News

Statement: Update on the Solicitors Regulation Authority investigation on the Post Office Horizon IT Scandal

14 October 2022

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In light of the resumption of hearings at the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry, we are providing an update on our work and the likely timelines.

We have been closely following issues relating to the Post Office Horizon scandal, where between 2000 – 2013 sub-postmasters and mistresses (SPMs) were prosecuted for alleged offences based on evidence provided by the 'Horizon' electronic accounting system. Some convictions of SPMs have since been quashed. There has also been associated group civil litigation by SPMs against the Post Office/Royal Mail Group.

Our focus is on individuals and firms we regulate working on behalf of the Post Office/Royal Mail Group. We are considering the judicial findings in the group civil litigation. In respect of the criminal prosecutions, we are assessing whether individuals we regulate fulfilled their duties and ensured the prosecutions were carried out fairly and information and documents were disclosed when required.

We have obtained a Court Order which required the Post Office/Royal Mail Group to provide us with specified relevant documents. We are also a 'core participant' in the [ongoing Statutory Inquiry](https://www.postofficehorizoninquiry.org.uk/) [https://www.postofficehorizoninquiry.org.uk/]. However, the Inquiry will not provide us with any of the evidence it holds, unless we provide an undertaking which restricts our ability to use the information in our processes. So we anticipate that we will need to wait to the end of the Inquiry process before we can take any further formal steps.

We have not named anyone we regulate linked to our investigation. This will remain the case unless we decide we need to take regulatory action ourselves, or we need to issue disciplinary proceedings before the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal.