it would be useful to know the other side of the coin.

If you have data which shows the vast majority of SPMRS love using Horizon and trust it implicitly, it would be useful to have that information.

Also is it true that you are in the process of commissioning a new system to replace Horizon? If so, why? And when do you expect it to be operational?

During my planned chat on the sofa with Matt and Alex tomorrow I will be reporting on the comments of MPs during the Westminster Hall debate. I'd also like to talk about my experiences of dealing with former and existing SPMRs and their attitude to Horizon, plus whether or not this system is due to be replaced any time soon.

Your help would be greatly appreciated.

Many thanks

Nick

From: Mark R Davies [mailto:[redacted](#)] **GRO**
Sent: 15 December 2014 17:35
To: Jane French; Nick Wallis; Clare Hoban
Cc: Ingrid Kelly; Melanie Corfield; Ruth X Barker
Subject: Fwd: One Show

All

Just copying to Nick to ensure you all have the statement and answers to your questions.

Mark

Mark Davies
Communications and Corporate Affairs Director
Mobile: **GRO**

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Melanie Corfield [GRO]
Date: 15 December 2014 17:24:31 GMT
To: Jane French [GRO] "Clare.hoban@ [GRO]
[GRO]
<Ingrid.Kelly@ [GRO]
Cc: Mark R Davies [GRO] Ruth X Barker
[GRO]
Subject: One Show

I attach the answers to the questions you have raised with us and also a short statement, for use in full please, in the film.
Please let me know if you need clarification about any of the information.

Thanks

Mel Corfield
Communications Team

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