

Witness Name: Richard Marwood

Statement No.: WITN07890100

Dated: 31 March 2023

POST OFFICE HORIZON IT INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF *RICHARD MARWOOD*

I, *RICHARD MARWOOD*, will say as follows...

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a former employee of Post Office Limited and held the position of Horizon Regional Liaison Manager.
2. This witness statement is made to assist the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry (the "**Inquiry**") with the matters set out in the Rule 9 Request dated 31st January 2023 (the "**Request**").

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND

3. The Inquiry believes that I hold information relevant to the issues which will be investigated by the Inquiry. In particular, the Inquiry understands that I was a Horizon Field Support Officer ("**HFSO**").

4. I must point out that I did not ever perform the role of HFSO, during my employment with Post Office Ltd.
5. I did perform the role of Horizon Regional Liaison Manager so will only be able to respond to questions from that perspective. However, up to 24 years have passed since, so my recollection of the role and activity undertaken is somewhat limited.
6. I left school in 1972 and worked in a variety of retail jobs until I joined The Post Office in 1979 as a Postman undertaking deliveries and collections in the Hastings area.
7. In March 1981 I transferred across to Hastings Branch Office as a Postal Officer and worked as a counter clerk serving customers, and balancing my own till using a manual paper based system.
8. In September 1986 I was promoted to Branch Manager of Bexhill on Sea Branch Office, where I was responsible for the daily running of the branch. In 1992 I became Branch Manager at Hastings Branch Office.
9. As part of a major reorganisation in 1993 I became a Retail Network Manager, responsible for approximately 110 Sub Post Office branches in the East Kent area.
10. In April 1994 I was promoted to the role of Quality Network Manager in the South-East Region. My role was as a support to the Quality Support Manager, in delivering the Customer First programme throughout the region.
11. Following the end of the Quality Support structure, in March 1998, I became the Horizon Regional Liaison Manager for South-East Region. This role was mainly a conduit between the Horizon Roll Out program and the region. At the

beginning, the role was about ensuring the Horizon rollout programme was provided with correct branch data such as address, opening hours and number of counter positions etc.

12. As the rollout programme progressed the emphasis changed to providing information to the Retail Line Managers working in a business as usual capacity, ensuring they were aware of Horizon Roll Out activity in their branches, particularly Horizon training events and physical Horizon installations. Apart from the initial data gathering my direct contact with subpostmasters was very limited. I can only recollect having to call branches direct during Horizon rollout on a couple of occasions. The reason for the calls were to understand why a subpostmaster had not responded to Horizon training invitations & to agree a resolution between us.

13. In June 2002 I joined the Property Projects team as the team leader for the South-East region. We were responsible for all Post Office aspects of physical change taking place in branches such as openings, closures, and refurbishments etc. I remained in the role until I retired in February 2015.

TRAINING AND/OR INSTUCTIONS

14. I did receive the standard Horizon training during my time as the Regional Liaison Manager. This allowed me to serve on the counter which was a requirement at peak business times such as Christmas.

EXPERIENCES WORKING AS AN HFSO

15. I am unable to describe my experience working as an HFSO, as I did not perform this role.

ADEQUACY OF SUBPOSTMASTER HORIZON TRAINING

16. I do not recall any negative comments from subpostmasters attending the same Horizon training sessions as me.

17. I do remember that because of the very diverse range of branches, and the subpostmasters that operated them, there would be those that would need additional support. Some of our subpostmasters were past the normal retirement age and Horizon could be their first encounter with the digital age, so it was my understanding that additional support would be available and wherever possible was provided.

ADEQUACY OF ADVICE TO SUBPOSTMASTERS

18. I am unable to answer this as it was not part of my role.

BUGS, ERRORS, OR DEFECTS WITHIN THE HORIZON IT SYSTEM

19. At no time was I aware of any issue with the Horizon IT System & had no reason to doubt the integrity of Horizon.

20. I do not have any other comments that I think the Chair should be aware of relating to the Horizon IT Project.

Statement of Truth

I believe the content of this statement to be true.

Signed:

GRO

Dated:

31 March 2023