

From: [Ministerial Correspondence](#)
To: [REDACTED] [@postoffice.co.uk](#)
Subject: Response from the Lord Chancellor
Date: 30 January 2024 16:41:35
Attachments: [Signed Response to Nick Read correspondence - LC Edits.pdf](#)

Good Afternoon

FAO: Mr Nick Read

Please find attached the response from the Minister.

We are sending replies electronically and will not send a hard copy unless you specifically request one.

Thank you for your understanding.

Ministerial Correspondence Team

Did you know that we have a dedicated email account for MPs and constituency offices? It is [REDACTED] [@justice.gov.uk](#) and you can use it to send us electronic queries and constituent concerns. You can forward emails from your constituents and do not need to send us a letter signed by your MP, providing that you use your [@parliament.uk](#) account. We just ask that you do not share this dedicated email address with constituents or the public please.

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Ministry
of Justice

The Right Honourable
Alex Chalk KC MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary
of State for Justice

Mr Nick Read
100 Wood Street
London, EC2V 7AN

Email: [REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk

MoJ ref: SUB 112145

30 January 2024

Dear Mr Read,

POST OFFICE CONVICTIONS AND COMPENSATION

Thank you for your letter of 9 January regarding the Post Office convictions and compensation.

On Wednesday 10 January, the Prime Minister announced the Government will introduce primary legislation in the coming weeks to quash all convictions that were based on the erroneous Horizon evidence and/or the poor behaviour of the Post Office investigation and prosecution teams, behaviour you describe in your letter as 'abysmal'. This blanket exoneration will clear the names of post-masters and mistresses and make sure they can access the compensation they deserve as quickly as possible. Once this legislation is passed and convictions have been quashed, individuals will be entitled to at least £600,000 in compensation to rebuild their lives.

Fairness is at the heart of our justice system and there can be no doubt that innocent post-masters and mistresses have suffered an intolerable, exceptional and unprecedented miscarriage of justice at the hands of Post Office Ltd. These are truly exceptional circumstances, and we must right this wrong quickly, ensuring those convicted can be fairly and swiftly compensated.

This is why the Government has chosen to legislate for a blanket quashing of convictions, rather than doing so on a case-by-case basis. This necessarily means we will not be able to make an assessment of an individual's guilt or innocence. The Government therefore has to accept the risk that some postmasters who committed a crime will have their convictions overturned and will be eligible for compensation. The Government has concluded on the unique facts of this case that such a risk must be accepted to ensure timely justice for the many postmasters who have been so seriously wronged. The principle that underpins our decision is that of the great legal scholar Sir William Blackstone who said "better that ten guilty persons escape, than that one innocent suffer". That said, I and my officials are working with our colleagues in the Department for Business and Trade, who will own the forthcoming legislation, on potential ways to reduce the risk of fraudulent claims without putting unnecessary barriers in the way of genuine victims claiming compensation.

I am grateful for your ongoing support and for Peters & Peters continued engagement. I am aware that my officials are in touch with Post Office Ltd and appreciate the assistance your officials are providing.

Thank you again for getting in touch.

Yours sincerely,



RT HON ALEX CHALK KC MP

LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>
To: [Gratton, Lorna - UKGI](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Urgent Letter for Lord Chancellor from Nick Read Post Office Ltd - legally privileged and confidential
Date: 10 January 2024 20:13:14
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Thanks very much Lorna, all duly noted. Whilst I appreciate the ship has probably sailed on this one, having discussed internally, I would be very grateful if you could still follow up with the recipients of your original email to let them know that the advice from P&P is legally privileged and confidential, and to ask them to pass that message on if the email was forwarded. As I say, I do appreciate it's a little late in the day, but your assistance with this would be much appreciated.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

From: Gratton, Lorna - UKGI [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk>
Sent: 10 January 2024 16:07
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>
Subject: FW: Urgent Letter for Lord Chancellor from Nick Read Post Office Ltd

Caution: This email has been sent by an external contact. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, please use the "Report Phishing" button.

Hi [REDACTED],

This is the email from Nick to the Lord Chancellor, but as you can see, it's gone to shared mailboxes and I would imagine it's been circulated widely within the departments (I got it from the Secretary of State's office in DBT), so I'm afraid I really don't think there's much that can be done about it now. Is [REDACTED] keen that it continues to be covered by legal privilege, as the copy Nick R sent to the Minister isn't marked as such.

Thanks,
Lorna

From: Nick Read [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, January 9, 2024 4:53 PM
To: ps.lordchancellor@justice.gov.uk; Secretary Of State INTERNATIONAL TRADE (DBT) <Badenoch@businessandtrade.gov.uk>; Minister HOLLINRAKE (DBT) <Hollinrake@businessandtrade.gov.uk>
Subject: Urgent Letter for Lord Chancellor from Nick Read Post Office Ltd

Please find attached a letter for the urgent attention of the Lord Chancellor

Nick Read
Group CEO

EA: [REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk

100 Wood Street
London, EC2V 7AN

postoffice.co.uk



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From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>
To: [Gratton, Lorna - UKGI](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Criminal appeals
Date: 10 January 2024 15:09:52

Hi Lorna

Thanks very much for letting me know. Would you mind forwarding me the 2 email chains you refer to (the one you sent over to the MoJ and the one you were copied into from Nick)? I appreciate it has now been distributed more widely but we are still keen to ensure that recipients are made aware of its privileged nature and that it should be treated confidentially.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

From: Gratton, Lorna - UKGI <[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk>
Sent: 10 January 2024 11:24
To: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>; [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Criminal appeals

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Hi [REDACTED]

I sent the note on (and told [REDACTED] at the time that I did, and he didn't express any concerns). But I think the ship has firmly sailed on this one as Nick Read has sent it on to the Lord Chancellor, the Secretary of State and Minister Hollinrake last night (without any confidentiality markings on it).

Best wishes,

Lorna

Lorna Gratton | Director

UK Government Investments

1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET

T: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk>

www.ukgi.org.uk

PA: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk>

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>

Sent: 10 January 2024 11:09

To: Gratton, Lorna - UKGI [REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk>

Cc: [REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@postoffice.co.uk>

Subject: Criminal appeals

Lorna,

Hope you are well? I am currently overseeing criminal appeals at POL and understand that colleagues at the MoJ were made aware of the letter from [REDACTED] at P&P (as referred to in the attached email from [REDACTED]). I just wanted to check whether you knew if the original correspondence from [REDACTED] had actually been shared, or whether it was just the existence of the note and relevant contact details? We're obviously keen to ensure that privilege is not waived and that the note remains confidential.

Many thanks and kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

100 Wood Street,
London, EC2V 7ER

[REDACTED]

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From: [Gratton, Lorna - UKGI](#) on behalf of [Gratton, Lorna - UKGI](#) [REDACTED] [@ukgi.org.uk](#)
To: [REDACTED]; [Benjamin Tidswell](#); [Brian Gaunt](#) [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [RU Governance](#); [Lorna Gratton](#) [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Remediation Committee - For Comment: P&P Advice Note re proposed legislation to exonerate and compensate PFAs
Date: 02 February 2024 15:06:15
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

A few other things to note:

- The last letter POL sent into DBT and MoJ on this issue was leaked to the FT. They described it as being a letter to DBT (when in fact it was addressed to the Lord Chancellor). This suggests that they hadn't seen the whole letter, only an extract, and that the leak may well have come from DBT. That letter wasn't marked as legally privileged when it was sent it. The handling of it in the department may well have been different if it had been (and therefore the handling of this might be if it were appropriately marked).

Sorry that's not more conclusive from me!

Lorna

Lorna Gratton | Director

UK Government Investments

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[\[REDACTED\]@ukgi.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk)

www.ukgi.org.uk

PA: [\[REDACTED\]@ukgi.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk)

From: [Gratton, Lorna - UKGI](#) on behalf of [Gratton, Lorna - UKGI](#) [REDACTED] [@ukgi.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk)>
To: [Nick Read](#)
Subject: Today's announcement
Date: 10 January 2024 14:15:30

Hi Nick,

You'll have seen today that Ministers have announced a radical approach to convicted sub postmasters. We did everything we could yesterday to make sure that any action was as well informed as possible (and I think you know, we arranged for [REDACTED] to speak to MoJ) – I also saw your letter to the Lord Chancellor. You won't surprise you to hear that they're still working through the detail both of how the legislation is going to work, and how what the administrative consequences (for POL/DBT) will be. We (UKGI, HMT and DBT) are very keen that have an approach that is deliverable and worked out together.

Do let me know if it's useful to speak, I'm very happy to if it is.

Lorna

Lorna Gratton | Director

UK Government Investments

1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET

[REDACTED]
[@ukgi.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@ukgi.org.uk)

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