

Message

From: Mark R Davies [GRO]
on behalf of Mark R Davies [GRO]
Sent: 14/01/2015 16:06:59
To: Melanie Corfield [GRO]; Belinda Crowe [GRO]; Patrick Bourke [GRO]; Tom Wechsler [GRO]; Rodric Williams [GRO]
Subject: RE: BBC Inside Out

Hi

My additions for the statement:

Post Office has acted in good faith in voluntarily setting up, with independent parties, a scheme to raise and investigate a small number of complaints about its Horizon system.

Indeed it has gone above and beyond the call of duty in recognising its responsibilities to its people.

The system is used without problems by thousands of people every day in the UK's largest retail network.

We are committed to completing the investigations and review of each and every complaint that was put forward – a number of these are now resolved.

We cannot and will not break the agreement of confidentiality on which the independently-chaired working group was set up.

It remains the case, however, that after two and half years of independent review and other investigations there is no evidence of system wide flaws in the Horizon system.

Best wishes,

Mark

Mark Davies | Communications and Corporate Affairs Director

1st Floor, Banner Wing, 148 Old Street, London, EC1V 9HQ

GRO



From: Melanie Corfield
Sent: 14 January 2015 14:13
To: Belinda Crowe; Patrick Bourke; Tom Wechsler; Rodric Williams
Cc: Mark R Davies
Subject: BBC Inside Out

Hi all

Attached: Inside Out Qs and As, checked against previous content provided to programme and against dossier and the other cleared material. I also attach a very brief statement for them to use in the programme.

Below is the email Mark previously drafted as his cover note to respond to the programme, which still stands. We ideally need to respond to the programme later today. Comments welcome.

NB – Rod the majority of legal issues are addressed through the wording we already have but I have noted one “new” accusation for your special attention!

Thanks
Mel

Mark’s email:

“Thank you for your request for an interview to accompany the ‘Inside Out’ programme you are making. I am sending you our responses to the questions you have posed as below and am happy to discuss and answer any more points you may have which do not compromise the Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme and the principles upon which it was formed and agreed by all parties.

“It is not the case, by the way, that we are simply ‘not prepared’ to comment on individual cases - it is that confidentiality is a key element of the working group and Mediation process, signed up to by all parties.

“I must say that some of the broad assertions and loose language in the statements you have put to us fail, it seems to me, to stand up to the rigour one might expect in an enquiry such as this. They appear to be statements made without any evidence, or certainly no evidence which you have shared with us. Please do let me know what evidence you plan to put forward to support the statements being made.

“The suggestion that we pursue interviews under caution without legal representation is extremely serious and untrue. Please let me have your evidence for this statement.

“You may be aware that the JFSA is holding a meeting on January 18, the day before your programme is due to air. Having asked Edwin Coe LLP to advise them, and referring as they do on their website to the prospect of taking legal action, you will understand I am sure that we are placed in an invidious position. Anything we say in a pre-recorded interview could quite quickly become sub judice depending on the deliberations of the JFSA. It is with regret, therefore, that we must decline your offer to record an interview.

“We will of course provide you with a statement as well as the answers to the questions posed below. You may also find the attached letter from Sir Anthony Hooper, which was referred to in the parliamentary debate, of use as it describes progress with the mediation scheme and corrects the inaccuracy that 90% of cases are being blocked by Post Office.

“It is worth stressing that the Post Office takes its responsibilities on this matter and any around its people very seriously indeed. There remains, however, absolutely no evidence at all to support the very serious allegations made against us, repeatedly, in your films. “

Mel Corfield
Communications Team
1st Floor – Old Street
Mobile **GRO**