

Witness Name: Alan Spafford

Statement No.: WITN06300100

Dated: 16th March 2023

POST OFFICE HORIZON IT INQUIRY

FIRST STATEMENT OF ALAN SPAFFORD

I, Alan Spafford, will say as follows...

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a former employee of Post Office Ltd and held the position of Field Support Advisor.
2. This witness statement is made to assist the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry (the '**Inquiry**') with the matters set out in Rule 9 Request dated 4 January 2023 (the '**Request**')

BACKGROUND

3. I started working for the Post Office in 1987 as a Postal Officer. I worked at the Evesham branch on the counter for 8 years. I then moved into the

Training Department based in Birmingham. My role was to train Subpostmasters and supporting them onsite.

4. I had no experience working in any IT roles or neither do I have any formal qualifications.
5. My training on the Horizon System consisted of two days training workshop. I also spent one day working in a branch that had the Horizon System installed, the region I was working in would not go operational for a number of months after my initial training.
6. My memory of exactly how I trained people on the Horizon System is now vague. From what I remember the Subpostmasters and direct employed Post Office staff had a weeks training in a classroom. This had between 1 and 6 trainees. We showed them how to use the system, using dummy transactions and there were two sessions on balancing during the week. There was one session on reversing transactions and errors.
7. All Trainees were given the opportunity to give feedback in the form of a questionnaire that was posted onto my line manager. The results of which were discussed at my regular appraisal.
8. The Subpostmasters were also given a week or more support in their Post Offices after their classroom training. This also ended with a feedback form handed to the Subpostmaster to complete.
9. I had no awareness of any bugs, errors or defects in the Horizon System. I trusted the system was correct and delivered the training to the best of my ability. When I heard of criticism of the Horizon System my reason for trusting the system was that I had not heard of any large companies, such as W.H. Smith having any difficulties or large discrepancies.

10. I believe that the training was adequate to enable the Subpostmaster to use Horizon in running their branch, including balancing and to identify discrepancies.

11. We were not expected to train the Subpostmaster's assistants, that was the Subpostmasters job.

Statement of Truth

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

Signed:

GRO

Dated: 16/03/2023