

No. 567/2020

26<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Colleagues

## **POST OFFICE: SUPPLY CHAIN JOINT STATEMENT – STAB VESTS**

Further to LTB 001/20 dated 2<sup>nd</sup> January, Branches are reminded that earlier this year we worked with the Post Office on a joint review with regards to the potential introduction of stab vests for CViT Crew members performing duties on high risk routes. Following a trial in 3 Depots and an enhanced risk assessment of CViT routes, it has now been agreed that in the interest of our members' protection, the stab vests will be rolled out initially to seven depots covering 35 high risk routes as a trial extension.

The following joint statement has been published today:

### ***Stab vest roll out***

*Following a joint review we recognise that a number of factors may impact on the CViT risk profile in the near future particularly in some parts of the country.*

*We have to ensure that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of colleagues is our number one priority, therefore we have agreed to roll out the provision of stab vests to 35 of our CViT drivers who perform routes in areas deemed high risk. These risks include:*

- an increase in knife and violent crime in a number of areas and major cities.*
- an increase in cash being collected from branches due to the closure of local high street banks.*

*A range of four vests from different suppliers were trialled at 3 depots in early 2020 by male and female crew and a preferred version was selected by CViT crews. The feedback informed us that comfort, fitting and robustness was important.*

*Post Office took onboard the feedback from drivers and the chosen vest was generally considered lightweight, flexible panels, comfortable when worn, not too hot, easy to remove and good quality.*

*Post Office Security team have undertaken an enhanced risk assessment of CIT routes and due to an increase in the risk factors above, Post Office are proposing to roll out the vests to seven depots covering 35 high risk routes. The depots that have been identified to receive vests are:*

- *Belfast*
- *Birmingham*
- *Chester*
- *Hemel*
- *London*
- *Manchester*
- *Sheffield*

*The Health and Safety team will shortly be contacting the depots serving the 35 high risk routes to obtain colleague measurements.*

*At this stage we do not believe there is a requirement to provide crews with stab vests on all routes, but we will continue to review quarterly including reviewing the requirements across all Depots to ascertain whether stab vests should be extended beyond the 35 routes. We will of course share information and data with you especially if the threat levels change moving forward.*

*Post Office and CWU will continue to work together; to ensure safety is our number one priority. This will include the depot manager and the CWU Unit Rep in the seven depots involved working together to ensure the smooth implementation of this agreement.*

*Nick Trowler  
Head of CViT Operations  
Post Office*

*Andy Furey  
CWU Assistant Secretary*

As Branches will note from the Joint Statement, we will continue to jointly review the situation on a quarterly basis and where necessary agree any further requirements. Branches and Representatives are urged to bring this LTB to the attention of our Supply Chain CViT members.

Further developments will be reported.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Furey**  
**Assistant Secretary**