



Information Rights Team
Post Office Limited
Ground Floor
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London EC2Y 9AQ
033 3665 3951

Our reference: FOI2020/00733

Mr Alan Bates
request-688238-1d76b5aa@whatdotheyknow.com

27 October 2020

Dear Mr Bates,

Freedom of Information Request – FOI2020/00733

I am writing further to my letter of 29 September 2020 in respect of your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("**FOIA**"), as set out below:

"At the end of a six month investigation in October 2013 Detica Limited, part of BAE Systems, produced a 51 page report entitled 'Fraud and Non-conformance in the Post Office; Challenges and Recommendations - G-119 Fraud Analysis' which was referred to during a High Court litigation action last year.

Point 5.1.1.4 of that report deals with 'Overstocking', and one of the findings in that section states:-

'Scratch cards have a sell by date imposed by the lottery operator; any scratch card entered by the branch into Horizon is effectively owned by the Post Office and cannot be returned to the operator. Once the sell by date has been exceeded the lottery cards cannot be sold with the Post Office effectively sitting on a loss.'

Would you please answer the following questions in relation to that finding;

Has Post Office ever actually suffered a loss from lottery cards exceeding their sell by dates?

If such losses were incurred, were they itemised and recorded?

Please provide the recorded loss figures to Post Office for lottery cards due to an exceeded sell by date for each of the years from 2006 to 2014.

Has a Subpostmaster ever been held financially liable for a loss from lottery cards exceeding their sell by dates (whether or not those had been activated on the branch's Horizon system prior to that sell by date)?"

Post Office has conducted what it considers to be reasonable and proportionate searches in accordance with FOIA and the Code of Practice and I can confirm that Post Office holds information responsive to your first question.

As to your second, third and fourth questions, Post Office has reached the cost limit of £450 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 in seeking to determine whether it holds information responsive to these questions. The cost limit of £450 equates to 18 hours of work at a rate of £25 per hour. Post Office is not obliged to comply with a request where to do so would exceed the cost limit in accordance with section 12 of FOIA. Where a single item of correspondence contains multiple requests, Post Office is entitled to "aggregate" these for the purposes of the cost limit in section 12 where certain conditions set out in regulation 5 of The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and

Fees) Regulations 2004 are met.¹ Post Office has therefore aggregated your second, third and fourth questions. As a result, Post Office cannot confirm whether or not it holds information responsive to your second, third and fourth questions which Post Office is permitted to do in these circumstances under section 12(2) of FOIA.

In light of the above and in summary, our answers to your questions are as follows:

Has Post Office ever actually suffered a loss from lottery cards exceeding their sell by dates?

Yes.

If such losses were incurred, were they itemised and recorded?

As explained above, we cannot confirm whether or not we hold information responsive to this question.

Please provide the recorded loss figures to Post Office for lottery cards due to an exceeded sell by date for each of the years from 2006 to 2014.

As explained above, we cannot confirm whether or not we hold information responsive to this question.

Has a Subpostmaster ever been held financially liable for a loss from lottery cards exceeding their sell by dates (whether or not those had been activated on the branch's Horizon system prior to that sell by date)?

As explained above, we cannot confirm whether or not we hold information responsive to this question.

I am sorry for any disappointment that, for the reasons set out above, we are only able to provide limited information in answer to your questions. If you refine your request, for example, so that your questions refer to a more recent time period, we will consider your new request afresh. However, please do note that we might still be unable to respond to your refined request if we estimate that complying with it would exceed the cost limit.

If you have any queries about this response, please contact me. Do remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of this response, you do have a right to request an internal review. You can do this by writing to the address below stating your reasons for your internal review request.

Information Rights Manager
Post Office Limited
Information Rights Team
Ground Floor
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20 Finsbury Street
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EC2Y 9AQ
information.rights@postoffice.co.uk

¹ The conditions are that the requests in question are (i) made by one person, or by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign; (ii) are received within any period of 60 consecutive working days; and (iii) relate to any extent, to the same or similar information.

If, having requested an internal review by Post Office, you are still not satisfied with our response you also have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113
<https://ico.org.uk>

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kerry Moodie', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Kerry Moodie
Information Rights Team
information.rights@postoffice.co.uk
<http://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/secure-corporate/about-us/access-to-information/>
@postofficenews

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