

Witness Name: Dave Ward

Statement No.: WITN10070100

Dated: 21st June 2024

POST OFFICE HORIZON IT INQUIRY

FIRST WITNESS STATEMENT OF DAVE WARD

I, MR DAVE WARD, will say as follows...

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

1. I am the General Secretary of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) and I was elected to this role in 2015. I was a member of the CWU Postal Executive in the year 2000, before being elected Assistant Secretary for Royal Mail deliveries in 2001. I was elected to the role of CWU Deputy General Secretary for Postal issues (DGSP) in 2003, and I held that role until I became CWU General Secretary.
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 17th April 2024 (the "Request"). I have drafted this witness statement, but I have sought

assistance and guidance from a lawyer at Penningtons Manches Cooper LLP in finalising the statement and ensuring that it meets the requirements of the Rule 9 request and covers the points raised.

3. I have been asked to provide a first witness statement covering my involvement in matters relating to Phases 4, 5 and 6 of the Inquiry.

THE CWU'S ACTIVITIES AND THE NATURE OF MEMBERSHIP

4. I have been asked to provide a brief summary of the purpose(s) and activities of the CWU, taking into consideration the draft CWU Rule Book 2001 (CWU00000112) and the CWU Rule Book 2004 (CWU00000120). The CWU is an independent trade union, certified as such by the statutory regulator, the Certification Officer.
5. I can confirm that the CWU is the largest union in the communications sector in the UK, representing over 170,000 members in the postal, telecoms, technology, financial services and related industries.
6. The CWU is the recognised trade union for non-managerial employee grades in Royal Mail, BT and the Post Office Limited (POL) where the Union has members in all sections of the business. We also have a national 'CWU Postmasters¹ Branch', established in 2014, with circa 300 postmaster members. The CWU has long called for union recognition for collective bargaining purposes for postmasters, but POL has consistently refused to grant this.

¹ The title 'Postmasters' encompasses all postmasters including postmasters in Crown Offices and subpostmasters and subpostmistresses in sub post offices.

7. The CWU's Rule Book is regularly updated, but the Rule Book shows that the objectives of the union have remained largely unchanged since 2001, including:
 - a) To unite and organise all those entitled to be members. To protect and promote members' interests and maintain and improve their working lives;
 - b) To regulate the tensions between members and their employers, and between members.

8. The methods adopted by the CWU to represent our members' interests between 2000 and 2019 include (as they still do today) the following:
 - a) **Maintaining strong, democratic representative structures** so that members are represented at every level from individual workplaces through their local branch, area and region, up to national level through the National Executive Council and national conferences.
 - b) **Collective bargaining** with employers on pay, terms and conditions of employment.
 - c) **Individual representation** in the workplace, including on disciplinary or grievance cases.
 - d) **Legal advice and representation**, including in Employment Tribunals, through the CWU's law firm UnionLine and other legal service providers.
 - e) **Continuous political engagement** with local authorities, Metro Mayors, the Labour Party and the Government on many areas of policy, including workers rights and industrial matters, to ensure our members' interests are represented at every level.
 - f) **Campaigning** for and on behalf of our members and the wider trade union movement both industrially and politically on a wide range of issues, from employment rights to health and safety related concerns.

g) Operating under the umbrella of the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

CWU Legal Services

9. I have been asked to consider rule 11.2.1 of the CWU Rule Book 2001 (CWU00000112) and rule 4.1.7 of the CWU Rule Book 2004 (CWU00000120).
10. I can confirm that between 2000 and 2019, the CWU provided a broad range of legal services to our members as we do today.
11. In 2014, the CWU jointly set up trade union law firm UnionLine alongside the GMB in response to changes to the regulatory environment for the personal injury claims market. These changes were part of the Jackson reforms that came into force in April 2013. Prior to 2014, the CWU delivered legal services in conjunction with employment law firms such as Simpson Millar and others.
12. The creation of UnionLine changed the structure and organisation of much of CWU legal services, but the scope of the union's legal services offering has remained fundamentally the same since 2000. This includes legal advice and representation on:
 - a) Employment matters such as unfair dismissal, working time and payment issues.
 - b) Personal injury cases, helping individuals to win compensation if they suffer an accident or injury that wasn't their fault.
 - c) Road Traffic Accidents (RTAs).
13. The CWU may, dependent on circumstances, offer legal advice on other issues, e.g. consumer disputes and motoring offences.

14. I have been asked to set out to what extent the rule changes in or around 2004 affected the legal representation to which CWU members may be entitled.
15. I can confirm that the rule changes in or around 2004 did not materially affect members' entitlement to legal services. The changes were designed to simplify and summarise the rule in relation to the provision of legal services.
16. I have been asked to provide an overview of the employment status of CWU members in the Post Office and the types of roles the CWU represented in the Post Office between 2000 and 2019, limited to those who used the Horizon IT system.
17. I can confirm that from 2000 to 2019, the CWU represented Post Office employees who used the Horizon IT system in a range of non-managerial grades working in Crown Post Offices. This includes, for example, Counter Clerks and Financial Specialists in Crown Offices.
18. I can confirm that since 2014 when the CWU established a dedicated CWU Postmasters Branch, the CWU has represented subpostmasters, who following a test employment claim were found to be self-employed agents of the Post Office.

KNOWLEDGE OF HORIZON

19. I have been asked to consider the extent of my knowledge of the integrity of the Horizon IT system from 2000 to 2008. In doing so, I have been asked to consider a range of documents provided by the Inquiry, including minutes of Horizon Working Group meetings and correspondence between the CWU and the Government.

My personal knowledge of Horizon system integrity (2000-2008)

20. I can confirm that I personally had no knowledge of the integrity of the Horizon IT system during the period 2000 to 2008.

21. For context, I was a member of the CWU Postal Executive in the year 2000, before being elected Assistant Secretary for Royal Mail deliveries in 2001.

22. I was elected Deputy General Secretary for Postal issues (DGSP) in 2003, a role I held until 2015. As DGSP I had general responsibility for postal issues, but the role was strategic and wide ranging, which did not require me to have, nor did I have a detailed knowledge of day-to-day issues in the Post Office.

23. As CWU General Secretary since 2015, I have not been involved in day-to-day operations in the Post Office. My role as General Secretary is focused on strategic issues for all members across all the sectors in which CWU members work, as well as wider political matters and dealing with the escalation of trade disputes across a number of employers.

24. In short, none of my roles at CWU have involved direct day-to-day responsibility for or insight into Post Office issues, which is an area covered by a dedicated CWU Assistant Secretary (Tony Kearns until 2002 and Andy Furey since 2002).

CWU knowledge of Horizon system integrity up to August 2000, as evidenced by the Inquiry documentation

25. For the purposes of this Inquiry I have examined the documents listed that the Inquiry has asked me to consider, so that I may offer a view on the CWU's knowledge of Horizon integrity at this time.

26. I believe these documents show that, as a member of the Horizon Working Group in 1999 and 2000, the CWU was aware that the system was complex, that technical issues had arisen in its development, and that this had led to delays in its acceptance and rollout. For example, document NFSP00000066 says that *“Mr Miller (POCL) explained that formal acceptance of the reconfigured Horizon system planned for 18th August (1999) had been postponed because of POCL’s concern about training, system stability, data integrity (there had been an unacceptably high level of screen freezes) and the effective operation of the help desk” (NFSP00000066 - minutes of the Horizon Working Group meeting on 11 October 1999)*. Mr Miller also explained that there was some disagreement between the Benefits Agency (BA) and ICL in the reasons for problems with the reading of bar codes on benefit order books. *“BA blamed the Horizon system, whilst ICL blamed the quality of bar code priming” (NFSP00000066)*.

27. The same document (NFSP00000066) shows that the CWU General Secretary, Derek Hodgson, expressed concerns about a number of issues, suggesting more frequent meetings were necessary to ensure the success of the Horizon project. He also suggested the Working Group could input more directly into the discussions between POCL and the BA, but the DTI Minister Alan Johnson MP said that the Working Group could not sit at the negotiating table.

28. As we also heard in the Inquiry’s evidence session with Tony Kearns on 29th November 2022, document NFSP00000200 (note of a meeting of the Horizon Working Group on 7th July 1999) states *“Mr Sweetman (POCL) gave a report on negotiations with ICL...On rollout, a deal was being closed. The plan was to complete 99% of rollout by March 2021. Mr Hodgson thought this was quite*

ambitious and sought assurances that the usual health & safety and other standards would not slip. Mr Sweetman thought that neither management nor workforce should attempt to use this tight timescale to their advantage.”

29. Document NFSP00000066 shows that Mr Miller (POCL) said “*The Post Office had accepted the system on 24th September 1999 on the basis that effective remedial action had either been completed or was at hand*”.

30. Documents CWU00000103 and CWU00000100 (correspondence between Derek Hodgson, Alan Johnson MP and others between 19 and 24 January 2000) show that the CWU expressed concerns to the Minister that issues relating to the Horizon roll-out were not being sufficiently addressed. The Minister rejected the CWU’s concerns and said that “*Whilst there are still difficulties with balancing, the other technical problems have been resolved and the roll-out will recommence as scheduled.*”

31. In summary, the documents I have been asked to consider and the other evidence referenced (document NFSP00000200) show that the CWU was a member of the Horizon Working Group in 1999/2000. The documents show that the CWU was told by POCL and the Government (DTI) that technical issues that had arisen during the trial period had been or were being resolved. I believe that the documents show that the CWU was generally reliant on POCL and the DTI for information and insight into these technical issues at that time. We had no decision-making role in relation to approval or acceptance of the Horizon system or making technical changes to improve its performance. We expressed our concerns and sought assurances in relation to the Horizon rollout on the Working Group, and we were reliant on assurances from POCL and the DTI that Horizon would be fit for purpose by the time it was rolled out.

CWU knowledge of Horizon system integrity from 2000 to 2008

32. Other than the CWU's awareness of the technical issues described above, which we were assured would be resolved by the time of roll-out as the documents show, I do not recall the CWU being aware of any problems with Horizon system integrity between 2000 and 2008.

33. I do not believe we were aware at that time of (a) the existence of bugs, errors or defects, or (b) the ability of Fujitsu staff to alter transaction data or data in branch accounts without the knowledge or consent of SPMs² ("remote access").

34. As stated in the section on CWU activities and membership, the CWU has union recognition for directly employed non-managerial grades in Post Office Limited working in Crown Offices. I do not believe we were aware of any Horizon integrity issues affecting POL employees between 2000 and 2008.

35. Prior to 2014, the CWU did not actively recruit or represent subpostmasters. Therefore, we did not have first-hand knowledge or awareness of the difficulties that subpostmasters were experiencing due to Horizon. The cases that POL took against subpostmasters during the period from 2000 to 2008 (including for example Alan Bates in 2003 and Lee Castleton in 2007) were not within the CWU's remit at that time.

36. It was not until 2014 that the CWU established the CWU Postmasters Branch, which was led by Mark Baker who was formerly a member of the NFSP Executive before resigning in 2010 in response to the NFSP's failure to defend its members over Horizon.

² In this Rule 9 request, SPM refers to subpostmasters, subpostmistresses, Post Office Counter Managers and Post Office Counter Assistants

Discussion with CWU colleagues

37. I have been asked to what extent I discussed my knowledge of Horizon system integrity with others at the CWU. I can confirm that I do not recall discussing these matters with others at the CWU between 2000 and 2008. It is unlikely I would have done so because, as set out above, none of my roles at CWU have involved responsibility for day-to-day duties regarding Post Office issues.

38. It is unlikely that the CWU would have discussed these issues as an organisation between 2000 and 2008 because as I have stated, I do not believe the CWU was aware of the problems with Horizon integrity during that period of time.

39. I have been asked to set out what steps I or the CWU took to develop a better understanding of Horizon related problems between 2000 and 2008.

40. I can confirm that I did not take any such steps at this time and I do not recall that the CWU took any such steps at this time. We had no reason to do so because as I have said I do not believe we were aware of the Horizon integrity issues between 2000 and 2008.

POST OFFICE INVESTIGATIONS, CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS AND CIVIL PROCEEDINGS

Understanding of POL branch audits/investigations (2000-2008)

41. I have been asked to briefly summarise how I understood POL to conduct branch audits or investigations into alleged shortfalls in branch accounts, with a particular focus on 2000 to 2008.

42. I can confirm that in my roles as Assistant Secretary for Royal Mail deliveries, DGSP and subsequently CWU General Secretary, I was not aware of how POL conducted branch audits or investigations into alleged shortfalls in branch accounts. I was, however, aware that there were processes for auditing/investigation shortfalls at Crown Post Offices where CWU members were employed. I did not have any detailed knowledge of these processes as it was not my immediate area of responsibility. These matters were dealt with by the Assistant Secretary for Post Office issues (Tony Kearns until 2002 and Andy Furey since 2002).

CWU support for SPMs (2000 – 2008)

43. I have been asked to describe the nature and extent of any support the CWU offered to SPMs between 2000 and 2008 in relation to Horizon, branch audits and alleged shortfalls.

44. In relation to our directly employed Post Office members, the CWU had an extensive representative structure and collective bargaining agreements in place – as we still do today - to help ensure that the interests of our members were properly protected. I am not personally familiar with the 'Losses and Gains Procedure', but I understand that this procedure has been significant in ensuring a fair hearing for CWU directly employed members in relation to accounting discrepancies.

45. I can confirm that the CWU did not support subpostmasters during this period because we did not represent them. This was the responsibility of the NFSP as the only recognised trade union for subpostmasters until 2013, when the Post Office stated that they did not recognise the NFSP for collective bargaining

purposes. Subsequently, in 2014, the Certification Officer removed the NFSP's status as a trade union.

46. The CWU has represented subpostmasters since 2014 when we established the CWU Postmasters Branch. However, our membership is relatively small compared with the NFSP, and we have so far been unsuccessful in securing trade union recognition for subpostmasters. The NFSP continues to be the main representative body for subpostmasters with over six thousand members, compared with circa 300 CWU subpostmaster members.

RESPONDING TO THE EMERGING SCANDAL

47. I have been asked to respond to a number of questions in relation to the emerging Horizon scandal, and in doing so I have been asked to consider a range of documents provided by the Inquiry. These include various letters to CWU Branches sent by the CWU and a letter from me to Baroness Neville-Rolfe in 2015.

Personal awareness of JFSA and the Horizon IT problem raised by Computer Weekly in 2009

48. I do not recall when I personally became aware of the JFSA or of the allegations made in the 11th May 2009 Computer Weekly article about the Post Office failing to recognise a potential IT problem (Document POL00041564).

49. I was not aware of the creation of the JFSA when it was first established in November 2009.

50. It is likely that I first became aware of these matters in 2013 when the CWU issued an LTB (Letter to Branches) on the findings of the Second Sight report (Document CWU00000001).

CWU awareness of these issues

51. I believe that the CWU was not initially aware of the JFSA when it was established in 2009. My understanding is that the CWU was never approached or contacted by the JFSA to engage with them or to support their campaign, so it may have taken some time for the JFSA to come to the CWU's attention.

52. I do not believe that the allegations made by subpostmasters in the 2009 Computer Weekly article were initially on the CWU's radar in any formal capacity because the CWU did not represent subpostmasters at that time. Further, my understanding is that no issues relating to complaints surrounding Horizon had been raised directly with the CWU by our Crown members.

53. It is likely that these developments gradually came to the CWU's attention over the following years. The earliest record of the CWU communicating with our branches in relation to the JFSA and the potential Horizon IT problem is the letter to branches of 12th July 2013 (document CWU00000001).

CWU action to raise concerns about Horizon (2009 – 2019)

54. I have been asked to provide an account of any steps that I or the CWU took between 2009 and 2019 in raising concerns regarding the integrity of the Horizon IT system.

55. I can confirm the following:

- a) **In 2014**, as stated above, the CWU established the CWU Postmasters National Branch to represent the interests of postmasters.

- b) **In January 2015**, the CWU submitted written evidence to the BIS Committee Inquiry on Horizon, when we stated: *“We believe there are serious failures with...Horizon and the infrastructure over which it runs. This includes problems with training, accounting practices, losses and gains policies, disciplinary policies, technical and operational help desk support, telecommunication and power related issues, interface development issues, hardware maintenance and data centre integrity”* (RLIT0000220).
- c) **In February 2015**, Andy Furey (CWU Assistant Secretary) and Mark Baker (CWU Postmasters Branch Secretary) gave oral evidence to the BIS Committee Inquiry on Horizon expressing serious concerns about the system and POL’s mediation scheme. During the session, Mark Baker said: *“What has been systemic and consistent throughout Horizon’s life is the failure to recognise that parts of the infrastructure could be to blame for some of these discrepancies occurring”* (POL00022337). Andy Furey said *“We are concerned about the pace of the process of mediation, and the number of cases that seem to have fallen out of the process. Overall, we are not particularly happy with the way that the mediation scheme has been conducted”* (POL00022337).
- d) **In April 2015**, the CWU called for an independent inquiry into the Horizon debacle and justice for postmasters who claim they have been accused of wrongdoing. We also called on the Post Office to formally recognise the CWU to represent postmasters with immediate effect (document CWU000000004), CWU letter to branches from Andy Furey, CWU Assistant Secretary, 21st April 2015). The CWU’s concerns about the approach adopted by POL to the alleged problems caused by Horizon were raised

directly with the Prime Minister (document CWU00000076, CWU NEC Doc, 18th June 2015).

e) **In November 2015**, The CWU warned postmasters of a flaw in the Post Office Horizon system (POL00267952). As set out in document POL00321858 (CWU circular to postmasters forwarded by Karl Flinders on 3 November 2015), the CWU Postmasters Branch sent an email to its members alerting them to intermittent duplicating errors that are caused by Horizon. This referred to the 'Dalmellington case' which was later used as important evidence in the High Court of known errors in the Horizon system (CWU00000129).

f) **In April 2019**, the CWU sent a parliamentary briefing to all MPs to alert them to the Post Office Horizon Trials. The briefing contained a number of recommendations, including that POL's right to prosecute without CPS scrutiny needs to be assessed, and an overhaul of POL governance is needed (document CWU00000020, CWU letter to branches from Andy Furey, 12th April 2019).

g) **In December 2019**, the CWU called for a public inquiry into the whole Horizon debacle (document CWU00000029, CWU letter to branches from Andy Furey, CWU Assistant Secretary, 23rd December 2019).

56. I believe it is also relevant to note, whilst not Horizon specific, that in August 2018 the CWU submitted a group Employment Tribunal claim seeking to formally establish 'worker status' for subpostmasters. The overall objective was to introduce much needed employment protections for subpostmasters and to establish a route to collective bargaining recognition for subpostmasters through the CWU as an independent trade union. Unfortunately, in March

2022, the CWU lost its legal claim against the Post Office for worker status for subpostmasters.

Meetings with Government Ministers and other representatives

57. I have been asked whether I met with government ministers and representatives in 2015/16.

58. I can confirm that Andy Furey and I held a meeting with Baroness Neville-Rolfe in 2015. We do not have a record of the precise date of the meeting. As we made clear in our letters to Baroness Neville-Rolfe of 15th June and 3rd July 2015, (Documents UKGI00005210 and UKGI00005211), the main issues we wanted to discuss were around the future of the Post Office network, Network Transformation and the NFSP's Memorandum of Understanding with the Post Office. I believe the meeting focused mainly on these issues.

59. I do not recall whether we discussed the Horizon IT System, but it is possible that we touched on it briefly as it was a concern which we had raised with the Prime Minister earlier that year (as mentioned in Document CWU00000076).

60. I recall that Andy Furey and I held a meeting with Margot James MP in 2016, although we do not have a record of the precise date. I believe the discussion would have centred on our concerns about the future of the Post Office network, especially around government funding and Network Transformation. We may also have covered Horizon, given our earlier calls for an independent inquiry into this issue (document CWU00000004).

CWU liaison/communication with NFSP and JFSA

61. I have been asked to what extent the CWU liaised or communicated with the NFSP and/or the JFSA in relation to the integrity of Horizon.

62. I can confirm that I did not personally liaise with the NFSP and/or the JFSA in relation to the integrity of Horizon.
63. Apart from the CWU's involvement in the Horizon Working Group in 1999 and 2000, I am not aware that the CWU liaised or communicated with the NFSP on the integrity of Horizon.
64. I am not aware that the CWU had any relationship with the JFSA, and I do not recall any CWU communication with the JFSA on the integrity of Horizon. I am not aware of any attempt by either the NFSP or the JFSA to contact the CWU on these issues. As stated in CWU00000076, *'the key individual in JFSA, Alan Bates, is not currently in contact with the CWU postmasters' branch'*.

Knowledge of Horizon 2009 - 2019

65. I have been asked to provide information on my knowledge of Horizon between 2009 and 2019.
66. I can confirm that the CWU became far more aware of problems with the integrity of the Horizon system from 2013 onwards, as described above.
67. When the CWU's Postmasters Branch was established in 2014, the CWU became increasingly aware of serious problems with the integrity of the Horizon system, due to the concerns raised by postmasters. The CWU Postmasters Branch has dealt with many requests for support from postmaster members since the branch was established in 2014. The former CWU Postmasters Branch Secretary, Mark Baker, is best placed to provide further detail on this.

68. I do not believe the CWU was aware of Horizon integrity problems in relation to Post Office employees during the period 2009 to 2019 because as far as the CWU is aware, none of our directly employed members raised concerns with the CWU about Horizon integrity.
69. The CWU has always provided strong and effective representation for members accused of accounting discrepancies. CWU collective agreements including the 'Losses and Gains Procedure' have been significant in ensuring a fair hearing for CWU directly employed members. The CWU would have fought for similar procedures to be applied to postmasters if POL had engaged with the CWU.
70. There have been cases of actual theft amongst CWU represented grades, but invariably when people have been caught and presented with clear evidence of wrongdoing, they are quick to admit to theft. In these cases, the CWU is generally not involved as people resign before being dismissed.
71. Since the Horizon system was put in place, to my knowledge no one has come forward and said they were a former CWU member who was let down by the CWU and not represented.
72. Prior to the commencement of the Inquiry, to my knowledge the CWU had no record of any of our directly employed members losing their jobs or being prosecuted due to problems with Horizon.
73. The CWU is now aware of details of two cases of Post Office employees in CWU grades who have been prosecuted and convicted of theft or fraud, one of whom we know was a CWU member.
74. Tracy Felstead was the only case we now know of relating to a direct employee of the Post Office being jailed for theft as a consequence of Horizon failures. I

do not know when the CWU became aware of Tracy Felstead's case, but the union was aware of it by March 2020 when Tracy gave oral evidence to the House of Commons BEIS Committee on the same day as Andy Furey from the CWU (UKGI00018138). Tracy was jailed for a year in 2010 aged 19 after being accused of stealing £11,503. The CWU has no record of Tracy having been a CWU member and we have no knowledge of her approaching CWU for support.

75. Elena Herd was a Customer Service Advisor at a Post Office in Stockport for nine years before being charged with fraud after a Post Office investigation into rejected post office labels. She was sentenced by Stockport Magistrates' Court to four months imprisonment (suspended for 12 months), 200 hours community service and to pay £500 compensation with costs of £100. In November 2022, Elena Herd's fraud conviction was overturned by the CCRC due to the conviction being unsafe because it relied on data from Horizon. Our records show that Elena Herd was a member of the CWU between 2009 and 2011, but we do not have any record of her having contacted the CWU for support in relation to her case. I was not aware of Elena Herd's case until Andy Furey alerted me to it earlier this month. I understand that Andy Furey only became aware of the case within the last few weeks, after hearing about the evidence from Andrew Wise to the Inquiry on 20th September 2023. During that session, Andrew Wise was questioned about his involvement in the investigation of Elena Herd (INQ00001076).

76. I am not familiar with the details of either of these cases, but Andy Furey, the CWU Officer responsible for Post Office matters, may be able to provide more information.

CWU involvement in SPM representation and mediation scheme

77. I have been asked to summarise the nature and extent of any involvement the CWU had in claims by SPMs represented by Shoosmiths in 2011, and POL's initial Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme.

78. I can confirm that I do not believe the CWU had any involvement in the Shoosmiths claim in 2011 as the CWU did not represent subpostmasters at that time. I understand that all the claimants in this case were subpostmasters.

79. I am not aware of any CWU involvement in efforts by SPMs to overturn their convictions.

80. I believe that at least two CWU members were involved in POL's initial Complaint Review and Mediation scheme (as noted in document CWU00000076). Mark Baker (former CWU Postmasters Branch Secretary) should be able to provide more detail on these cases.

CWU relationship with the NFSP

81. I have been asked to describe the CWU's relationship with the NFSP and whether this changed following the NFSP's conversion to a trade association, after the NFSP was delisted as a trade union.

82. I can confirm that prior to the NFSP's conversion to a trade association in 2015, the CWU and the NFSP held equal status as trade unions, albeit POL only recognised NFSP for subpostmasters whilst the CWU was only recognised for POL employees. The NFSP would infrequently meet with the CWU to discuss some issues such as the future of the Post Office network. We did not work together in any meaningful capacity nor did we represent any of the same groups of members before the NFSP was deregistered as a trade union. As

already described both organisations were members of the Horizon Working Group in 1999 and 2000.

83. However, the CWU had expressed concerns in 2013 about the lack of independent representation available to subpostmasters (document CWU00000001). The creation of the CWU Postmasters Branch in 2014, by an ex-NFSP member citing a lack of representation from the NFSP, was a consequence of the NFSP's inability to serve the interests of its members.

84. As indicated in document CWU000000076 (see p.1 and p.5), the CWU had carried out some work with the NFSP in early 2015 with a view to a transfer of engagements of the NFSP to the CWU. However, this was not taken forward as later in 2015 the NFSP voted to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Post Office.

85. As stated in document CWU000000076, the CWU's relationship with the NFSP necessarily changed as a consequence of the MoU in 2015 between POL and the NFSP. This is because the NFSP lost its status as a trade union and reconstituted itself as a trade association. Its relationship with POL became contractual, and the NFSP was no longer independent from POL.

WHISTLEBLOWING

86. I have been asked to describe any practice, policy or procedure adopted by the CWU between 2000 or 2019 to enable members or officials to report wrongdoing in relation to Horizon.

87. The CWU did not adopt a specific whistleblowing policy or practice for our Post Office members. However, with regards to our directly employed Post Office

members the CWU had an extensive representative structure. With a high density of members at the outset of this timeline (2000) the majority of CWU members employed by the Post Office would be aware of who their CWU representative was or how to contact their CWU branch. If they wished to report any wrongdoing, they could contact their Rep/Branch for guidance and support.

88. With regards to postmasters, we understand that as self-employed agents, they are not protected by whistleblowing legislation (CWU00000128). However, our postmaster members would know how to contact the CWU Postmasters Branch to raise any concerns and to seek guidance and support.

GENERAL

89. I have been asked to set out my reflections on the extent to which the support and representation available to SPMs with regards to Horizon was adequate or inadequate between 2000 and 2019.

90. As a recognised trade union the CWU has robust structures and procedures in place to represent directly employed Post Office members. I believe this has enabled the CWU to provide the strongest possible representation on behalf of our directly employed members. I am not aware of any case in which the CWU has failed to support a member who has requested help in relation to Horizon or any other issue.

91. Since the CWU Postmasters Branch was established in 2014, the branch has intervened many times on behalf of postmasters. However, the CWU has been

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No.	URN	Document Description	Control Number
1	CWU00000112	Draft CWU Rule book 2001	CWU00000112
2	CWU00000120	Rules for the Communication Workers Union (2004)	CWU00000120
3	NFSP00000066	Minutes of the Horizon Working Group meeting on 11 October 1999	VIS00007514
4	NFSP00000200	Note of a meeting of the Horizon Working Group on 7 th July 1999	VIS00007648
5	CWU00000103	Correspondence between Derek Hodgson (CWU GS), Alan Johnson MP (DTI Minister) and others dated 19 th January 2000	VIS00009907
6	CWU00000100	Letter from Derek Hodgson (CWU GS) to Alan Johnson MP (DTI Minister), dated 24 th January 2000	VIS00009904
7	POL00041564	Computer Weekly article, Bankruptcy, prosecution and disrupted livelihoods - Postmasters tell their story – 11 th May 2009	POL-0038046
8	CWU00000001	CWU letter to all branches with postal members, Post Office: Findings of Second Sight report into Horizon computer system, from Andy Furey, CWU Assistant	VIS00007675

		Secretary, dated 12 th July 2013	
9	RLIT0000220	Written evidence from CWU to BIS Committee, 29th January 2015	RLIT0000220
10	POL00022337	Post Office Mediation, Oral Evidence, BIS Committee, 3rd February 2015	POL - 0018816
11	CWU00000004	CWU letter to branches from Andy Furey, CWU Assistant Secretary, dated 21 st April 2015	VIS00007678
12	CWU00000076	National Federation of Sub-postmasters, Post Office Limited and CWU, CWU NEC Document, from Dave Ward and Simon Sapper, dated 18 th June 2015	VIS00007750
13	POL00267952	CWU warns subpostmasters of flaw in PO accounting system, Computer Weekly, 5 th November 2015	POL – BSFF - 0106015
14	POL00321858	CWU circular to postmasters forwarded by Karl Flinders on 3 rd November 2015	POL-BSFF-0159908
15	CWU00000129	PO considered Horizon IT system 'high risk' court told, Computer Weekly, 12 th March 2019	CWU00000129
16	CWU00000020	CWU letter to branches from Andy Furey, dated 12 th April 2019	VIS00007694

17	CWU00000029	CWU letter to branches from Andy Furey dated 23 rd December 2019	VIS00007703
18	UKGI00005210	Letter from Dave Ward, CWU General Secretary, to Baroness Neville-Rolfe, Minister for Business, Innovation and Skills, dated 15 th June 2015	UKGI016024-001
19	UKGI00005211	Letter from Dave Ward, CWU General Secretary, to Baroness Neville-Rolfe, Minister for Business, Innovation and Skills, dated 3 rd July 2015	UKGI016025-001
20	UKGI00018138	Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee, oral evidence: Post Office and Horizon, HC 143, 10 th March 2020	UKGI028145-001
21	INQ00001076	Post Office Horizon Inquiry, Phase 4 – 20 th September 2023, evidence from Andrew Wise, former adviser in the Network Business Support Centre	INQ00001076
22	CWU00000128	Whistleblowing at work, the law, ACAS, June 2023	CWU00000128