



Michele Graves
08/05/2009 14:47

To: Valerie Stanley/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO]
CC:
Subject: Fw: Re letter from BERR re challenge to Horizon integrity

Michele Graves
Executive Correspondence Manager
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GRO
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Post Office HR Help



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----- Forwarded by Michele Graves/e/POSTOFFICE on 08/05/2009 14:47 -----



Paul Inwood
08/05/2009 11:28

To: Jessica Madron/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO]
cc: Andy Z McLean/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Michele
Graves/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Sarah M
White/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Rebekah
Mantle/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Tracy
Marshall/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO]
Subject: Re: Fw: Re letter from BERR re challenge to Horizon integrity

Dear Jessica,

The complainant has not identified specific cases so it is not possible to investigate or comment on the allegations made without a full understanding of the casework. That said, I have some experience of this type of complaint from my time as a contracts manager.

From time to time, either existing agents, or those suspended / terminated due to accounting irregularities / unpaid debts, will say that it is '...the Horizon system... that has caused the loss'. On each occasion I had asked a Spmr to substantiate the allegation, they had been unable to provide any evidence to support it.

In many respects, Horizon is a sophisticated calculator, and operates on the principle of GIGO - garbage in, garbage out. It is no more likely that, with 100% accurate input, Horizon produces inaccurate outputs than a calculator would, which is extremely unlikely. In some respects though, there are items of data transferred between other terminals in-store, and from Horizon to Head Office - it is always possible that in these data streams electronic data could go astray, either because of human error or an IT failure, and that could cause transaction corrections to be produced, either in favour or against an agent.

It is not possible to say, absolutely, that the system could not cause a loss or gain, and some time back when Horizon was introduced, POL wrote off a considerable number of losses that appeared in

agent's account on migration from manual accounts - after some investigation it was not possible to show where the losses had occurred.

POL's approach is consistent in that when a Spmr challenges a TC, they have an opportunity to produce evidence to support their claim, and that is considered by the contracts team, and consideration can be given to writing off all or part of the loss. It is a fact that these days, far fewer losses are written off, as some years back there was a culture of weak management where some losses that were inappropriate for write-off, were written-off - perhaps the proliferation of these complaints is an outcome of that, or POL becoming more hawkish in the way it manages debt/integrity issues.

I think our line must be that POL is always prepared to consider representations that are based on proper documentary evidence, and not simply an obtuse '..the system did it.'

If you needed a more technical response, backed by facts drawn from system design and testing, it is possible that our colleagues at Fujitsu could help - Gayle Laverick may be able to offer further insight into the treatment of losses if needed.

Regards,
Paul.

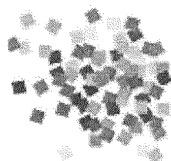
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Jessica Madron



Jessica Madron

07/05/2009 15:51

To: Tracy Marshall/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Paul
Inwood/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO]
cc: Andy Z McLean/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Michele
Graves/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Sarah M
White/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO] Rebekah
Mantle/e/POSTOFFICE [GRO]
Subject: Fw: Re letter from BERR re challenge to Horizon integrity

Tracy/Paul,

I'm hoping you can help us with this please.

Andy Maclean and Michele Graves have referred this to us.

BERR have written to Alan Cook and he must reply by 14 May.

A reporter has written to her MP referring to conversations she has had with a subpmr to the effect that the Horizon system is faulty and shows deficits where there are none and that POL just reclaims these deficits from subpmrs. There is also reference to a website for subpmrs who have been "victims" of POL's approach.

Legal Services have been asked to assist with a response but we need to understand what POL's position is on the alleged facts. The constituent says that there is no proof that it is Horizon that is at fault but that POL refuses even to entertain the possibility that it could be at fault and just claims the money back, presumably be deducting it from remuneration

Could you let me know how best to find out what is actually happening please?

You will see that Sarah White, my colleague, refers to a litigation case - i am checking this with Mandy Talbot but my recollection is that this involved a subpmr claiming lost remuneration from ntransactions he could not perform when Horizon was out of action.

many thanks.

Regards.

Jessica Madron
Legal Services
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London EC1V 9HQ

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Fax: GRO
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----- Forwarded by Jessica Madron/e/POSTOFFICE on 07/05/2009 15:41 -----

Sarah M White
07/05/2009 13:33

To: Kiron Farooki/e/POSTOFFICE GRO, Jessica
Madron/e/POSTOFFICE GRO
cc:
Subject: Fw: Re letter from BERR re challenge to Horizon integrity

Hi there

Can we have a quick chat to discuss how to handle this.

Andy called me and explained that he wants help in preparing a response - I think it best that we send to Rebekah Mantle for her to work with Andy but he also explained that there was a case where a subpostmaster sued us re alleged Horizon failings and lost and so wants to link into that which is why I'm ccing Jessica as well.

Regards
Sarah

Sarah White
Principal Lawyer
Post Office Ltd Legal Services
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Royal Mail House, 148 Old Street, LONDON, EC1V 9HQ

----- Forwarded by Sarah M White/e/POSTOFFICE on 07/05/2009 13:31 -----

Andy Z McLean
07/05/2009 13:28

To: Sarah M White/e/POSTOFFICE GRO
cc:
Subject: Fw: Re letter from BERR re challenge to Horizon integrity

Andy McLean
Head of Service Delivery
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----- Forwarded by Andy Z McLean/e/POSTOFFICE on 07/05/2009 13:27 -----



Michele Graves

07/05/2009 12:59

To: Andy Z McLean/e/POSTOFFICE **GRO**

cc: Tahira Rasool/e/POSTOFFICE **GRO**

Subject: Re letter from BERR re challenge to Horizon integrity

Hi Andy

As discussed, this is the scanned version of the letter sent to Alan.

This is, as you know, an issue that raises its head and a couple of MP's of late have shown interest in it (primarily when approached by suspended subpostmasters). Given the constituent is a reporter in this instance and any response is likely to go to print and therefore potentially to a wide audience, I am keen that we have a robust response. I'll leave you to decide/arrange any legal input.

I need a draft response and any relevant background information for Alan by cop 14 May. Please can you send to my team mailbox ECT **GRO**

Many thanks,

Michele Graves
Executive Correspondence Manager
Executive Correspondence Team
Network Directorate
Post Office Ltd



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michele.graves **GRO**

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