



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

Our reference: FOI201612060820

Mr Tim McCormack
request-375538-fe8961aa@whatdotheyknow.com

06 January 2017

Dear Mr McCormack,

Freedom of Information Request - FOI201612060820

I am writing in response to your email received by Post Office Limited ("**Post Office**") on 06 December 2016, which I am dealing with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("**FOIA**").

In your email you requested information in two parts:

1. *Could you please provide me with the number of known errors in Horizon as at 23/11/15 that if gone undetected by the subpostmaster would have resulted in the subpostmaster incurring losses at their branch*

Post Office considers that information as requested above does not contain a request for recorded information. Although your request can be in the form of a question, rather than a request for specific documents, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not oblige an authority to answer a question if this would mean creating new information or giving an opinion or judgement that is not already recorded, which applies to the question that you have raised above.

2. *In the Second Sight Interim report, an error in Horizon was reported "Local Suspense Account Problem" which occurred as early as 2010 and was not noticed by POL or Fujitsu until 2012 and not fixed until 2013. Could you please confirm that the Known Errors Log for November 2011 did not hold any details of this error?*

Post Office considers that information as requested above does not contain a request for recorded information. Although your request can be in the form of a question, rather than a request for specific documents, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not oblige an authority to answer a question if this would mean creating new information or giving an opinion or judgement that is not already recorded, which applies to the question that you have raised above.

As advised previously on 29 April 2016, I can confirm that Post Office does hold some information about updates to the Horizon system. However we believe that this information is exempt from disclosure under Section 43(2) of the Act, concerning likely prejudice to commercial interests and Section 31(1)(a) Law Enforcement.

Commercial Interest

Further, Post Office considers that disclosure of information requested about updates to the Horizon system would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Post Office and other commercial partners, in that software updates for the Horizon system are released on a regular basis to ensure that operational performance is maintained at optimal levels, as you would expect for any large IT system. Such updates include, for example, upgrades and improvements to functionality; and the introduction of new business capabilities for products & services and are, therefore, considered to be commercially sensitive.

Post Office in this respect considers that disclosure of the information would weaken its position in a competitive environment, by revealing information which could be unfairly used by its competitors.

Law Enforcement

Post Office also relies upon the exemption under Section 31(1)(a) of the FOIA, concerning law enforcement. Post Office considers that disclosure of this information would be likely to inhibit its abilities to prevent and detect crime, in that software updates for the Horizon system are released on a regular basis to ensure that operational performance is maintained at optimal levels, as you would expect for any large IT system. Such updates include, for example, security-related matters and upgrades.

Depending on the nature and extent of changes they are applied in carefully managed periodic releases, following thorough impact assessment and testing. The Post Office cannot make public information that could compromise the security of its systems and I am unable therefore to provide you with technical details of our software updates.

Public Interest

As information has been exempted under Section 43(2) and Section 31(1)(a) of the act, a public interest test applies. This involves weighing the balance of public interest in maintaining the exemption or releasing the information. Post Office understands that there is public interest in promoting the transparency and understanding of matters which are of interest to the public. However, there is also strong public interest in ensuring that Post Office is able to operate in a fair marketplace in relation to its commercial activities and that the integrity its process and systems is protected from fraudulent or other criminal activity. This is equally applicable to the interests of its commercial partners, who should not suffer security or commercial detriments as a result of inappropriate disclosure of the information.

Accordingly, Post Office considers that the public interest is best served by maintaining the exemption respect of the information requested.

Post Office further considers that were it seeking to answer your question costs limits would likely apply.

I hope the information I have provided on this occasion is useful, however 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
Finsbury Dials
20 Finsbury Street
London
EC2Y 9AQ
foia@postoffice.co.uk

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: 01625 545 700
www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gagan Sharma', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gagan Sharma
Information Rights Team
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<http://corporate.postoffice.co.uk/access-information>
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