**Communication Workers Union**

Dave Joyce National Health & Safety Officer

150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RX

Tel: 020 8971 7365/7308 E-Mail: djoyce@cwu.org

Our ref:  DJ/SG/P18/13

6 March 2015

Lord de Mauley

Parliamentary Under-Secretary

Lord de Mauley's Private Office

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

Room 625, 9 Millbank

c/o 17 Smith Square

London

SW1P 3JR

Tel: 0207 238 1191

Dear Rupert,

**HM Government ‘Cyberstreetwise’ Campaign Adverts and Website - Trivialising Dog Attacks On Postal Workers:**

I write further to my previous correspondence.

As you will know from our several past meetings and correspondence in the run up to the introduction of the revised dangerous dogs legislation, over 3,000 Postal Workers are attacked and injured by dogs every year. The highest number recorded was 2007/2008 when 6,500 attacks occurred and two Postmen were nearly killed. Hence the CWU ‘Bite-Back’ Campaign and the eventual positive response of government with significant changes to Dangerous Dogs Law in order to clamp down on irresponsible dog ownership and hold those responsible to account via the extended legislation, tougher court penalties and Community Protection Control Notices. We, government, CWU, Royal Mail, enforcers and all stakeholder organisations and experts now need to turn attention towards education, training, encouraging responsible ownership, enforcement and prevention. We look forward to participating in that process as the organisation representing the UKs largest number of victims.

Clearly Defra, the Home Office and government realise that dog attacks on Postal Workers is far from being something to Trivialise and make fun of. They are terrifying, painful and injurious experiences for thousands of victim Postal Workers who suffer both physical and psychological injuries, some of which are severely disabling and disfiguring. In many cases the victims never fully recover. Some are unable to continue as a Postal delivery worker.

I am grateful that you have in the past personally visited a Royal Mail Delivery Office, jointly with myself and Royal Mail representatives and have seen photographs of victims injuries which I presented to you. I know you fully appreciate the scale of the problem Postal workers face.

It therefore came as quite a shock and unwelcome surprise to see the HM Government ‘Cyberstreetwise’ Campaign Adverts on the London Underground, advising Businesses on Passwords by using examples which are in extremely poor taste, trivialising and poking fun at dog attacks on Postmen , e.g. a “Cyber Unwise” (Blue background) Password, it suggests, would be “Rover” and a “Cyber Streetwise” recommended Password (Orange background) would be **“dogPostm@nD1nner”.**

Donald Brydon Royal Mail Group Chair, kindly sent you a note fully supporting my previous letter.

We have received many complaints from our members, as the offending adverts have now been widely seen by Postal workers.

Negative stereotyping of this nature, displaying Postal Workers in a poor light, and sustaining the 'joke' image of dog attacks on Postal Workers as somehow being funny and an acceptable, everyday part of life is entirely unrepresentative of the actual situation where 3000 Postman and Women every year fall victim some terrifying attacks by dogs, owned by irresponsible owners with many of the victims left severely injured. Two were nearly killed and many more have suffered amputations for example.

For a Government advert to display publicly **"DogPostmanD1nner"** as a **"Strong Password"** to use is in itself totally irresponsible and insulting to thousands of Postal workers apart from encouraging dog owners to think that if their dog bites the postman or woman it's not serious - it's funny.

I would urge a re-think on these adverts and request they be withdrawn and replaced at the earliest opportunity.

A copy of the offending advert is attached.

Yours sincerely

**Dave Joyce**

**CWU National Health, Safety & Environment Officer**