



Department for
Business & Trade

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The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair, Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
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25 April 2025

Capture Accounting Software Redress

Dear Liam,

Thank you for your letter dated 28 March regarding the Capture accounting system. The Government is working at pace to ensure that postmasters who suffered because of technical issues in the Capture system receive redress. I am grateful for the Committee's support of the Government's commitment in this respect.

We recognise that a lot of time has passed for those who were affected by the Capture system. That is why we are committed to establishing a redress process as quickly as possible. In designing a redress process, we have considered the unique challenges posed by Capture, including the lack of records due to the time that has elapsed. Working with a group of Capture postmasters and their legal representatives we have drawn on ten case studies to inform our thinking, as well as talking directly to a wider group of impacted postmasters to test our thinking as it has developed. In addition, DBT has been working closely with HM Treasury and the Public Sector Fraud Authority to ensure any new redress process meets the tests for managing public money and fraud. I remain committed to providing a formal update on this work before the summer.

You asked whether the Government had considered expanding the Post Office (Horizon System) Offences Act 2024 to bring Capture convictions cases in scope of the Act. The Act was an unprecedented intervention that was justified due to the extraordinary scale and circumstances of the Horizon scandal. The decision to legislate was taken after over one hundred cases were overturned through existing criminal appeal processes, providing a strong basis for action on the remaining Horizon conviction cases. To date, no convictions have been overturned by the Court of Appeal where Capture was known to be in place in the post office and evidence from Capture was relied on by the prosecution.

However, I understand that the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) is currently investigating 28 applications for appeal which are potentially Capture related convictions. I understand that no decisions have been made on any referrals, but the CCRC continue to actively review all of these cases. The Government, along with the Post Office, remains committed to supporting the CCRC and the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (SCCRC) in their ongoing investigations.

You rightly highlight the importance of keeping postmasters who may have been affected engaged and updated throughout the process. That is why we have been working closely with postmasters and their legal representatives to design the redress parameters to meet their specific needs. This includes bi-monthly roundtables to ensure the necessary transparency in the approach being taken, with the next scheduled for later this month. Additionally, we continue to encourage postmasters or their families who believe that they were prosecuted on the basis of shortfalls caused by the Capture software to come forward to the government to make themselves known – a dedicated mailbox is available for those who may have been affected to register their concerns and enquiries.

Thank you once again for your and the Committee's ongoing interest and for bringing up this important issue. I trust that my response demonstrates our commitment to this essential cause.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gareth Thomas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gareth" and the last name "Thomas" clearly distinguishable.

GARETH THOMAS MP

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