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**From:** Ben Foat [GRO]  
**Sent:** Fri 02/08/2019 6:57:09 PM (UTC)  
**To:** Hall, Glenn [GRO]; Smith,  
Catrina [GRO]; Bourke,  
Patrick [GRO]  
**Subject:** Strictly Confidential and Privileged - Highly Sensitive - Not for further forwarding

Glenn, Patrick and Catrina,

Thanks for your time earlier. I understand that Norton Rose can not act in respect of the previous matter given a conflict which is understood.

Unfortunately I have received what I think is potentially another different whistleblowing event. This one is acutely sensitive and is only relevant to POL so hopefully there should be no conflict.

You will see from the email below that the current interim CEO is potentially whistleblowing an issue in respect of our Group Litigation issue. In effect, that our procedures around loss recovery isn't right and that we are incorrectly seeking repayment from subpostmasters (which is an allegation in respect of the Group Litigation which your firm has some awareness).

I should point out the interim CEO was recently unsuccessful in his application to become the permanent CEO. He will revert back to his CFO role once the new CEO starts on 16 September. From today the interim CEO is on leave for about a month. Moreover, all of the GE have been informed that the shareholder intends to penalise their bonuses as a result of the GLO. He has sent me the email below. On the one hand he says that he hasn't used the whistleblowing process but in effect seeks to do so and seeks the confidentiality and "protections".

This is not the usual scenario given that its the current CEO of the company that is making the qualified disclosure. I have not managed previously an issue where it is the CEO that makes the whistleblowing. Under the POL whistleblowing policy it can be made to a line manager or through a variety of channels which is subsequent reported to me as the General Counsel. I currently report into the interim CEO who is making the apparent protected disclosure.

I suspect that should there be further reorganising of the General Executive Committee subsequent to the new CEO, the interim CEO / CFO will seek to rely on the protections under this disclosure.

I would have thought that I proceed as if its any other whistleblowing (which is that I investigate the claim) respecting the anonymity of the allegation. My challenge is that I would report the findings back to the whistleblower (which I would ultimately do but not until the company has made its decision in respect of the decision and in the case I can not investigate more widely than Kim which would make any investigation difficult and unlikely to be able to produce an answer). Obviously, the interim CEO would not suffer any consequences for making this protected disclosure but at what point do I have a duty to advise the company – either the new CEO or Group HR Director or Shareholder of the risk if they were to (quite independently and separately from this issue) restructure the GE and make the interim CEO / CFOO redundant /settle.

I should say I greatly respect the interim CEO who I think has done an excellent job and nothing above is to be taken to suggest otherwise but it does seem to me that this is an unusual situation which gives rise to some conflicts and potential risks for the business (down the track). Hence my seeking further advice.

Could you advise me of what steps I should take including what investigation should I undertake; what initial response should be back to AI; whether I can disclose to any other person including the new CEO or shareholder (my understanding is not at least). I suspect that if Im instructed by my line manager that I can only speak to Kim that I will not be in a position to come to any conclusions in respect of the questions that he is seeking.

I look forward to hearing from you. Could we discuss on Monday please.

Kind regards

Ben

Ben Foat

General Counsel

Post Office Limited

GRO

**From:** [Alisdair Cameron](#)

**Sent:** 02 August 2019 16:54

**To:** [Ben Foat](#)

**Subject:** Confidential and privileged

Ben, I have been made very uncomfortable by an issue at Little Milton Post Office. GRO They approached me recently because they had been asked to pay a significant amount (£3-4k) to us. Kim Abbotts got involved but could not explain what had happened remotely. At my suggestion an audit was held and the belief now seems to be that there was no loss, just mis-booking of stock and mi-remming of cash. However, Kim has not yet been able to explain things to my satisfaction.

Could you please work with Kim while I am away to understand what has happened and answer two questions.

1. Is our understanding of what is happening in branch sufficient for us to be able to ask for money or suspend Postmasters – it doesn't feel like it.
2. Secondly, should there be any implications for our defence of the GLO.

Given our shareholder's focus on a rapid settlement, I would rather you looked at these questions without it being clear I am asking – I haven't used the whistleblowing process to protect privilege but I am asking for that confidentiality and protection. You do not therefore have my permission to discuss this elsewhere, other than talking to Kim about the specifics.

Is that OK?

Kind regards Al



**Al Cameron**  
**Interim Chief Executive**

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GRO

Ben Foat  
General Counsel  
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**GRO**