# Former Post Office CEO testifies on Post Office Horizon IT system safety concerns



Former Post Office Chief Executive Paula Vennells testified for a second day at the ongoing Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry on Thursday, addressing the safety of subpostmaster convictions linked to the faulty Horizon IT system.

In 2013, campaigner Alan Bates sent Vennells an email expressing surprise that she had not met with him given findings from independent forensic accountants Second Sight. Despite this, Vennells contended she had no reason to believe the convictions were unsafe and emphasized seeking assurance that the Horizon system could be trusted. She denied efforts to manipulate Second Sight's conclusions to favor the Post Office.

The inquiry also reviewed a 2013 email exchange between Vennells and communications director Mark Davies, where Davies advised against reviewing all subpostmaster prosecutions to avoid negative media coverage. Vennells acknowledged the improper nature of this perspective, but claimed she couldn't recall making decisions based solely on Davies' advice.

Over 700 subpostmasters were prosecuted by the Post Office from 1999 to 2015 due to Horizon system errors, which made it appear as though money was missing at their branches. Despite the government announcing £600,000 payouts for those with quashed convictions, hundreds await compensation.

Vennells apologized multiple times during her testimony, including addressing the inquiry's tearful first day, but maintained she had no prior indication of the system's defects jeopardizing convictions.

The inquiry continues to delve into the Horizon IT system's faults and the subsequent impact on subpostmasters.