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1		Friday, 24 February 2023
2	(10.	.05 am)
3	•	KENNEDY: Good morning, chair. Our witness today
4		is Mr David Smith.
5	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Before we hear from Mr Smith, I'd
6		like to make an announcement about what
7		I anticipate is going to happen today. As you
8		will know the Prime Minister has made a request
9		that as many of us as possible observe
10		a minute's silence at 11.00 am this morning.
11		I propose to observe that minute's silence by
12		remaining silent on the screen.
13		I understand that some people may wish not
14		to observe that silence or may wish to observe
15		it in private and, accordingly, shortly before
16		11.00 we will stop the proceedings. Those who
17		wish to leave the Inquiry room are of course
18		free to do so and those who wish to join from
19		other parties of the Inquiry Team who are not in
20		the room can come into the room if they wish to
21		do so.
22		Then at 11.00 those of us who are in the
23		Inquiry room, either in person or remotely, will
24		observe the minute's silence. Following that
25		we'll have our morning break until 11.15 and
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1	Q.	Is it true to the best of your knowledge and
2		belief?
3	A.	It is.
4	Q.	Turning to your second statement. Do you also
5		have that there?
6	A.	I do.
7	Q.	That should run to 16 pages and, if you turn to
8		the 16th page, is that your signature there?
9	A.	It's actually on the 17th page but it is indeed.
10	Q.	It finishes on the 17th.
11	A.	Yes.
12	Q.	It's dated 7 February 2023.
13	A.	It is.
14	Q.	Have you read through this statement recently?
15	A.	I have, yes.
16	Q.	Is the also true to the best of your knowledge
17		and belief?
18	A.	It is, yes.
19	Q.	Those witness statements are now in evidence and
20		everything I ask you is supplementary and can
21		I start by saying thank you very much for coming
22		to give evidence to the Inquiry today.
23		Starting with some questions about your
24		background. Can you explain what you did before
25		you joined the Post Office.

1		then, because this is all happening a little
2		earlier than usual, we'll probably take an early
3		lunch and aim to complete our business by about
4		3.00 by these rather different means,
5		Ms Kennedy. I hope everyone understands that.
6		If you think I'm getting too close to 11.00
7		before adjourning just stop me all right,
8		Ms Kennedy?
9	MS	KENNEDY: Will do so. Thank you. Mr David
10		Smith.
11		DAVID SMITH (affirmed)
12		Questioned by MS KENNEDY
13	MS	KENNEDY: Mr Smith, you've given two witness
14		statements to the Inquiry, one in respect of
15		Phase 2 and one in respect of Phase 3. Do you
16		have the first witness statement in front of
17		you?
18	Α.	I do indeed.
19	Q.	It should run to 24 pages. If you turn to the
20		24th page, is that your signature there?
21	A.	Yes, it is.
22	Q.	It's dated 30 August 2022?
23	A.	It is indeed.
24	Q.	Have you read through it recently?
25	A.	Yes, I have.
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1	A.	I worked at British Airways I started
2		actually at British European Airways and worked
3		in finance, first of all as an auditor, and then
4		various roles in route accounting. I worked on
5		the privatisation of BA at one stage and I was
6		also the financial controller of British Airways
7		Helicopters. I was actually sent in there to
8		assist the managing director in selling the
9		company, and we worked through that and sold the
10		company, and one of the terms of the contract
11		was that British Airways severance terms were
11 12		was that British Airways severance terms were available to me which I took and, after that,
		•
12	Q.	available to me which I took and, after that,
12 13	Q. A.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office.
12 13 14		available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987?
12 13 14 15	A.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987? That's correct, yes.
12 13 14 15 16	A. Q.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987? That's correct, yes. What was your first job in the Post Office?
12 13 14 15 16 17	A. Q.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987? That's correct, yes. What was your first job in the Post Office? I was chief financial accountant. It was
12 13 14 15 16 17	A. Q.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987? That's correct, yes. What was your first job in the Post Office? I was chief financial accountant. It was a fairly broad role, actually, because it
12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	A. Q.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987? That's correct, yes. What was your first job in the Post Office? I was chief financial accountant. It was a fairly broad role, actually, because it involved not just what you'd expect a financial
12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	A. Q.	available to me which I took and, after that, I joined the Post Office. That was in 1987? That's correct, yes. What was your first job in the Post Office? I was chief financial accountant. It was a fairly broad role, actually, because it involved not just what you'd expect a financial accountant to do but it also involved running

associated with office accounting and client

settlement, subpostmasters' remuneration,

various business processes.

- 1 Q. Then in July 1996 you were appointed as director 2 of central services group?
- 3 Α. Yes, this was -- I retained my role as head of 4
- the finance executive whilst doing that. The --
- 5 it was an odd role because my -- I was charged
- 6 with breaking up that directorate and,
- 7 basically, attaching the various sections within
- 8 it to other parts of the organisation. So it
- 9 was a short-term role that lasted either six to
- 10 nine months and then I was -- the plan was that
- 11 I was going to revert full time to head of
- 12 finance executive.
- 13 Q. But what happened then?
- 14 A. Well, I was approached by not one but I think
- 15 three directors in total. I wasn't told I was
- 16 going to be heading up automation transformation
- 17 but I was asked whether I would consider it.
- 18 I mean, I'd spent over 25 years building
- 19 a career in finance so I guess I went through
- 20 some kind of grieving cycle. But I mean, I came
- 21 to terms with it, and, you know, there started
- 22 my long association automation projects.
- 23 Q. Why were you initially reluctant to take up that
- 24 role?

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25 A. Part of the reluctance was it just wasn't --

- 1 lucky, to get the right people together.
- 2 Q. Did you have any qualifications or experience in 3 information technology at that point?
- 4 Yeah, well starting from my university days Α.
- 5 I had done some ASA/Fortran, BASIC, the -- as
- 6 an auditor -- I hesitate to call myself
 - a computer auditor but I did start to audit
- 8 through the system or through systems rather
- 9 than just around them, and I would review
- 10 system-based controls and then test them with
- test packs and what have you. At Helicopters as 12 financial controller, systems was part of my
- 13 responsibility.

When I joined the Post Office all the major systems were actually supporting the areas that I controlled. So I was the business's major customer of systems, which meant that I engaged with the systems people on a regular places.

When I moved to the finance executive I led an SAP project called MICA SAP(?) **, unusually we delivered ahead of time within budget and the benefits were somewhat greater than we'd forecast in the business case.

So I think I'd had a fair amount of exposure to systems and involvement in systems project

- 1 I mean, it was not a job I sought and my initial
- 2 reluctance was this was a lot to take on board.
- 3 As I got to accepting that this was going to
- 4 happen, I did, with Stuart Sweetman, challenge
- 5 him about where the authority came to carry out
- 6 this role because none of the projects, none of
- 7 the business activities to deliver automation
- 8 would report directly to me. In fact, many of
- 9 them reported directly to directors. So how did
- 10 I, where would I draw the authority from to get
- 11 these people to do what I needed them to do,

going to have to do as you tell me".

12 which is to work very closely together.

> Stuart did take that away. He wasn't the first to announce the outcome of that. I bumped into our marketing director actually walking along the street and he sort of bowed down to me and said "Well, I understand now, Dave, that I'm

And fair enough to Stuart, I think I did have the authority to -- in particular when a big issue arose, to pull the parties together very rapidly to seek a resolution. Things didn't normally happen that quickly in the Post Office, it might take you two or three weeks if you're lucky, two or three months if you weren't

1 work.

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- 2 Q. You said you were associated with the Horizon
- 3 System from then until you left in March 2010;
- 4 is that right?
- 5 That's right, yes. Α.
- 6 Just for clarity, shortly after you left,
- 7 another David Smith took over as managing
- 8 director; is that right?
- 9 Yes, there were rather a few of us and matters
- 10 were complicated by the fact that neither of us
- 11 were given a second Christian name. So I became
- 12 known as "David X" and he became known as
- 13 "David Y". But there was confusion over time.
- 14 We'd get each other's mail, and what have you,
- 15 and some of the documents I've received were in
- 16 fact meant for him.
- 17 Between 1997 and 2010 you held a number of other 18 roles. In 2004 you became acting IT director
- 19 when Alan Barrie went to the Royal Mail?
- 20 A. That's correct, yes.
- 21 Then in February 2005 you became general manager
- 22 of IT, which then changed to Head of Change and
- 23 IS; is that right?
- 24 Yes, I mean, Post Office used to go through
- 25 regular reorganisations and, you know, roles

would be changed, not always significantly, but yeah, job titles. Essentially, I think, the difference between being general manager IT and Head of Change and IS was that I gained a much broader range of change in the business. I think it was over 1,000 changes a year we used to deliver, many of them seemingly minor changes but if you got them wrong could create massive disruption.

So the change in postage stamps for example was quite a significant operation and had to be project managed.

- 13 Q. Then in 2009 you were operations director until14 you left?
- A. Yes, that was just three months. Not until
 I left, no. That was a holding situation, Ric
 Francis left Post Office Limited and Mike Young
 joined and in the three months in between I just
 held the ring.
- Q. Turning then to some questions about prior to
 the introduction of Horizon, if we could turn up
 your first witness statement, WITN05290100, and
 if we could turn to page 7 in that. Looking at
 paragraph 18, you set out there the basis of the
 cash account and described the process that

pensions and allowances paper into Chesterfield.

If you understand the cash account process, if you go through what's involved in putting the cash account together, you know, it's a very, very complicated process and it's not surprising, therefore, that you've got the level of errors that we had. We tried all the while to drive them down but also the counter was a place of constant change. So as soon as you'd dampened down errors in one area, there would be a change to other products and a new source of error would arise in another.

Q. If we could turn over the page on that statement to paragraph 24, scrolling down. You say there:

"The five thousand plus errors mentioned ... were merely the tip of the iceberg ..."

- **A.** Yeah.
- 18 Q. Did you find that a very difficult environmentin which to work?
- A. I mean, the -- what I was getting at in -I mean, when I joined, one of my objectives was
 to take 200 posts out of Chesterfield and, you
 know, in most processes in most businesses the
 way to do that is either to radically reform the
 process or to take out waste.

a 200-strong group of individuals in

Chesterfield would go through and you describe:

"A separate unit just to deal with pensions and allowances was even larger in size and a third group processing Postal Orders about 80 strong. There was also a unit in Edinburgh mirroring the Chesterfield operation dealing with Scottish branches."

If we scroll down to paragraph 20 you set out that:

"Over five thousand errors per week were detected. Many of these would result in the issue of an error notice."

Did you feel that was a lot of errors at that time under the paper-based approach? It sure as hell felt like it. I guess there's no -- I'd never in my working career come across something that was so paper based. I think it would be fair to say that the airline that I joined, the use of accounting systems was about 15, 20 years ahead of where the Post Office was. So I'd never come across a paper factory like this. I mean, I think I said it in the -- further on in the statement, that there was a dedicated freight train just to bring the

And, you know, a lot of these -- a lot of these errors were related to conformance. So for example, this freight train that came in each week, the pouches were meant to be made up to a particular standard. They very often weren't, and we ran a trial with the Derby district and the Plain English Society, developed a refreshed set of instructions, just to get the, you know, conformance with the presentation standards that we required.

On the basis of the pilot in Derby, we rolled it out nationally, targeting 17 posts coming out just from, you know, people not putting paperclips, staples, segmenting the different classifications of benefits properly, and so a lot of this was about that sort of stuff. So my interest was to, you know, drive out these areas of error and drive the resources down.

Q. You mentioned the pensions and allowances in the
freight train. If we turn back over the page to
paragraph 21, and down -- sorry, on to the next
page again. You say there that that area was
particularly prone to fraud.

25 A. Yes.

Q. Can you explain what you mean, by that?

A. Well, it was -- the checks here, such was the volume of paper that it was not possible to run a 100 per cent check every week on -- so, basically, these checks involved summation of the individual vouchers to a summary docket on to the cash account and, basically, we're saying that, you know, the check was only done, I think, every couple of years or something like that. At the time I joined, there was one fraud that was being settled of £400,000, and what some postmasters would do was just enter an erroneous number onto the cash account, one that was deliberately erroneous, and effectively the cash would then -- so they would be funded by the false amount that they put on the cash account and they would pocket the money.

And, again, I remember a few -- a very short period of time into my service with the Post Office, there was a case of a subpostmaster who had fraudulently entered entries onto the cash account to the tune of £85,000, and the reason why it sticks is that when security went in and apprehended him, he wrote a cheque out there and then on the spot and it didn't bounce.

As it was actually introduced when the system went live, there was simply a check that this was a valid book of vouchers that the subpostmaster was using. It was obviously subsequently replaced by a dedicated Post Office card account, which closed this area down.

Q. You mention in your statement that you stepped in on EPOSS during the process of the development of the program, the Electronic Point of Sale System. If we could turn up your first statement that's WITN05290100, again. Then page 13. Scrolling down, please, to paragraph 41, you say:

"I was asked to describe the nature of the work I carried out in relation to EPOSS design. I must reiterate that I did not manage Horizon and it was normally for Horizon management team to manage the project issues and risks. I did, however, step in on this issue."

Why did you step in on that issue? **A.** Well, there was a lot of concern about what was being developed. I mean, this was -- this, in part, I think, came about was because of the PFI deal. So there was limited to zero exposure to what was actually being developed and we were --

So this was the result of, you know,
a poorly designed process, really. I mean, in
a -- Horizon itself was, you know, kicked off by
the Benefits Agency wanting to attack fraud at
all sorts of different levels, mainly on their
side, entitlement fraud; this was sort of
encashment fraud involving subpostmasters.

8 Q. How prevalent was there is type of fraud, would9 you say, or what was your impression?

10 A. I'm sorry, I would have known at the time but
11 I can't remember now. I remember those two big
12 instances because they were, you know, even in
13 those days, large sums of money but no, I can't
14 recall, I'm afraid.

15 Q. But you felt it was a real problem at the time?

16 A. Oh, it was a real problem, yeah.

17 Q. Did you expect Horizon, when it came in, to
18 catch these people out or to leave no room for
19 them to hide?

A. Well, had Horizon come in as it originally was
intended, then this would have closed that down,
because it would have been card driven and, you
know, there was no -- there would have been no
question of the subpostmaster creating a false
entry on the cash account.

I mean, Darren being able to get in there and
 access what he did access was something of
 a surprise. I think it was considered, you
 know, very much against expectation at the time.
 Unfortunately, Darren's presentation doesn't

Unfortunately, Darren's presentation doesn't exist so I'm going a lot on memory here about what he brought to the table. I can't say that his presentation in any way calmed the concerns around the -- what was being developed at all, but without -- I don't think we'd even got the -- I'd even seen the ATSG minutes for the meeting at which he presented that feedback.

If we could turn up POL00028324, please. This is the Automation Transformation Programme and we can see there that you're on the list for this Automation Transformation Steering Group and this is the notes of the meeting of 23 June 1998. If we scroll on to the second page, please, we see the "Red Light issues" there and you were giving a verbal update on new issues.

> If we scroll down we can see EPOSS is something that's on that list and scrolling down again, there's also item 4 recorded as you there giving an update on the work on the EPOSS

1 design. 2 The Inquiry has heard a lot of evidence 3 about the EPOSS system but this was specifically 4 something that was acutely on your mind; is that 5 right? 6 A. Yes, it would have been, to have been raised in 7 this fashion, yes. 8 Q. If we could turn to POL00028484, please. This 9 is a risk register, I think, from 1997/1998, but 10 if we look at the fourth section down, 11 "Operational: non conformance to business 12 procedures in automated environment", and we can 13 see "Potential Impact for Automation" -- yes, 14 thank you very much. It says: 15 "Lost transactions 16 "Inability to operate effectively 17 "Loss of control 18 "Financial loss 19 "Increased errors." 20 It is being discussed with the strategic 21 director and you're the owner of that. What 22 does that mean that you're the owner of that, 23 you're keeping it under review? 24 A. Yes, it would. In terms of a risk register, 25 absolutely. 17 1 not. Other criteria have also not been met. 2 Analysis of the causes of new incidents has not 3 met the 10 day turnaround target." 4 Going down to 12: 5 "We also have some concerns about progress 6 with the new integrity control. While Pathway 7 have been reporting satisfactory progress 8 against plans, our people on the ground perceive 9 that there has been a reversion to old ways of 10

working with the shutters being brought down. We have seen no progress on development of the joint processes that will be needed to manage the errors trapped by the control, and on this, and on the specification of interface processes, we have found Pathway unwilling to engage in meaningful discussions." So at this point in time, data integrity is a real concern and there is a worry, isn't there, that Pathway aren't giving you the access that you wanted? Supplementary Agreement but it's fair to say the level that's recorded there.

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20 21 A. Absolutely, yes. 22 Q. I'm not going to turn up the Second 23 24 target level in terms of errors was 0.6 target 25

2 it? 3 A. Yes, it would be, yes. 4 Q. Do you remember being particularly concerned 5 about that at this time? 6 A. I don't know, I'm sorry. I mean, the fact that 7 I had recorded there obviously says it was 8 a concern. But, I mean, I don't remember much 9 about the specifics behind that. 10 Q. Turning forward in time slightly to 18 November 11 1999, if we could turn to POL00028550, please. 12 Thank you. We can see there that this is 13 a negotiation brief written by Keith Baines for 14 David Miller, and it's sent to both David Miller 15 and to you. If we scroll over the page we can 16 see the start of that brief. The point I wanted

Q. Lost transactions is a very serious issue, isn't

"The third area was the reduction in errors in accounting data passed from your systems into TIP, and the development of appropriate integrity controls for that interface. Progress in this area has not been encouraging. The overall area of levels has greatly exceeded the 0.6% target level -- by an order of magnitude or

to take you to in particular is page 3 and, if

we scroll down to paragraph 11, it records:

1 Α. Yes.

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2 But, at this stage, errors were exceeding that?

3 Yes, one of the, I think, Rule 10 documents 4 I was given does actually contain the actual 5 percentage levels week by week and, I mean, many 6 orders of magnitude greater than 0.6.

7 Q. If we could turn up POL00028545, please. This 8 is a speaking brief for you on 24 November 1999, 9 and it sets out:

10 "[The] Purpose was agreed between Dave 11 Miller and Richard Christou as: To agree 12 a programme of work to be completed by 13 3 December 1999 which will provide POCL with 14 further information to enable us to decide 15 whether or not to exercise the right to suspend 16 rollout."

17 Do you remember this meeting or this -- the 18 reason for this speaking brief, other than 19 what's set out there?

20 A. I mean. I don't remember it but the brief is in 21 front of me and that's what I will have spoken 22

23 Q. If we turn down to paragraph 2 or number 2, it 24

25 "All criteria in the 2nd supplementary

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agreement to be met by 14 January ... The only change to be the exclusion of the period to date from the 0.6% criterion for the accounting integrity incidents."

So again, you're flagging that that is of real concern to the Post Office at that time --

7 A. Yes.

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- 8 Q. -- is that right?
- 9 A. Absolutely. It was -- it had still got some way
 10 to go in terms of proving that Fujitsu were
 11 getting on top of it.
- 12 **Q.** If we turn to POL00028440, this is the internal audit. If we turn to page 2, this is November to December 1999. Scrolling down we can see your name there. If we turn over the page to page 5, please, and scrolling down, we can see there the conclusions of that audit, which in short was that their opinion was that:

"... the procedures for identifying problems and reporting performance was good. We have recorded in the detailed audit findings the issues identified during our visits and can confirm that all issues reported by Post Offices and Transaction Processing ... had been formally recorded as problems."

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learning curve when the system was introduced. But, I mean, at the time we weren't aware of that.

I mean, at this stage, handling the errors, you know, was not my personal responsibility. Therefore, I wouldn't have had the same level of concern if I was still running the factory. If I had been running the factory, I would have been very, very concerned about that ahead of a national rollout because that would have swamped the unit. But, as I say, I think there could have been a better understanding of, you know, how this process of introduction of people becoming as familiar with a new system as they were with the old system, how that transition worked and the journey that people went through.

- 17 Q. Did you know about an EPOSS Task Force Report18 written within Pathway around summer of 2000?
- 19 A. No, I don't recall it, no.
- 20 Q. Do you recall being told that there had been
 21 a decision that the EPOS System wouldn't be
 22 rewritten but it would be fixed. Do you recall
 23 being told anything about that?
- A. No, I don't recall that. I mean, I do recall -I can refer you back to the -- what I recall of

I believe this -- when it talks about "our
 conclusions", this is Chris Paynter and Ian
 Johnson; is that right?

- 4 A. It was certainly Chris Paynter, because I think5 his name is on the report.
- 6 Q. If we could turn over the page again to page 7,7 and scrolling down we see here again that:

"The volume of errors generated by Horizon offices was a cause for concern. Initially horizon offices generated twice as many errors as manual offices."

That must have been very difficult for you
given how you felt there were already so many
issues on the paper-based system and this seems
to be making it worse. Do you remember finding
this frustrating at the time?

17 **A**. Not particularly, no. I think there was a poor 18 understanding of the soft change elements of 19 introducing a completely different system. 20 There's a document, a research services document 21 that introduces something called a coping curve, 22 which demonstrates that, over time, performance 23 in branches returned to pre-Horizon introduction 24 levels. I think that should have been better 25 understood, that we would go through that

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- the Darren Bosco report. I mean, one of the things he specifically addressed is that, you know, the inherent weaknesses in what had been designed, you know, couldn't be -- you could put plaster over them but, if you really wanted to put something different in place, then you had
- 8 Q. When it came to rollout of the system, your view
 9 was that Horizon was fit for purpose and that
 10 was partly because of the rigorous testing
 11 process that took place?
- 12 A. It was, yes.

to start again.

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- 13 Q. Did you have any concerns, at the rollout stage,
 14 lurking in your mind that you felt there were
 15 things that you should look out for?
- 16 A. Um, we went through a very, very extensive
 17 process of trying to pick out from the live
 18 trial the things that needed to be fixed and
 19 it's fair to say there were things that were
 20 required to be fixed that went beyond the issues
 21 that have been surfaced in this Inquiry.

We put in place quite a comprehensive set of measures. In the business at the time, there was a complete disbelief that rollout could actually happen.

1		It went relatively smoothly. Not to say,	1		the least worst option business case. I mean,
2		I mean, you know, when you look at the number of	2		it was not a business case you take to a bank
3		offices, the number of people concerned, even if	3		expecting to get funding. So one of the things
4		you are hitting, you know, 90 per cent	4		that I was asked to do was to look at the
5		satisfaction, that's still a lot of people who,	5		proposition of automation and understand how we
6		you know, have got issues with the way you're	6		could get value out of automating post offices.
7		doing things and, to the extent that we could,	7		And there was a programme called Era that
8		we tried to address those issues but, I mean, we	8		emerged out of that, a lot of work was put into
9		did the process did make, in terms of the	9		that, and the IMPACT Programme was an element of
10		reaction of the network to it, significant	10		that. It was driven it was enabled, if you
11		strides from what was, you know, a pretty poor	11		like, by automating the products by, you know,
12		performance, I think, in the live trial.	12		bringing into the modern world things like the
13		I mean, 50 per cent of people satisfied with the	13		issue of driving licences, and stuff like that,
14		way you've done it is a bad result in anybody's	14		so that you were capturing transactions often
15		book.	15		driven by tokens and stuff like that. And this
16	Q.	Do you remember fast forwarding in time, do	16		enabled this radical change in the IMPACT
17		you remember the IMPACT Programme that had its	17		Programme to happen.
18		inception, I think, in 2003 and was completed in	18		So from that very early stage it was
19		2005?	19		developed and we developed a roadmap of how
20	A.	Yes, I do.	20		the how automation was going to happen,
21	Q.	Were you involved in that programme?	21		through these releases, S50 to S90, and some of
22	A.	Yes, involved at various stages because I think	22		that was driven by the order of some of those
23		it had its birth was really work that we did	23		things was driven by contractual matters.
24		as part of the Transformation Management Team.	24		So as part of the Benefits Agency
25		The original case for original Horizon, it was 25	25		withdrawing from Legacy Horizon, it was set down 26
1		that there would be a Post Office card account.	1		for example, being able to streamline their own
2		It was also part of that that we were we had	2		back office process, as a result of now
3		to meet the target for the introduction of PIN	3		getting instead of getting, you know,
4		pads and stuff like that so there were some	4		a lorryload of paper, getting an electronic
5		fixed points around which the rest of it had to	5		stream of data.
6		work, so IMPACT was positioned at S80.	6	Q.	Did you hear the evidence of Susan Harding who
7	Q.	Was part of the objective of the IMPACT	7		gave evidence
8		Programme cost saving, making things simpler	8	Α.	No, I didn't, no.
9		and	9	Q.	Was she someone who ultimately reported to you,
10	A.	I think with all I think it was a better	10		do you remember her?
11		system, because what the old system was doing	11	A.	Yes, Sue was the programme management for
12		was settling with clients, based on summarised	12		IMPACT, yes.
13		numbers on cash accounts. What lay behind	13	Q.	She told the Inquiry that the decision to remove
14		IMPACT, if you like, was it was based upon where	14		the suspense account function came from above
15		you passed a stream of transactions to clients,	15		her. Was that your decision or was that the
16		and settled on the value of those transactions.	16		IMPACT Programme Delivery Board? Who would that
17		Yes, it did, I think, you know, drive some	17		have been?
18		numbers down but the real value in all the	18	Α.	I don't recall making that decision. That's not

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of benefits were derived by Government agencies,

automation that happened was very often derived

Remember most of what was transacted across

by the people who owned the products.

the post office counter were products that

didn't belong to the Post Office. You know, the

exception to that was postal orders. So a lot

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to say I wasn't involved in it but I don't

or who would have been at that level?

23 A. I think the process ownership would have been

Q. Do you recall who would have made that decision

whoever was running transaction processing at

the time. They would be the process owner here.

particularly recall it.

•		7.6 In onarge of project management, we
2		didn't make up the requirements. The
3		requirements came from the sponsor. So in this
4		case, with IMPACT, the sponsoring unit would
5		have been Transaction Processing. Just as with,
6		if we changed the method of handling TV Licences
7		or something like that, then I have to be
8		careful, we may have lost TV Licences by then,
9		but say road tax, it would be driven by the
10		account team, who were acting on behalf of the
11		DVLA. They would drive the requirements. They
12		would decide what was delivered. Our job was to
13		deliver it.
14	Q.	So the policy decisions made in the IMPACT
15		Programme weren't your responsibility or didn't
16		come from
17	A.	No, they weren't, no. They would lie with the
18		business unit. Now, that's not to say we
19		wouldn't be involved in the decision making by

As -- in charge of project management, we

25 we scroll down, please, your name is not on the 29 1 A. At that high a level, this incident would have

been managed by Dave and that team.

Well, if we turn to page 5 and scroll down,

Q. If we could bring up POL00029293, please. This

is a major incident report dated 24 August 2004

and we can see it's a document generated by

Fujitsu, and it relates to the S60 release. If

that Policy Unit.

please. The scope of this document is: "The scope of this report covers the failures of Fujitsu services to Deliver AP client data to a number of AP clients, those of which do not receive files on all 7 days of the week between the period 10th July-15th July 04

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"It also covers the failure to produce automated APS reconciliation reporting accurately in the form of daily CTS file produced, between 10th July 04-29th July 04. It should be noted that whilst the automated process was non-operational manual reporting was being covered daily."

If we look down at the "Management Summary", midway through the first paragraph, it states:

"It was suggested that this file was considerably less ... than would have been normally expected. The approximate value of transactions being reduced by up to [300 million]."

If we turn over to page 6 and we scroll

1 list of -- for distribution. But we can see 2 there the external distribution is "Post Office 3 Limited Library plus reviewers". If we turn 4 over the page and scroll down, we can see this 5 was sent to someone called Dave Hulbert? 6 Α. Yes.

7 Q. Who is Dave Hulbert? 8 Dave Hulbert worked in the service management 9 team and he, I believe, was responsible for 10 managing the service from Fujitsu. Back in the 11 early days there was a piece of work done by 12 PA Consulting which created the framework for 13 the set-up of service management in Post Office 14 and that unit was embedded in the Operations 15 Directorate. So we, in my area, would deliver 16 the project but once it was delivered, once it 17 was rolled out, control of what happened passed 18 to service management and they would deal with 19 day-to-day incidents.

> If there was an incident that affected the -- a large number of post offices, then we would normally be called in to provide support and very often would take over managing that incident. But in --

25 Q. At that high a level, though?

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1 down, we can see a "Detailed explanation of the 2 incident". If we look at the headline figures 3 at the bottom, we can see that: 4 "There were 581,481 transactions in the pass 5 through files that were not processed. These 6

include Reverse/Reversal pairs that should not be sent to clients.

"There are 578,091 transactions not placed into client transmission files."

Over the page:

11 "These transactions had a value of 12 [22 million]."

13 Is this the type of thing that would have 14 been escalated to your team?

15 A. I don't recall it having been so. I do recall 16 the incident, but I don't recall my team being 17 asked provide assistance in sorting this matter.

18 Q. When you say you recall the incident, how did 19 you come to hear about it?

20 Well, because it was -- I mean, clearly --21 I mean, we weren't passing customer data. Bear

22 in mind what's behind this is someone paying 23 their gas bill or their electricity bill. If

24 the data doesn't get through to the utility

25 company, that person's bill is not settled and 32

- 1 they get a red letter. So this was something of 2 a -- it was an embarrassing incident.
- 3 Q. Did it give you cause for concern in the system 4 itself?
- 5 A. Well, of course it did because, you know, it had 6
- such a significant impact. But, you know, we 7
- didn't step in on every single incident; only 8
- where the small team of architects that was 9 nested within my department were required to
- 10 give specialist advice, and I don't recall them
- 11 being asked on this particular occasion.
- 12 Q. Would this type of issue ever be raised or
- 13 escalated to board level? 14 A. Oh, undoubtedly this would have been reported
- 15 through to board level. I mean, there was
- 16 a process of Directorate reporting in to the
- 17 board and I can't imagine that the Ops
- 18 Directorate wouldn't have included this in that
- 19 report. But I would have expected it, in any
- 20 case, to have been raised by the Ops Director
- 21 with the Managing Director anyway, in the normal
- 22 course of things.
- 23 Q. If we could turn up POL00021485, these are the
- 24 minutes of a board minute held on 13 October
- 25 2004. I can't see this incident having been
 - 33
- 1 Q. Do you want to explain what that was?
- 2 A. I think this was -- can you remind me of the
- 3 date of that meeting again, sorry.
- 4 Q. Yes, this is 13 October 2004.
- 5 A. Yeah, this would have been funding, I think, to
- 6 carry out the initial stages of the work.
- 7 I think anything over £1 million had to go to
- 8 the group to get approval and, as such, it would
- 9 pass through the Post Office Board. I don't
- 10 think this would have been the final business
- 11 case asking for approval for the project proper,
- 12 which I forget the exact number but it was
- 13 around 125 million. It certainly wasn't that
- 14 case, but it was -- the money, if you like, to
- 15 do the initial stages of the project.
- 16 Q. That was because the current Fujitsu contract
- 17 was going to expire in 2010 and it was going to
- 18 be the work your proposal for the work --
- 19 A. Yeah, well, what triggered the whole thing was
- 20 I think the account manager in Fujitsu at the
- 21 time was a guy called Ian Lamb and he had
- 22 a regular -- I mean, the account manager would
- 23 have a regular meeting with the IT director and
- 24 he walked into Alan's office one day and he drew
- 25 on a flip chart the cost curve of the Legacy
 - 35

- 1 reported in this meeting but you're guite sure
- 2 it would have been at some point?
- 3 Well, this is -- when I -- sorry, when I said
- 4 previously the board, this would be the
- 5 executive management team of Post Office
- 6 Limited, okay? I don't recall -- I mean,
- 7 I attended for this one item at this board
- 8 meeting as acting IT director. I didn't have
- 9 a seat on this board so I can't really address
- 10 the process at that board. I mean, I think the
- 11 board -- I think the board only met three or
- 12 four times a year anyway and I don't think it
- 13 dealt with operational issues. It dealt with
- 14 more -- things at a more strategic level.
- 15 So those kind of incidents wouldn't have made 16 their way -- the operational, if you --
- 17
- A. As I say, I didn't attend that meeting on
- 18 a regular basis so I am not really familiar with
- 19 the process at that board meeting. There will 20 be others who would be.
- 21 This particular board meeting, as you've said,
- 22 you did attend, and that was -- if we turn to
- 23 page 10, and scrolling down, this was to present
- 24 the Horizon Next Generation business case?
- 25 **A**. Yes.

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- 1 Horizon and then a cost cover for this idea they
- had to replace the existing infrastructure, and 2
- 3 it showed a very, very big cost gain. And that
- 4 triggered off the work that became, eventually,
 - Horizon Online. That was the origins of this.
 - And yes, it, you know, given the lead time
- 7 on a system of this stage, then it did -- it
- 8 only made sense if you were talking about
- 9 a contract extension, because it would have
- 10 taken us pretty close to the expiry date of the
- 11 existing contract, 2010, before the system was 12
 - implemented.
- 13 If we could turn up RMG00000044, this would have
- 14 been the business case that you wrote on
- 15 1 September, so around this time, so
- 16 1 September 2004.
- 17 Yes, and this again is acting -- asking for the
- 18 money to -- for the initial stages of the
- 19 project. Not for -- at this stage, we're not
- 20 getting approval for the 125 million, which,
- 21 I mean, I think, if I remember it correctly, not
- 22 even the group board could actually approve it.
- 23 It had to go to Government to get authority.
- 24 If we turn to page 2 and scroll down, this sets
- 25 out a summary, your summary of why do it and it

sorry, Chair.

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says:

2		"Horizon NG significantly reduces the cost	2	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Just so that we're
3		of IT. Compared to a 'do nothing' baseline (no	3	coordinated, I'm two minutes behind you but that
4		branch hardware refresh and consequent	4	doesn't matter. We'll go by the clock in the
5		increasing maintenance costs), Horizon Next	5	room. So we'll now stop hearing evidence and
6		Generation is estimated to deliver ongoing cash	6	anybody who wishes to leave, please do so and
7		savings of £25m+ over the life of the proposed	7	anybody who wishes to join us, please do so.
8		extended contract to 2015."	8	Then in a few seconds I don't think we
9		So part of the business case was the saving	9	need to be completely synced with 11.00
10		of costs; is that right?	10	throughout the country, I'll announce that we'll
11	A.	Absolutely, and one of the things that we	11	observe a minute's silence, all right?
12		achieved in the revised contract was the Legacy	12	Is there any more movement taking place or
13		contract had cost escalators which increased	13	is everybody settled down?
14		significantly the cost of the system each year.	14	MS KENNEDY: I think everybody is settled.
15		So by I don't think we there were no cost	15	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Well, then we will
16		increases allowed but we really drove down how	16	commence our minute's silence now.
17		much Fujitsu could increase the cost of the	17	Thank you, everyone. We'll now adjourn
18		contract year by year, and I think there was	18	until 11.15.
19		another eventually in the business case there	19	MS KENNEDY: Thank you, Chair.
20		was another 25 million per annum claimed for	20	(11.00 am)
21		avoiding those cost increases through the new	21	(A short break)
22		contract. So it was a very, very substantial	22	(11.15 am)
23		cost case.	23	MS KENNEDY: Hello, Chair.
24	MS	KENNEDY: Chair, I'm mindful of the time.	24	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Hello there.
25		I think it's 10.59. I think you're on mute,	25	MS KENNEDY: Mr Smith, before the break we were
		37		38
1		discussing Next Generation Horizon, which became	1	to before the break. Yeah.
2		Horizon Online. If we could pull up	2	Q. If we turn over on to page 73, it sets out on
3		FUJ00098040. This is a slide show done by you	3	the slide there some of the issues we were also
4		in September 2010. Can you just tell us a bit	4	discussing before the break of getting the Post
5		about how you came to prepare this?	5	Office on board with this and the fact that it
6	A.	Yes, when I finished with the Post Office,	6	was a very large project that would take up
7	Λ.	senior people in Fujitsu felt it was would be	7	a lot of time and money.
8		advantageous if they engaged me to do some	8	If we could then turn to page 77, you
9		consultancy work. I am not sure that was	9	describe there how:
10		entirely welcomed by the account team who	10	"Getting to an acceptable proposal from
11		were Gavin and his boss were fairly new	11	Fujitsu was a long and arduous process."
12		brooms in Fujitsu, but the account team kind of	12	Can you describe what you meant by that?
13		welcomed my involvement because there'd been	13	A. Well, as this slide describes, we use the
14		such a change in personnel that they'd lost all	14	Gartner organisation to work through what the
15		the history of what had gone on and so what they	15	service or what was being proposed should cost,
16		asked me to do was to write the story of	16	both in terms of development cost but also in
17		Horizon, you know, as best as I can remember it.	17	terms of annual running costs. And Fujitsu came
18		And this is what I produced.	18	up with a proposition and, you know, to add
19	Q.	If we turn to page 71 of this document,	19	balance, I think it wasn't just Fujitsu's fault,
20	ų.	throughout this slide show, as you say, you set	20	I think our own architects, I think they
20 21		out the various releases. This is the section	21	designed the system that it would have been
2 i 22		where you deal with what became Horizon Online;	22	
22 23		is that right?	23	ideal for us to have had instead of Legacy Horizon.
23 24	Α.	That's right, yes. Yes, and this is lan Lamb	23	And it didn't meet the Gartner levels in
2 4 25	۸.	approaching Alan Barrie, as I think I referred	25	terms of development costs and it had this
		approaching / wan barrie, as I willing I follow	20	40

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upward curve with ongoing operating costs, with the year-on-year escalations. So there was a gap between Fujitsu's initial proposal and the guideline, if you like, that we'd used within the group to say "We won't do this competitively, we'll go down a non-competitive route".

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It eventually came to the point that my colleague Ian O'Driscoll and I sat with Clive Morgan and Liam Foley from Fujitsu and told them "We are walking away from Fujitsu. We will go and do this in a different way". That resulted in a changed approach from Fujitsu and, particularly taking on board the fact that all the major developments -- I mean, there were no more clients left to re-engineer the products so a system that was designed to support that intensive period of change that we'd gone through was no longer required.

And we also put on the table some requirements in terms of how things might evolve in the future and this involved breaking the contract down into a number of different areas which could be competed separately. So we were trying to move Fujitsu into a space where they

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data centres as your test environment, that would have been identified. So there was a lot of learning, if you like, from things that had gone less well during Legacy Horizon that were built into this proposal.

A better way of working up requirements and turning those into design, that sort of stuff, which would all have been appropriate to what happened during the lifetime of Legacy Horizon with the -- you know, this constant period of change but was less appropriate to a period where we expected change to be a much more -- on a much more modest level.

14 Q. You mentioned you then took the proposal to the Post Office Board. If we turn to page 88, this 15 16 slide records what your memory in 2010 was of 17 that process and the questions that were in your 18 mind at the time. Is there anything in addition 19 to what's on the slide that you want to tell the 20 Inquiry?

21 A. No, I think that summarises the position as 22 I understood it.

23 Q. Was part of the problem the last bullet point on 24 the slide, "What's the alternative?"

25 A. Well, the alternative would have been -- you

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1 would be the systems integrator but not 2 necessarily the provider of all the services.

And, I mean, this was taken on board by Fujitsu and they came up with a proposal that met the goals, underpinned by the Gartner work, which had been embedded not only in Post Office's business plan but also aided and abetted by McKinseys in the group plans. And it was on that basis that we contracted.

9 10 Q. You mentioned that the initial proposal from 11 Fujitsu was what, on the basis of what you would 12 have ideally had rather than Legacy Horizon. 13 Were you not surprised by that, given it was 14 Fujitsu who were handling Legacy Horizon? 15 Um, well, this was not so much about the 16 functionality of the system. This was about --17 so for example, one of the things in the

> the test environment and that was, you know, pretty radical but also expensive sort of stuff. Now, it would have been -- I mean, there was an issue that emerged in 2004 where, because the volume testing had to be a result of testing and modelling, a design implementation fault was not

proposal was to use one of the data centres as

picked up. Now, if you were using one of the 42

1 know, one of the things I think that was 2 a concern at the time of going to competition, 3 4 were required in the business to go through to 5 get there, plus then working with a new 6

Now, there were -- I think there were some arrangements in the contract that if we changed the supplier, that resources could -- and knowledge could be moved across from Fujitsu. But I mean, that was seen as -- taking the whole thing and shifting it elsewhere was seen as a step too far.

14 Q. Easier to stay with what you know?

Easier to stay with what we know but, as I say, 15 16 the -- what we came to in the end was something 17 which did allow breaking out, so for instance 18 data centres, and competing those in the 19 marketplace, and then requiring Fujitsu to 20 manage the process of phasing out their data 21 centres and integrating a new supplier into the 22 overall service.

> And that was seen, I think, at the time, as being a more manageable way forward than taking the whole thing and replacing it in one go.

was the sheer amount of management effort that supplier.

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1 **Q.** If we could turn to page 94 of the slide show. 2 This records the stage at the holding board 3 approval and the first bullet point records that 4 the Post Office was technically bankrupt at that 5 stage. How did that fact impact on you doing 6

your job?

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7 A. Well, it was a bit of a road block at the time 8 because I think, as it says here, the directors 9 of the business would have been criminally 10 liable if they had approved a major project like 11 this with a business that was technically 12 bankrupt.

> I mean, it was a -- you know, it was something that was overcome eventually but I think it built in a delay of a number of months before we could actually move forward. So there was an element of frustration having got to a proposition that we, you know, we could support, not being able to move forward as quickly as we might have been able to.

20 21 Q. That document can come down, please. If we 22 could turn to POL00070492, please. This is 23 an email chain from 22 November 2005. Your name 24 is mentioned here. We're going to go through it 25 in a moment in detail in relation to attending 45

was that an expert had been appointed jointly, I believe, by the Post Office and the defendant. It had basically said that Horizon could

have caused this problem and what I remember was that Mandy was really, really concerned that this would create a precedent and could I suggest a way we could get out of this hole? I mean, the only thing I could suggest to her was to access the audit file for the branch and to test the proposition that Horizon was to blame.

12 Q. Scrolling down in your witness statement, 13 I think you say that. You say:

> "The only way to counter this, in my view, was to demonstrate that Horizon had not created the discrepancy and the only way to do that was the audit file."

18 A. Yeah, I mean, the only way that basically 19 I believe would produce incontrovertible proof 20 that it wasn't Horizon or, I might add, had 21 Horizon caused the problem it would also surface 22 that Horizon had caused it.

23 Q. But a moment ago you said the audit file was the 24 only thing you could think of?

25 Without going into the details of the case, yes. 1 a meeting concerning Lee Castleton.

2 If we could turn up your second witness 3 statement, please, which is WITN05290200, and 4 page 11, please. Looking at paragraph 28, it 5 says:

"It was towards the end of 2004 ... when completely out of the blue I received a telephone call from Mandy Talbot [who was in that email chain we looked at a moment ago]. She explained that she worked for the Group Solicitors team and had recently been assigned to POL cases. She was dealing with a civil case referred to as Cleveleys which the Post Office was on its way to losing. She was most concerned that this would create a precedent which could be used in future cases. She wanted to know if I could suggest a way to retrieve the situation."

19 So is this your introduction to Mandy 20 Talbot, the Cleveleys case?

21 It was indeed, yes.

22 What was the Cleveleys case? The Inquiry has 23 heard about it before but what do you remember 24

25 A. Well, I guess the -- I'm aware Mandy was an --46

1 Q. But wouldn't this have been a good time to go 2 into the details of the case and to do a proper 3 review on the integrity of Horizon?

A. It wasn't -- I mean, it wasn't part of my brief 4 5 to do so.

6 Q. What do you mean by your "brief"?

7 Well, I was there as a project manager to 8 deliver projects, not to get involved in the 9 whole process of, you know, dealing with 10 subpostmasters.

Q. But you just told the Inquiry a moment ago that 11 12 you got a call from Mandy Talbot asking if you 13 could get her or the team out of a hole; is that 14 not becoming involved?

15 A. Yes, but, I mean, it was -- you know, the audit 16 file was -- and the processes around it -- was something that was specified in the original 17 18 Horizon, I believe, by the security team. So it 19 was there. I was simply pointing her in the 20 direction of what already existed.

21 At that time, did you think the audit file was 22 the start and end of the matter, in terms of the

23 integrity of the system?

24 Well, yes, I believe it would actually -- you 25 know, if there was a suggestion that the system 48

1 A. Can't recall.

had introduced an error, accessing the audit

25 Q. If we scroll up to that, the top email again,

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•		nad introduced an error, accessing the addit	-	Α.	
2		file the audit file was a record of what the	2	Q.	If we scroll down to the bottom of that page, we
3		subpostmaster had asked or the subpostmaster or	3		can see the initial email is from Tom Beezer and
4		the office staff had asked the system to do. It	4		it says:
5		wasn't an audit of what Horizon had done, and so	5		"Mandy
6		it was possible, against that audit file, to	6		"I have called and left a message. I will
7		test what Horizon had done to see if it was	7		try again this afternoon.
8		actually in accordance with the subpostmasters	8		"The points I wanted to discuss are (in
9		instructions.	9		short form):
10	Q.	Did you think, "I remember there was a problem	10		"1) a full set of papers is being prepared
11		with the EPOSS system during the design of	11		for you.
12		Legacy Horizon, might there be an error	12		"2) I suggest that you, Stephen Dilley and
13		introduced in something like that?"	13		me have a con' call at your convenience to
14	Α.	No, I didn't, no.	14		discuss and plan the next steps in this matter.
15	Q.	If we could return to the email thread at	15		"3) an updated spreadsheet is being prepared
16	Œ.	POL00070492, please.	16		listing all Horizon related cases. From my end
17			17		-
		Could you have an overview of who each of			you are aware of Blakey and Patel. We can
18		these individuals, Mandy Talbot, Tom Beezer and	18		discuss the level of information you require on
19		Stephen Dilley, are, please?	19		each or all of the Horizon related matters when
20	Α.	Can you repeat the names again, one by one?	20		we speak.
21	Q.	They should be in front of you: Mandy Talbot?	21		"4) I have put out to the team the message
22	Α.	Mandy was from the Group Solicitors department.	22		that there are to be no proceedings issued
23	Q.	Tom Beezer?	23		relating to a Horizon based claim without your
24	Α.	I can't recall, I'm afraid.	24		knowledge and 'ok'."
25	Q.	Or Stephen Dilley?	25		There's a spreadsheet mentioned there. At 50
		49			
1		this stage the Post Office is already preparing	1		please, and it says the third paragraph:
2		this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that	2		"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith,
2		this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that right?	2		"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith, Tony Utting and Clare on Friday to discuss this
2 3 4	Α.	this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that right? Yes, one of the so resulting from Cleveleys,	2 3 4		"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith, Tony Utting and Clare on Friday to discuss this case but also to plan a way forward so this type
2 3 4 5	A.	this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that right? Yes, one of the so resulting from Cleveleys, there were a series of meetings, I believe, with	2 3 4 5		"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith, Tony Utting and Clare on Friday to discuss this case but also to plan a way forward so this type of problem does not occur again."
2 3 4 5 6	A.	this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that right? Yes, one of the so resulting from Cleveleys, there were a series of meetings, I believe, with interested parties and one of the issues that	2 3 4 5 6		"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith, Tony Utting and Clare on Friday to discuss this case but also to plan a way forward so this type of problem does not occur again." What do you think "this type of problem"
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	A.	this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that right? Yes, one of the so resulting from Cleveleys, there were a series of meetings, I believe, with interested parties and one of the issues that surfaced was that there was not one place where all cases, both criminal and civil, were consolidated. Partially due to the fact that the civil cases, I think, were dealt with by the Retail Line, without the involvement of security, but also the fact that the organisation of the Post Office, through various iterations, was regionally based. So there wasn't even a sort of consolidated view from the regional teams. So I think this is I wasn't included in this particular conversation but I think the this is an attempt to pull all of this activity	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Α.	"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith, Tony Utting and Clare on Friday to discuss this case but also to plan a way forward so this type of problem does not occur again." What do you think "this type of problem" means? What's being referred to there. Well, it's getting into a situation where we're going to lose a case and I mean the recommendation at the time was to access you know, where we got into proceedings and Horizon was claimed to be the fault of the problem, was access the audit file. The immediate issue was that security had, I think it was the right to access the audit file 100 times in a financial year. They were currently using all of those opportunities. They were only resourced to deal with 100 accesses of the data. If you extended this to
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Q.	this stage the Post Office is already preparing a spreadsheet of Horizon-based cases; is that right? Yes, one of the so resulting from Cleveleys, there were a series of meetings, I believe, with interested parties and one of the issues that surfaced was that there was not one place where all cases, both criminal and civil, were consolidated. Partially due to the fact that the civil cases, I think, were dealt with by the Retail Line, without the involvement of security, but also the fact that the organisation of the Post Office, through various iterations, was regionally based. So there wasn't even a sort of consolidated view from the regional teams. So I think this is I wasn't included in this particular conversation but I think the this is an attempt to pull all of this activity together in one consolidated statement. Were you aware of that spreadsheet at the time?	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A.	"I'm attending a meeting with David Smith, Tony Utting and Clare on Friday to discuss this case but also to plan a way forward so this type of problem does not occur again." What do you think "this type of problem" means? What's being referred to there. Well, it's getting into a situation where we're going to lose a case and I mean the recommendation at the time was to access you know, where we got into proceedings and Horizon was claimed to be the fault of the problem, was access the audit file. The immediate issue was that security had, I think it was the right to access the audit file 100 times in a financial year. They were currently using all of those opportunities. They were only resourced to deal with 100 accesses of the data. If you extended this to civil cases it needed more resource to process the data. I mean, this could be for some

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some reason, that's what's there.

1		And I think as part of the Rule 10 documents	1		
2		that I received, there's an email there from	2		
3		Tony Utting, who was from the security	3	Q.	
4		department, where he had put together	4		1
5		a proposition in terms of increasing the	5		٠
6		resource within security to enable them to	6	A.	
7		handle the additional accesses of the audit	7		
8		files, were the funding to come forward.	8	Q.	
9	Q.	But, again, coming back to the type of problem,	9		
10		you said the problem was losing the case, not	10	A.	
11		getting to the	11	Q.	
12	A.	Well, the problem was how you established how	12	A.	
13		do you establish so against it was	13	Q.	
14		Horizon: how you established a watertight case	14	A.	
15		that it wasn't Horizon.	15		
16	Q.	How you establish a watertight case?	16		
17	A.	Yes.	17		
18	Q.	That was your concern at the time?	18		
19	A.	That was Mandy's concern at the time and that	19		
20		was as I say, it was not an answer that I had	20		,

21 come up with because the security team, before 22 Horizon was implemented, had specified this 23 audit file facility so that they could, when 24 they were prosecuting subpostmasters, they could 25 demonstrate that Horizon wasn't to blame for the 53

I mean. I did receive in the Rule 10 document, a very extensive bundle of documents, and I went through all of them, and I absolutely, you know, underpinned my recollection that I wasn't involved in any way in the detail of this because I'm not included in any of that correspondence, other than, I think, this letter.

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9 **Q.** Were you pleased about the judgments in the 10 Castleton case?

A. Well, obviously, I was pleased that, you know, 11 12 we had won the case. But, I mean -- yes. But, 13 I mean, I wasn't "Yippee" pleased. I mean, you 14 don't want to deal with these cases at all.

Q. Did you feel the Castleton case shut down for 15 16 a while any suggestion that there was an issue with the integrity of Horizon?

17 18 A. Well, I think it shut Mandy down for a while, 19 phoning me about the issue because I think she 20 felt that she had a way forward in dealing with 21 these cases. It was when, you know, the 22 interest in the media, you know, started to 23 surface that I got re-involved, although I don't 24 think it was Mandy that got me re-involved.

My recollection is that it was the PR team,

cash balance. But the idea of checking the audit file came from you, didn't it, when you spoke to Mandy

discrepancy between the system and the physical

Talbot? My -- extending it from beyond the -- sorry, the criminal cases to the civil cases.

What do you remember about this meeting, if anything --

Nothing.

-- about Lee Castleton?

No. nothing.

Do you remember the case at the time at all?

I remember a couple of phone calls from Mandy.

I remember her basically saying that they'd

accessed data and that Castleton's solicitors

had disappeared left field but believed that

they had seen the data and they recommend that

he -- that he settled. And then, when the case

was actually found in our favour, Mandy was

21 somewhat ecstatic, I think, was the right word

22 because, particularly in the judge's summing-up,

23 I think he used some words that we, I guess, you

24 know, we would have wished him to write about

25 the integrity of Horizon.

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1 which again was a group function, started to get 2 concerned about the reputational damage that was 3 being caused by the stuff that was appearing in 4 the media. 5 So it was the public relations team that then --

6 That's my recollection, yes.

7 That document can come down, thank you.

9 This is a document prepared in October 2009 by 10 a Mr Gareth Jenkins. If we turn to your second witness statement, WITN05290200, and we look 11 12 they bottom of that page, you set out that you

If we could turn up FUJ00080526, please.

13 can't be sure but you believe this document was

14 produced as a follow-up to your telephone 15

conversation that you had with Gareth Jenkins; is that right? 16

8

17 Yeah, yeah.

18 How did that conversation come about?

19 A. I think the witness statement goes on to explain 20

21 Yes, shall we turn over to the next page.

22 Yes. Basically, I was -- via Finance, I was 23 asked to meet with partners of Ernst & Young,

24 who were the group auditors and, basically, in

25 preparation for that meeting, I wanted to make

sure that, you know, my understanding of certain facts were -- was correct. I didn't want to tell Ernst & Young something that wasn't right.

And so it covered two -- now, what I recall at the time was that one of the things that was being said by a number of subpostmasters was that the circumstances in which Horizon was creating these false balances was thorough power interruptions, whether it be through storms or the grid failing or a power surge.

I think it's fair to say that the original design of Horizon was -- the choice of the Escher Riposte product was very much driven by its ability to recover from such circumstances.

The other was around the audit file and the security around the audit file. I mean, I won't go into detail but there were a lot of security procedures around that audit file which meant that when someone accessed it, it was possible to see that you were the only person that accessed it. No one had been in before and had interfered with it.

So that was the reason why I spoke to Gareth, and --

25 **Q.** How did you come to be in touch with Mr Jenkins 57

might have been the cause."

2 A. Yeah.

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- Q. What hard evidence, in your mind, could the
 subpostmasters have produced to show that there
 was an issue with the Horizon at this stage?
- 6 A. It's a great question. It would have been, 7 I think -- it -- I'll try to answer this without 8 getting into too much detail, but it's possible 9 on Horizon to -- at the start of the day you get 10 a till. You log on to the system, it's you --11 it identifies all the transactions until you log 12 off to you and to that till. At the end of the 13 day's session, you count up the cash. If 14 somehow the cash is out of balance, that will be 15 flagged up.

Now, not all branches did this. But from that, you could spot a difference, you know, in a lot of offices the -- I mean, I worked on the counter on a number of occasions during industrial disputes and I remember doing that, going through that process and ending up with very significant differences. You know, I cried help and the branch manager or assistant branch manager would come along and they would go through a checklist of obvious things that

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A. I think I did it through the account team. Soit would have been through -- I think Suzie

Kirkham's name is mentioned on the document, and

meeting coming up with Ernst & Young, can you

5 I would have said to Suzie "Look, I've got this

7 put me in contact with someone who can address

8 these issues for me?"

- 9 Q. She gave you the name Gareth --
- 10 A. I think Gareth phoned me. I think Gareth phoned
 11 me. So she triggered Gareth contacting me to go
 12 through this.
- 13 Q. Did you understand him as being the expert atthis time?
- 15 A. I understood him as being an expert. I mean,
 16 his name used to crop up quite frequently when
 17 we were dealing with stuff. So he was well
 18 known yes, and, he was -- he wasn't the only
- expert but his name was pretty prominent.
 Q. Just looking at your witness statement again, at
 that paragraph 2 and the bit that's on the
 screen now, it says:

"The subpostmasters had no hard evidence
 that Horizon had produced false balances but
 there were suggestions that power interruptions

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I might not have done and in both those cases,
 actually they immediately resolved the problem.

But you might go through that checklist and then you might conclude "Well, I can't spot an obvious error", and, at that stage, you might pick up the phone to the helpdesk to trigger off -- you know, to trigger off a help -- you know, "This has happened, I don't think it was me, I think it was the system".

- 10 Q. What hard evidence would you have at that stage11 that it was the system?
- 12 A. Well, you wouldn't. All you'd have is13 an unexplained difference.
- 14 **Q.** So then you would be in the hands of the Post15 Office?
- A. You would then be in the hands of the call
 handlers and they would go through -- I mean,
 there are various levels of -- various levels
 involved in phoning up. So the first level
- would probably work through scripts.Eventually, you'd get to a more technical desk
- who would look into it and indeed in the Horizon
- 23 Issues trial there's a story of how some of
- 24 those calls eventually got to the people who
- 25 understood how the system worked and

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- 1 investigated the detail.
- 2 Q. But you accept, on the basis of the Horizon
- 3 System in front of the subpostmaster, sometimes
- 4 there would be no hard evidence available to
- 5 them?
- 6 A. There would be no hard evidence available to 7 them. no.
- 8 Q. If we could turn back up FUJ00080526, please.
- So turning back to this report, you said that 9
- 10 Mr Jenkins phoned you. How long did that
- 11 conversation last?
- 12 Α. It wouldn't have been a short one because, with
- 13 respect to technical architects, they didn't
- 14 always speak in, you know, everyday language, so
- 15 I would have had to do a fair bit of testing of
- 16 understanding. So I can't imagine we
- 17 discovered -- sorry, that we covered this area
- 18 in a short conversation. It would have --
- 19 I mean, I didn't run a stopwatch on it,
- 20 obviously, but it would have taken at least
- 21 an hour, I would have thought, to go over this
- 22 sort of material.

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- 23 Q. Do you recall whether you found Mr Jenkins
- 24 particularly difficult to understand or do you
- 25 have any recollection?

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says, in the first paragraph:

"The Horizon system is designed to store all data locally on the counter's hard disk. Once the data has been successfully stored there it is then replicated (copied) to the hard disks of any other counters in the branch (and in the case of a single-counter branch to the additional external storage on the single counter). Data is also passed on from the gateway counter to the Horizon data centre using similar mechanisms."

Did you know this before you had this conversation with Mr Jenkins --

13 14 A. Oh, yes, I knew this because this was -- I think 15 this goes back to one of the reasons why the 16 Escher Riposte product was chosen by Fujitsu. 17 In those days, dial-up telephone networks 18 weren't terribly reliable. So in designing the 19 system, it was important that when there was 20 an interruption in a transaction, that it was 21 recoverable. I mean, this reflected the -- this 22 reflected, you know, some of the important 23 elements of the Riposte design. I mean, I met

A. No, no more so than any other technical

2 architect. I mean, one of the problems with

3 this whole area is the use of abbreviations and,

you know, which can be deeply layered. So he

5 was no more difficult to understand than any 6 other person.

7 Q. If we could turn to page 5 of this document, it 8 sets out the "Purpose". It says:

> "This document is submitted to Post Office for information purposes only and without prejudice."

What do you understand "without prejudice" to mean in this context.

14 I think I would have read that heading at the 15 top of the page. It was basically for my use 16 and internal use only and we weren't to --

17 I mean, I think it quite explicitly says

18 elsewhere that we shouldn't -- we shouldn't use

19 this document in any court cases.

20 Q. So it was just for your understanding?

21 It was -- that's -- yes, it was -- that was why 22 I made, you know, made the contact with Fujitsu:

23 to have this call in the first place.

24 If we turn over on to page 6, please. There's 25 a section entitled "Horizon Data Integrity". It

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1 contents of that particular paragraph.

Q. The third paragraph then goes on to read:

2 3 "Every record that is written to the 4 transaction log has a unique incrementing 5 sequence number. This means it is possible to 6 detect if any transitions records have been lost." 7

> Did you understand that before you received this report?

10 A. Yes, I did.

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11 Scrolling down again, it says:

"While a customer session is in progress, details of the transactions for that customer session are normally held in that computer's memory until the customer session (often known as the 'stack') is settled. At that point all details of the transactions (including any methods of payment used) are written to the local hard disk and replicated (as described above). It should be noted that double entry bookkeeping is used when recording all financial transactions, ie for every sale of goods or services, there is a corresponding entry to cover the method of payment that has been used. When a 'stack' is secured it is reason in such

with Escher on a number of occasions as part of

a user group, and they were boy silly on the

a way that either all the data is written into the local hard disk or none of it is written. The concept of 'atomic writes' is also taken into account when data is replicated to other systems (ie other counters, external storage or data centre)."

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Scrolling down to the bottom, it states:

"Any failures to write to a hard disk (after appropriate retries) will result in the counter failing and needing to be restarted and so will be immediately visible to the user.

"Whenever data is retrieved for audit enquiries a number of checks are carried out:

- "1. The audit files have not been tampered with (ie the Seals on the audit files are
- "2. The individual transactions have their CRCs checked to ensure they have not been corrupted.
- "3. A check is made that no records are missing. Each record generated by a counter has an incremental sequence number and a check is made that there are no gaps in the sequencing."

Reading this did you then proceed on the assumption that, "Well, if the audit file says 65

1 to address it and explain what other issues --

- 2 A. Because I had one specific area of information 3 that I wanted to validate my understanding of it 4 before I met with Ernst & Young. I wasn't 5 carrying out an investigation into data 6 integrity.
- 7 Q. With the benefit of hindsight, do you think you 8 should have?
- 9 A. Do I think I should have? I think that -- it's 10 very difficult to answer that question without 11 taking all the stuff that I know, so for 12 example, having read the Horizon Issues trial 13 and clearly when you take the totality of what 14 was discovered, there more ought to have been 15 done than was done.
- 16 Q. Should more have been done by you at this time?
- 17 A. Well -- ha -- I read about, I would say I read 18 about the issues that had arisen in the Horizon 19 Issues trial for the first time in that Horizon 20 Issues -- in Justice Fraser's judgment.
- 21 Q. Who was it in the Post Office or Fujitsu who 22 could have done more at this time?
- 23 A. Well, I mean, the visibility of these -- you 24 know, the specific issues would have been within

1 something, then we can rely on the audit file 2 and it's correct?"

- 3 That was my belief, yes.
- 4 Q. Did you understand that to be the key issue with 5 data integrity in Horizon and the answer to the 6 Post Office's problems?
- 7 A. I believed it was -- I believed that this was 8 a way of investigating a claim that Horizon that 9 caused a misbalance -- or a wrong balance in the 10 cash balance for the branch.
- 11 Did you say to Mr Jenkins on the phone call 12 "What about before it gets to the audit stage? 13 Is there a way of telling that there's a bug or
- 14 an error or something that otherwise has 15 corrupted the data?"
- 16 No, I didn't. I was asking him to take me 17 through the way in which the system recovered 18 transactions when there'd been interruption to

19 the service.

- 20 Q. But it is entitled "Horizon data integrity"?
- 21 Well, that was his title. That wasn't my title 22 and I said in my written statement that 23 I understood data integrity to be a wider issue 24 than the topics covered in this document.
- 25 Q. But if it is a wider issue, then why not ask him 66

1 with in different ways. I mean, there are 2 a number of those issues where the resolution of 3 the issue was quite quick. I mean, a lot of the 4 differences that were created were clearly --5 were investigated and corrected. So if you've 6 got a bunch of issues coming up that are 7 identified and corrected, I mean, there would 8 have been no question on those issues of 9 a subpostmaster being taken to court over them.

> And the evidence is there in abundance in Justice Fraser's write-up of those issues. He -- there's -- in the technical appendix, there's constant reference to transaction corrections being raised. But, yes, taking -if I'd have had that stuff laid out in front of me, I'd have felt inclined to do something, to, you know, have a root and branch review of what's going on here.

- 19 Q. Do you remember the names of any of those people 20 in that team who would have had that oversight?
- 21 Um -- I remember one or two names of the people 22 in the service management team. What I'd be 23 less certain of is what their particular roles
- 24 were and there was, in the service management

25 team, I think, varying over time who was heading 68

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service management. The issues were all dealt

1		it, a difference in the level of, you know, some
2		people believed that, you know, this was for the
3		supplier to manage and it was for the supplier
4		to get on with it, and you didn't spend a lot of
5		time, you know, second-guessing them.
6	Q.	Or picking over the data?
7	A.	Yes, that's right. This was for the supplier to
8		do and not for it's the linkages here,
9		I think. What's missing in all of this is
10		whether those people in service management, or
11		indeed with Fujitsu, would have drawn a line
12		from these incidents to postmasters appearing in
13		a court.
14	Q.	
15	α.	you are telling us, on the basis of what you
16		knew?
17	Α.	
18	Α.	I mean, I didn't know about a lot of this stuff
19		that was going on. It wasn't, you know,
20		these some of these involved multiple post
		· ·
21		offices, some involved only one or two post
22		offices, and these weren't the kind of issues
23		that would come across my desk.
24		If it had come across my desk then I would
25		have felt inclined to, you know, to ask some 69
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1		about the progress, quite apart from more formal
2		situations when we would meet and discuss it.
3		I tried not to sit on his shoulder and
4		second-guess his moves. Also, I was, at this
5		stage, probably about 10, 12 working days away
6		from retiring.
7	Q.	If we turn to page 3. If we scroll down first,
8		actually, on that page, we can see you were on
9		the distribution list.
10	A.	Mm-hm.
11	Q.	If we turn to page 3 and scroll down, and down
12		again, please. At the bottom of that page it
13		records "Actions and Points" arising from the
14		previous meeting. One of the issues there
15		recorded is:
16		"Trial Report/Final Balance issue: PN to
17		check if the proposed workaround is acceptable
18		"
19		Then it says:
20		"[Post Office] have requested this to be
21		a Hot Fix as it is required before we migrate
		any further branches."

1 serious questions about what was going on, 2 and -- but whether I'd have made the immediate 3 contact -- sorry, the immediate connection with 4 subpostmasters appearing in court is a different 5 issue 6 Q. You don't view Lee Castleton's case, for 7 example, as coming across your desk? 8 A. It did but bear in mind that the process, 9 actually -- I mean, to quote the judge himself, 10 "The integrity of Horizon is beyond question". 11 Q. If we could turn back for a moment to Horizon 12 Online. We're now in March 2010. If we could 13 turn up FUJ00094472, please. These are the 14 "Notes of Horizon Next Generation Joint 15 Progress/Release Board meeting", and we can see 16 there the programme manager is Mark Burley, who 17 we heard from a couple of days ago. He reported 18 in to you; is that right? 19 A. That's correct, yes. 20 **Q.** Did you work well together? 21 A. I think so. I don't know what he said. 22 Q. Did you work closely with him on this? 23 A. He was one of a number of reports -- I mean, 24 Mark -- there'd probably be -- during a week, 25 Mark and I would have two or three conversations 70

A. I think I did get involved in this. Again, the 1 Rule 10 disclosure of documents, I think buried 2 3 in there, was a document that referred to my 4 involvement and I was concerned -- I mean, 5 I think this was reporting two conflicting 6 numbers and I was concerned -- and I think it 7 was me that drove this activity. I was 8 concerned about the potential implications of 9 that in terms of data integrity and I think 10 there are references in there to legal teams 11 being involved.

12 If we could take that document down, please, and 13 pull up POL00002268, please. This is an email 14 thread from February 2010 and it's between, we 15 can see there, Andrew Winn, Hayley Fowell, Dave 16 Hulbert, who we have discussed before, you, 17 Jacqueline Whitham and Ann, and it's about the 18 media coverage of Horizon. Is this the PR team 19 or is this -- I know Andy Winn is in branch 20 improvement and liaison but are you being 21 brought in again?

A. The only name I recognise on that, apart from my
own, is Dave Hulbert's. So I can't recall where
these people worked but it could be that it was
the PR team. I don't know, is the answer.

Would you have been across this level of

detail or is that something you would have left

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to Mr Burley?

1 Q. If we scroll over to page 2, please. This is 2 an email from Hayley Fowell to you, Michele 3 Graves and Dave Hulbert, saying:

"Media Inquiry -- Horizon.

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"We've had a media Inquiry from a Retail Newsagent magazine; they have been talking to a subpostmaster who said that his branch was closed in [September] 2008 because of financial irregularities which he claims are the fault of Horizon.

"I am providing our stock line which states the system is robust but in case we get more questions on this please can you advise if you have any record of an investigation for this individual and any relevant details ..."

16 Why were you sent this email directly?

- 17 A. I don't know, because, you know, I wouldn't have 18 had the information that Hayley was looking for.
- 19 Q. You said a moment ago you don't remember these 20 people. You have no idea who Hayley Fowell was?
- A. No, I don't recall. I don't recall the name or 21 22 Michele Graves.
- 23 Q. Was that because you were becoming a bit of 24 a point person for these media enquiries and 25 assisting with setting out that the system was

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- 1 Q. In the email Ms Fowell says:
- 2 "I'm providing our stock line ..."

3 Was there a stock line at this stage that 4 the system was robust?

- 5 If there was, I wasn't aware of that line and 6 I certainly wasn't aware of putting that line 7 together.
- 8 Q. So it didn't come from you?
- 9 A. It didn't come from -- neither was -- I believed 10 that Fujitsu were involved in supporting 11 certainly the security team and probably in 12 civil cases, the conduct of the case. I can't 13 recall ever being consulted about Fujitsu's 14 involvement in it. It probably would have 15 fallen under the bailiwick of service management 16 anyway but I was never consulted on, and never 17 asked, actually, to participate in supporting
- 19 Q. But would you have agreed with that position at 20 the time, that the system was robust and that's 21 the position the Post Office took?

the teams in those actions.

22 A. If I go back to my airline days, I was involved 23 in a piece of work around automated ticketing, 24 and there was a debate about whether it was 25 necessary to still keep a paper copy of the

1 robust?

- 2 A. I think that there were people -- if I go back 3 to Mandy's contact with me, and likewise with 4 the PR team, I think these people who were 5 dealing with these issues were having difficulty 6 getting the attention of senior people and 7 I suspect that the PR team had had some contact 8 with Mandy and it's for that reason that they 9 actually came to me. But I wouldn't have 10 records of investigation for individuals. 11 I mean, that was not part of my role.
- 12 Why do you think they were having trouble 13 getting hold of senior people? Did they tell 14 you that or was that a guess?
- 15 With the Mandy stuff, I'm going back I don't 16 know how many years and, in all honesty, I can't 17 be certain, but I -- my memory is telling me 18 that she used words to that effect.
- 19 Q. Why would it have been that senior management 20 wouldn't have wanted to know about this?
- 21 Well, I can only guess. But, I mean, again, 22 I don't have, never had, visibility of all the 23 action that Post Office took against all 24 subpostmasters but I guess if all that action 25 was successful, why would you change anything?

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1 ticket that's printed or whether we could rely on the electronic facsimile of that ticket. And 2 3 the project consulted widely. There were 4 a number of QCs involved in that consultation, 5 and include -- and IT experts from outside the

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And in that debate, someone asked the question: could anybody ever stand up in a court of law and say that automated record could not be corrupted? Could you ever say it could never happen? And could anyone ever really stand up and say it could never happen that Horizon could get it wrong or that the back office checking systems could ever beat it?

15 So I would have -- I would qualify that by 16 saying, you know, I had belief that the back office checks were robust and would pick up any 18 errors and, as I say, that's evidenced, I think, 19 in the very detailed accounts that Justice 20 Fraser gave of the investigation of the bugs, defects and issues that were found.

- 22 So, in short, at this stage, you would have said 23 yes, that is correct, this is --
- 24 Yes, in very broad terms. I've said the whole 25 thing end to end, gave you -- that it would 76

business.

1		be you know, the system was robust, it had
2		inbuilt checks and balances that should prevent
3		Horizon creating a false balance that resulted
4		in a subpostmaster being prosecuted.
5	Q.	If we could go back over on to the first page up
6	-4-	the chain and scrolling down a bit, there's
7		a bit of discussion about this case. You don't
8		respond on this email to say "Well, hold on
9		a minute, maybe we should look at X, Y or Z or
10		give Fujitsu a call and see if there's anything
11		to this"?
12	A.	No, because I wouldn't have been handling the
13	Λ.	it would have been for anyone to respond to
14		that, in terms of the detail of photographs
14 15		, ,
		being done, it would have fallen within Dave
16 17		Hulbert's area of responsibility because, you
17 10		know, issues with the day-to-day service were
18	_	for service management to manage.
19	Q.	If we scroll up again, just to the last email in
20		the chain. It states there that:
21		"We are due to restart our former agent debt
22		recovery process. I just wanted to check the
23		recent communications to ensure there was
24		nothing there to suggest we should not do this."
25		Is that how you understood the Post Office's 77
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1		testing means that we will not be able to
2		perform a significant amount of testing before
3		commencing the Medium Volume Pilot. Hence we
4		need a significant amount of data to be
5		collected from the Live Branches and Data
6		Centre "
7		Contract.
8		Do you remember whether there was less
9		
•		Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially
10	Α.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned?
	A. Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says.
10		Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember
10 11 12	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary?
10 11 12 13		Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF,
10 11 12 13 14	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical
10 11 12 13 14 15	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was
10 11 12 13 14 15	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying
10 11 12 13 14 15 16	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying here, the statement that closes the issue, that
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying here, the statement that closes the issue, that he believed that the level of testing was
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying here, the statement that closes the issue, that he believed that the level of testing was adequate "for now". Now, I guess one would have
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying here, the statement that closes the issue, that he believed that the level of testing was adequate "for now". Now, I guess one would have to ask Lee what he meant "for now".
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying here, the statement that closes the issue, that he believed that the level of testing was adequate "for now". Now, I guess one would have to ask Lee what he meant "for now". I suspect it was adequate for the purposes
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	Q.	Do you remember whether there was less testing at this stage than was initially anticipated or planned? That's what the minute says. You go off the minute, you don't remember anything to the contrary? Well, the important reference here is "LF". LF, I believe, was Lee Farman, who is a technical director of a company called Acutest, and he was a testing specialist, and he basically is saying here, the statement that closes the issue, that he believed that the level of testing was adequate "for now". Now, I guess one would have to ask Lee what he meant "for now".

1 approach to be: even when there was a dispute, 2 you'd go ahead and you start the debt recovery 3 process? 4 A. I really don't -- I don't understand this. So 5 I don't understand why the process needed 6 restarting. I just don't understand it. And as 7 I say, I wouldn't have been involved anyway. I think this would have -- if anyone in that 8 9 email would have been involved in that it would 10 have been Dave Hulbert. 11 If we could turn up FUJ00092754, please. Sorry 12 to jump around about, this is back in the 13 chronology, 27 January, this is another "Note of 14 the Horizon Next Generation Joint 15 Progress/Release Board Meeting". So on the one 16 hand you have the discussion of Horizon Online 17 going on and, on the other, you're also involved 18 in discussions regarding the integrity of Legacy 19 Horizon. These two threads of things are coming 20 up around the same time, quite close to when you retire; isn't that right? 21 22 **A**. That's correct, yes. 23 Q. If we go over the page to page 3 and scroll 24 down, at 140.09 it states: 25 "The delay in the commencement of Volume 1 roll out. Q. If we could then turn up FUJ00097159, please. 2 3 This is from the same day. It's a "Horizon Next 4 Generation Release Authorisation AG3 -- Joint 5 Board", and you were there as Head of Change and 6 IS? 7 A. Yes, I was, yes. Q. Was the priority at this stage to secure or to 8 accept the Horizon Online system? 9 10 **A.** This was release authorisation not acceptance. Q. I see. 11 12 So this is about the process of -- so the way 13 these processes work, contractual acceptance is, 14 you know, it's set out contractually and you 15 pass or fail the test and, at the end of it, you 16 either accept or you don't. You can accept 17 a product but the release authorisation process 18 can say "No, it's not fit to go into the network 19 in its current state". 20 And there was an example of this for instance with CSR+ when, actually, in this 21 22 instance, it was Fujitsu Services or ICL 23 Pathway, as it then was, service management team

who said "No, we are missing some key control

reports and, therefore, the release cannot go in

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a rollout to ensure -- to test check again

whether the level of testing was adequate to

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1 to live operation". But actually contractual 2 acceptance had already been achieved. 3 Q. If we could turn forward in time to FUJ00092875, 4 please, and if we could turn to page 3 this is 5 an email from Alan D'Alvarez, who the Inquiry 6 heard from yesterday, on Wednesday, 3 February. 7 You're not copied into this email chain, 8 I believe it's an internal Fujitsu one. But if 9 we scroll down we can see that there are two 10 issues that require fixing, prior to being able 11 to enter into a medium volume pilot. 12 It states that: 13 "The decision has been taken to deploy HNG-X

to a further 10 branches with the migration button being pressed tomorrow for migration to complete [on] Friday ..."

There are two issues outstanding at that stage, there's the branch trading statement issue and the counter pauses in live. What's recorded at paragraph 4 is:

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"We had a meeting with Post Office this evening which Mark Burley led from the Post Office side. Post Office are desperate for a date to start planning/rescheduling medium volume pilot. They accepted our position that 81

considerably delayed and so I think there was a degree of pressure to crack on with it but, I mean, I don't think that pressure would have extended to, you know, doing silly things, moving ahead when there were, you know, serious issues that, you know, would dictate that you shouldn't -- this is not a sensible thing to be doing.

So there would have been pressure to get on with it, crack on with it but there would have also been a degree of caution. I think it is --I mean, I think there are number of areas where it's reflected in some of those JSB minutes that issues had to be cleared or at least the business had to agree that there was a suitable workaround to a particular issue before we moved forward.

18 Q. You described pressure internally. Were you 19 being quite forthright, the Post Office, with 20 Fujitsu about timescales and needing to push on 21 but not do something silly?

22 Well, that would have been Mark who would have 23 done that. I would imagine, yes, he would have 24 done, yeah.

25 Q. If we turn over to POL00032999, please. This is

we were not able to give this today. I expect that Mark will be keeping Dave Smith briefed and my reading is that if we are not in a position to give a target date by [close of play] tomorrow it is likely to result in an escalation to Mike Young."

At this stage, were you and your colleagues at the Post Office "desperate" for a start date or a date to start planning the medium volume pilot?

11 That's what the document says.

12 Q. But this wasn't written by you.

13 No, but this would be reflecting, I think, what 14 was coming across from Mark and his team and 15 I've no reason to disbelieve it.

16 Do you remember at this time it being quite 17 stressful, trying to get everything ready for

18 HNG-X being fully rolled out? 19 A. I think I had a degree of unease about the way

20 things -- the way things were progressing

21 There was pressure from -- I think from within

22 the business to get on with it because, clearly, 23 whilst we were rolling this thing out, other big

24 things couldn't happen in the branch network.

25 So, I mean, matters were already being

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the acceptance report for HNG-X Acceptance

Gateway 3 and if we scroll down, this is

3 something that you were sent, we can see your 4 name on the distribution list. Do you remember 5 6 7 8 9 10

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receiving this document? No, I don't, but, I mean, I think the documents that have been disclosed to me as part of this process are probably less than 5 per cent of the total documents that I would have received so recalling individual documents is beyond this

11 aged memory.

If we turn to page 9, please. The introduction 12 13 sets out that:

> "This document comprise the HNG-X Acceptance Report to the HNG-X Acceptance Board for the assessment of the progression through Acceptance Gateway 3 ... Readiness for Pilot."

If we scroll down, we can see that it sets out clearly what the purpose of the Acceptance Board is, which is:

"To agree the Acceptance status of the relevant Release ... and provide the recommendation to the "Joint Release Authorisation Board".' The proposed options that this board can select from are described in

1 appendix D." 2 I think you say in your statement that you 3 thought that anything that would have affected 4 acceptance would be closed in this report. 5 A. Yes. 6 Q. Is that right? 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. There's one thing that you highlight at the 9 bottom of page 9, if we scroll down again. It 10 states: 11 "It should be noted that there are also 12 defects that are not linked to POL Requirements 13 and which are not the subject of Acceptance 14 Incidents. A separate assessment of the status 15 and significance of these has been undertaken 16 and will be available for consideration at the 17 Release Authorisation Board." 18 Do you remember what kind of defects those 19 may have been? 20 Α. No, I don't, but I seem to think, in going 21 through the documents that I received, there 22 were some -- buried in another document, there 23 were some references to what -- you know, what 24 issues had actually come up under this heading. 25 So there was -- I think, the reason why 85 1 it to me. I can't say whether I did or whether 2 I didn't receive that detailed document. 3 Q. Did you ask for this report to be done? 4 A. Again, I can't recall. No, this is an internal 5 Fujitsu document and it doesn't -- I don't think 6 it sort of points to Post Office specifically 7 having asked for it. On the other hand, I would 8 have expected Mark to want this level of detail 9 in explanation about what caused the incident. Q. This was what was sent to you? 10 A. I don't -- I can't confirm or otherwise whether 11 12 I received it. 13 Q. At the time, did you understand this report to 14 have been undertaken by independent experts or Fujitsu employees? 15 16 A. Well, as I say, I can't recall the document, 17 so ... (the witness laughed) 18 Q. If we scroll down we can see, as you've already 19 said, the background to this paper and the 20 reason why it was written. And it's to do with 21 the Derby issue, which you've described, which 22 is to do with transactions and banking 23 transactions. Did you consider this to be 24 a serious problem at the time?

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A. I was aware of the incident, yes. It was

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1 I alluded to it in my witness statement, I was 2 asked a question generally about was there other 3 stuff that should be taken into account and 4 I pointed to this, and I think there was -- and 5 I can't recall the document but there was 6 evidence in other documents that such evidence 7 had been brought forward. 8 I'd no reason to believe at the time that 9 that wasn't complete. I obviously can't talk to 10 what subsequently happened after I left. 11 If we could then turn up FUJ00094393, please. 12 This is "RMGA HNG-X Counter Application Review", 13 and this one is dated 25 February 2010. Do you 14 remember this document? 15 A. I don't recall it from the time. But I do 16 remember it now because it had been supplied to 17 me and I've worked thorough it in some detail. 18 Q. This was, as far as you can recollect, the 19 version that was supplied to you? 20 I don't recall whether I saw this issue in this level of detail at the time. I think this 21 22 relates to the Derby --23 Q. Yeah. 24 -- the Derby issue. I would have known about 25 the Derby issue because Mark would have brought 1 a serious incident, and it was taken very 2 seriously at the time. 3 Q. Was it -- sorry. Go on. You finish.

4 I mean, I think, having read this report --5 I mean, I think, if I've understood it, and I've 6 had no one to bounce my understanding off, and 7 usually my process in looking at technical 8 issues was to bounce it off people so 9 I'd interpret it correctly, but under Legacy 10 Horizon, when you used "fast cash", you also 11 pressed "settle". With Horizon Online, both 12 those keys were still available but you only, in 13 this example, had -- the person operating this 14 transaction should have only pressed "fast 15 cash". They pressed "settle", which shouldn't 16 have been active and was active.

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This would have caused me to ask questions about the approach to negative testing, because where you take something where the process was press both, and you change it to where you only press one, but the other key is still there, you would have -- I mean, negative testing is a very difficult area because you've got to sort of work through all the combination of things that people might throw at the system that you

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1 wouldn't expect, in the normal course of things, 2 to hit it. 3 But when I read this, that appeared to me to 4 be pretty fundamental: that such an obvious test 5 had been missed. And I think this document, or 6 a document related to it -- in fairness to 7 Fujitsu, it does actually record that -- it does 8 ask the question about whether the approach to 9 negative testing was as it ought to have been. 10 Q. At this time, do you remember whether the Post 11 Office was stressing to Fujitsu the importance 12 of data integrity so that postmasters could be 13 prosecuted? Was that something that would have

14 been communicated? A. Don't think that -- I don't think that 15

16 necessarily would have been top of mind at all.

Certainly not in the programme team.

18 Q. Rather, just data integrity --

19 A. It was just about data integrity. It was just 20 about getting the system right.

21 Q. There's another version of this report. If we 22 could turn up FUJ00093031. I appreciate you say

23 you don't remember receiving this report.

24 A. Mm, mm.

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25 Q. So you don't know the way in which it played in

1 A. I mean, it shows an understanding, I think, in 2 Fujitsu, of the relevance of data integrity to 3 actions taken against subpostmasters. But totally appropriate, because you've got --4 5 you've got duplicate baskets being settled.

6 Q. Thank you.

7 MS KENNEDY: Chair, I believe we initially discussed 8 taking an earlier lunch. This might be 9 a convenient moment if we were to stop at 12.30.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: That's fine. If we have our 10 11 usual hour, that still gives us sufficient time 12 this afternoon?

13 MS KENNEDY: Yes, I won't be very long at all. SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Then yes, that's what 14

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we'll do. We'll break now until 1.30.

16 MS KENNEDY: Thank you.

17 (12.30 pm)

18 (The Short Adjournment)

19 (1.30 pm)

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20 MS KENNEDY: Good afternoon. Chair.

21 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Good afternoon.

22 MS KENNEDY: Could we please pull up POL00054371,

please. This is an email thread with the

24 subject "Horizon disputed cases". If we turn

25 over to the third page and scroll down, please, 2 So you can see there the date is 9 February. My 3 understanding from the documents is that you 4 weren't sent this. If we scroll down to the

your mind, but I'll take you to one paragraph.

5 bottom paragraph, this doesn't appear in the 6 later version that was sent on to the Post

7 Office, but it says:

> "The net effect would be that the Post Office and the branch records would not match. Where this happens, the Post Office investigates the branch and postmaster with a view to retraining or even uncovering fraud. It would seriously undermine Post Office credibility and possibly historic cases if it could be shown that a discrepancy could be caused by a system error rather than a postmaster/clerk action.

"Most importantly, the central database, as the system of record, would be called into question."

Does it surprise you to see that comment there in that report?

22 A. I think, in the circumstances of the fault that 23 arose, you couldn't disagree with that 24 statement.

25 Q. Okay. So --

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1 to the bottom, we can see the start of this 2 email chain between a Jason Collins, Graham 3 Brander and Andy Hayward. You're not copied 4 into that, Mr Smith. If we just scroll over, 5 just so we can see the end of that email, but it

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"Andy called me and asked whether you guys, (Graham, if FIU have any cases in dispute/new issues that could affect your case) could put together some stats on these cases where the accused's defence was/is that the Horizon data is unreliable for any amount of reasons given by the accused.

"This should be sent to lain within the next few days. Iain will need as much information as possible."

If we scroll up we can see a further email, again at the top of that page, talking about two cases, West Byfleet and Orford Road. Scrolling up again a little bit -- but, again, you're not copied into that email -- but if we control up further, we can see you start being copied in on this email thread about people essentially using or saying that the Horizon data used in their cases isn't right. Do you remember being copied

Were you on this conference call, do you

		The Post Offic
1		in to this email threat?
2	A.	Not particularly, no, I don't.
3	Q.	Do you know why, again, you would have been
4		copied into this
5	A.	It was Mandy who was copying me in, so I was
6		kind of Mandy's go-to person when she had things
7		like this crossing her desk. My advice, if
8		I had been asked, it would have been exactly the
9		same: use the audit file.
10	Q.	It seems as though that email comes from Andy
11		Hayward and it looks as though he's the one who
12		is has copied you
13	A.	Oh, that's right, yeah.
14	Q.	Do you know who he was?
15	A.	No, I can't recall, no.
16	Q.	You don't know whether he was someone in Mandy's
17		team?
18	A.	No. I mean, I recognise some of the others Rod
19		Ismay ran transaction processing; Sue Lowther
20		was the head of information security; and John
21		Scott was head of security.
22	Q.	If we scroll up further, please. This email
23		says:
24		"As was discussed on the conference call and
25		taking into account Rob's comments"
		93
1	_	never say never.
2	Q.	1 3 7
3		first page, and down a little bit, this is again
4		an email from Dave King to the thread, and it
5		says:
6		"As discussed, I can confirm that we are in
7		no way questioning/investigating the financial
8		integrity of Horizon, or of the accounting
9		system as a whole."
10 11		There's almost a defensiveness to that,
12		isn't there, that someone could ever question the systems?
13	Α.	Um I think there are several ways you could
14	A.	read that. I mean, that may be defensive in the
15		sense that some other party was not happy that
16		information security were delving into this
17		area. So this should just be clarifying, "No,
18		we're not about that, we're about this". But
19		the answer is, you know, I don't know, I'm just
20		speculating in giving that answer.
		op command in giving that allower.

Do you think at this stage this would have been

a good time to do that proper analysis?

A. My belief right at the time, and I don't know

whether we'll come on to the slide set that

safety I produced, that it did need -- the way

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2 remember a conference call? 3 A. I can't recall it, no. It doesn't mean I wasn't 4 in it but I just don't recall it. 5 Q. "... to confirm that what we are looking at is 6 a 'general' due diligence exercise on the 7 integrity of Horizon, to confirm our belief in the robustness of the system and thus rebut any 8 9 challenges." That suggests that at this stage the 10 11 position of at least the people on this email 12 thread is that there is no problem with Horizon 13 but we just need to check and find a way of making sure that we can justify that that's the 14 15 case; is that how you read that? 16 Yeah, yeah. 17 Q. Does that reflect the wider attitude you 18 experienced in Post Office at this time? 19 A. Um ... I can't say that -- I mean, by "wider 20 Post Office" I think you're going into areas 21 like the Network team. 22 Q. Just your -- I mean, even within your team? 23 Within the team, I believe that there would have 24 been a belief that the system was robust, 25 notwithstanding what I said about you could 1 the issue was boiling up, it did need something to happen, something different to happen. Not 2 3 least of which, at the senior level in the 4 business, people to get a hold of this issue. 5 I mean, this is what the PR team were contacting 6 me for. You know, we need to get a grip of this 7 thing and deal with it before it actually 8 bubbles up out of control. 9 Q. Shall we go to that slide deck that you prepared 10 which is at POL00090575. So this is the first slide of a slide deck. 11 Yes. 12 Α. 13 Q. Do you want to tell us what this slide deck is 14 and why you made it. 15 A. So there are two reasons why I created the slide 16 deck. The first was that -- and I can't be sure 17 who but I think it was probably the PR team had 18 called a meeting/meetings to discuss this issue, 19 and I was due to go on annual leave and I was 20 asked to jot down some thoughts on the subject. 21 So that was why. 22 The other thing I used this slide deck for 23 was to -- I would have kept my boss informed of

the original Cleveleys issue, it would have at

what was going on, both -- I mean, going back to

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least briefed them on it. My boss, Mike Young, also had as his reports, service management and also security. So he would be well placed to take a wider view than just my view.

So for those two purposes, as I say, I created this just before I went on annual leave.

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What I meant with this -- well, part of this was about accessing the audit file in all cases.

The other part came about, I was invited to support the chairman of the Welsh Postal Board who'd been summoned to meet with an MP -- MPs to discuss the case of Mr Bates.

Up to this point, I'd assumed that, you know, what -- the noise that was being created around subpostmasters who were claiming that their balance had been distorted by Horizon and had been prosecuted. What I heard in that session with the MP was something different and it seemed to me that there were these cases bubbling around in the media, and I, for one, you know, guilty of assuming that they were all about that, and in Mr Bates' case it was somewhat different.

I mean, at the heart of it it was still 97

Q. "... we have to focus on what actually happened
 and not allow others to conduct the debate
 around speculation about what might have
 happened."

And "what actually happened", you mean --

- 6 A. Is the audit file, yeah.
- 7 Q. Just the audit file?
- 8 A. It's the only way, going back in history, that
 9 you can test this idea that Horizon caused the
 10 misbalance. If Horizon introduced a false
 11 transaction, for the sake of argument, that
 12 would be revealed by examining the audit file.
- would be revealed by examining the audit file.

 But it didn't occur to you at the time that
 there could be something other than the audit
 file that might show a problem with the system?
- 16 A. Not really, no. In the context of this debate,17 no.
- 18 Q. What do you mean by "no?" As in, you didn't19 think that -- you thought the audit --
- A. I believe the only way of going back to actually
 prove it, would be the audit file. Remember,
- 22 the proposition is that Horizon caused the
- 23 problem, so how do I prove that Horizon didn't
- cause the problem? And that would be via the
- 25 audit file. Now, if the subpostmaster had

- 1 Horizon but if you're going to deal with these
- 2 issues, then you need to know what you're
- 3 dealing with. So that's what I was really
- 4 driving at in -- the people who I sent this to
- 5 I'd been discussing this with on the telephone
- 6 or face to face. So I was literally summarising
- 7 my thoughts in the deck.
- Q. A moment ago you said at the meeting with the
 MPs you got a somewhat different picture. Could
- 10 you --

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- 11 A. Well, it was -- as I recall it, it wasn't about
 - Mr Bates being prosecuted because of
- 13 a difference between his cash balance, physical
- 14 cash balance on the system. I think Mr Bates'
- 15 contract was terminated because, he would argue,
- 16 because of events that were caused by the
- 17 Horizon System and that was a different take on
- 18 it
- 19 Q. Looking at this first slide, it says:

20 "I'm strongly of the opinion that in order21 to win the argument ..."

- What's the argument there?
- A. Well, the argument is that Horizon is causing
 misbalances and resulting in subpostmasters
- 25 being prosecuted.

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- 1 made -- introduced errors into the system,
- 2 entered in the wrong amounts or something like
- 3 that, there were other means by which that would
 - come to the surface but, I mean, that wasn't
- 5 being said.
- 6 Q. Or a bug or an error?
- 7 **A**. Um --

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- 8 Q. How would that come to the surface?
- 9 A. Well, the Horizon audit, again, would -- had one
 10 of those been missed, not picked up and not
 11 corrected, then that would come through from
- 12 examining the audit file.
- 13 $\,$ **Q.** If we could turn over the page, you set out the
- 14 history of Horizon and you chart through
- 15 a variety of cases, two of which are the main
- ones we've already discussed, which are
- 17 Cleveleys and -- if we turn over the page again,
- 18 and again, and again, one more time --
- 19 Castleton. Those were the two main cases where
- 20 Horizon's integrity had been called into
- 21 question, which is what you've recorded here?
- A. No, those were the two cases that Mandy Talbotcorresponded with me on. Yeah.
- 24 Q. So you've limited it to what you knew about --
- 25 A. I limited it to what I knew about it because

- 1 Cleveleys I was asked for some advice, which
- 2 I gave, and then Mandy -- Castleton, I think,
- 3 was the first test, as far as Mandy was
- 4 concerned, after Cleveleys and that's why it was
- 5 so important. I think that's why she continued
- 6 to correspond with me. After that, you know,
- 7 there was radio silence.
- 8 Q. If we could turn over to the next page please
- 9 you say there:
- 10 "Castleton 'killed' the noise until Computer
- 11 Weekly ran an article in 2009."
- 12 Α. Yeah.
- 13 Q. What do you mean by "killed the noise"?
- 14 A. Well, I didn't hear any more about it, about
- 15 this issue in general, I think, until 2009.
- 16 That's when it really became quite a hot topic.
- 17 Q. The way you've drafted that suggests that it's
- 18 not just in terms of your own knowledge; it's
- 19
- generally. It says, "Castleton 'killed' the
- noise"; it doesn't say, "I didn't hear about 20
- anything until the Computer Weekly article"? 21
- 22 A. No, I didn't, no.
- 23 Q. Does that not suggest that this is the totality
- 24 of the cases that Post Office knew about --
- 25 A. I don't think anybody would have understood that 101
- 1 A. No, I think, from my point of view, had the
- 2 audit file been applied, it simply said Horizon
- 3 was not the explanation. That didn't say, that
- didn't automatically imply guilt on behalf of 4
- 5 the subpostmaster.
- 6 Q. If we could turn over to the last page, please,
- 7 page 12. You say:
- 8 "Of the cases I am aware of ..."
- 9 Then we've already discussed Mr Bates' case.
- A. Yes. 10

- Q. You say in your last bullet point: 11
 - "Details of the cases do bear looking at."
- 13 A. It's back to the point made on the front slide
- 14 that, because of what I experienced in
- supporting the Chairman of the Welsh Postal 15
- 16 Board, we really needed to understand what
- 17 the -- what each individual was claiming and
- 18 what was the basis of that claim.
- 19 Q. To what end were you looking at that?
- 20 A. I think from the point of view that, I guess,
- 21 prompted by the PR team, you know, we had to
- 22 start pushing out some kind of answers. So
- 23 making sure that we're answering the questions
- 24 that are being put, not just assuming that this
- 25 was about prosecutions.

at the time.

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- 2 Q. Okay. If we could turn over the page to
- 3 page 10, please, you've summarised what you
 - understand the Horizon integrity to be, and the
- 5 mechanisms. Was this drawn from your
- 6 conversation with Gareth Jenkins --
- 7 It was indeed, yes.
- 8 -- and that document we discussed earlier?
- 9 Yes, it was and, indeed, I think I probably --
- 10 I think the attached PDF document --
- 11 Would have been that --
- 12 -- would have been that document, yes.
- 13 Q. -- document we looked at earlier?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 If we could turn over one more page to page 11.
- 16 You posit some explanations as to why these
- 17 cases are arising. 1 "Subpostmaster has had
- 18 hands in the till"; 2 "Assistants have had hands
- 19 in the till"; 3 "Accounting error". Is that the
- 20 order in which you thought was most likely?
- 21 **A**. No, there was no particular order.
- 22 There was no assumption that a subpostmaster
- 23 would have --
- 24 No, no assumption, no.
- Q. -- had their hands in the till? 25

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- 1 Q. If we could take that document down, please, and
- 2 this is the last document I'm going to take you
- 3 to. It's FUJ00094958, please. This is turning
- 4 back to Horizon Online, and if we could scroll
- 5 down, please, we can see there that this is
- 6 an email from you -- to scroll up a slight bit
- 7 again, please -- on the 26 March, which
- 8 I believe was your last day at the Post Office,
- 9 or close to it?
- A. I finished on 31 March, so this was a Friday. 10
- 11 Clearly looking at the time, I wrote this on the
- 12 train going home.
- 13 Q. You write this email to Gavin Bounds. Remind us
- 14 who Gavin was?
- 15 A. He was the account manager for the Post
- 16 Office -- well, the Royal Mail account I think
- 17 they would probably term it.
- 18 Q. It says:
- 19 "Gavin,
- 20 "I want to follow up our earlier telecon
- 21 rather more formally.
- 22 "Whilst we don't yet have a root cause of
- 23 today's issue given recent events it is
- 24 difficult not to suspect that it might be
- 25 related to the introduction of a change. Quite

simply there have been too many incidents where poor execution of change has caused a problem in live."

What did you mean by "problem in live"?

A. This was -- I mean, I think we're in pilot at the time, so this would have been an incident happening in a branch office and, I mean, I can't remember the specific incidents but it could have been loss of service, it could have been problems with transactions. I don't know. But this is problems experienced in the branch.

12 Q. It goes on to say:

"The situation demands that Fujitsu take action that is game changing whether that be increased rigour, an injection of differby [sic] skills or change in mindset.

"I also have to be concerned that we seem to be ahead of you and finding out for ourselves that there has been an incident in live rather than hearing from you. We have been here before and I will take a lot of convincing that this not symptomatic of a reactive mindset. Again, we need to see action that is game changing to a proactive style of management.

"The wider POL business and major 105

them were involved in independent review.

One was an independent review of some architectural issues. I meant external independent review but there was no way, in terms of the architect, that Fujitsu would agree to that.

The other was in terms of their service management organisation where they did bring in a third party and that third-party report was quite damning in terms of the stuff that had been going on.

Now, the story as far as service management after that was much better. I'd previously, earlier on in the year, as a result of a number of incidents, spoken to Ian Lamb about the mindset in service management. I left it at that and he came back and said, "Okay, we understand", and they went out and recruited back to Fujitsu a guy called Dave Baldwin who worked there before and Dave came in with a completely different mindset.

There was a lot of investment and we got a very different experience in terms of managing the service. You almost felt that Fujitsu were ahead of the game, in control of the situation,

stakeholders have been incredibly patient thus far. I believe we are now on the cusp of losing them and if we do then experience tells us that we could well end up on the front page of the Daily Mail. That will do damage to the reputation of both our businesses."

Were you angry when you wrote this email?

A. No, because I would have calmed down. I would probably have been angry when I had the phone call but my general approach to these things, if I felt angry, to do nothing, and then to record it in writing later.

I mean, I am very uneasy about the nature of the issues that were arising but also, there was a sense of *déjà vu* and this reference to mindset was really a reference back to 2004, when we did appear on the front page of a national newspaper and which resulted in me writing a mail to Fujitsu on Christmas Eve about the reactive nature of their service management, which was not my area. I stepped outside of contract, I stepped outside of the law, I said, "You may have contractual acceptance but you ain't getting the money until you do a number of things", and one of those was -- well, both of

rather than the situation controlling them.

Dave moved on to be the account manager. He was replaced by Naomi, I forget her surname, but she was cut in the same mould as Dave. She was in turn replaced by Wendy Warham, who had a different style but very much lived the philosophy that no matter how good it is, it can be better.

Then we got to this stage and, all of a sudden, it felt quite, quite different. Now I can't recall exactly what the meeting was, but I went to a -- I think it was probably the Joint Release Authorisation Board meeting, and the performance of service management in that meeting was lamentable. I mean, never mind being behind the ball, they weren't on the pitch, so much so that a guy called Graham Welsh who worked in that -- and is referred to in emails and documents I've been seeing -- he phoned me up afterwards to try to reassure me that on the ground things were rather better. And this is what I was getting at there, you're now being driven by events instead of you having control of them.

I think, within Fujitsu -- I think within 108

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- 1 Fujitsu that there was some feeling along those 2 lines, as well. In the -- I can't remember 3 which document it was, but I think I had 74 4 Rule 10 documents to trawl through, and there's 5 a document -- there's an email there where Alan 6 D'Alvarez is asking Fujitsu to inject senior 7 person to deal with problems. And I guess 8 that's one of the things that I was driving at 9 here, you know, this needs some bolstering of 10 effort, this needs something really different, 11 plus you need to get -- you know, we shouldn't 12 be hearing from the branches first -- the first
- 14 branch: it should be from Fuiltsu Services. 15 So I was very worried about the way things 16 were going at that stage.

we hear of an incident shouldn't be from the

- 17 Q. You mentioned your last day was 31 March.
- 18 Α. Yes.

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- 19 Q. Did you feel like you had unfinished business on 20 Horizon Online when you left the Post Office?
- 21 A. Yeah. In fact, I wrote another email that day 22 that had been -- there'd been another incident 23 overnight, which, again, it implies the sort of 24 unease I had about stuff. There had been an ice
- 25 storm in Northern Ireland. Now, ice storms 109
 - Fujitsu approached me and, by this time, it was time to start thinking about what happened after 2015. If you're going to go to -- if you're going to go to competitive tender, and I think things were quite clear at the time that on this occasion we'd have to go to competitive tender. You needed to kick the process off around then.

You needed to do your strategy work first of all and then you needed to put that into an ITT, go through the process of selecting a supplier and start working with them. So I mean that's where -- that's very much where, you know, my head was

MS KENNEDY: Thank you very much, Mr Smith. I have 14 no more questions for you. I think Mr Stein has 15 16 some and some of the other Core Participants, as 17 well.

Questioned by MR STEIN

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18 19 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right Mr Stein, first, yes. 20 MR STEIN: Mr Smith, I've just got one area I want 21 to ask you about. I represent a large number of 22 subpostmasters and mistresses that have been 23 affected by this scandal, so you'll understand 24 from my questions that point of view. Now 25 you've been taken by Counsel to the Inquiry

- don't normally happen in our part of the world. They usually happen in northeast America and it would have been easy to dismiss what happened as down to, you know, once in 100 hundred years weather situation.
- What happened was power lines were brought down. I mean, these things can actually not just bring the power lines down but they can bring the pylons down with them, as well. And the system had -- so there's back-up generators and the system hadn't failed over to the back-up generations properly and this caused a disruption to service in the branches.
- And again, I found myself writing to Gavin on my last day saying, "How can this happen? You know, the system as specified should fail over cleanly. What's going on here?"
- 18 So I was -- I left very worried about the 19 way things were going but, I mean, I had to hand 20 over to someone else to deal with it.
- 21 You mentioned that you were subsequently engaged 22 by Fujitsu as a consultant?
- 23 A. Yeah.
- 24 Q. How did that come about?
- 25 A. I don't know the background from the -- I mean, 110
- 1 Ms Kennedy to documentation that reveals your
- 2 point of view in 2010 at the time when you're,
- 3 I think, just moving on.
- 4 Α. Mm-hm.
- 5 Q. Okay. You'll recall the question she's asked 6 you, which was asking about whether, when you 7 wrote a particular email, you were angry and you 8 described the fact that you try not to write
- 9 emails when hot --
- 10 **A.** Yeah.
- 11 Q. -- but deal with them slightly later. Do you 12 recall that email?
- Yeah. 13 **A**.
- 14 Q. I can take you to it if you wish.
- 15 A. Yeah.
- 16 So at that particular juncture, what you seemed 17 to be saying is this: that you'd realised that 18 there was a problem, the third party report has
- 19 been damning -- your words -- you've got Dave
- 20 Baldwin and other people coming in and you
- 21 regard their quality as being better, reactive
- 22 and looking at it in more detail; is that fair?
- 23 Yes. I think so.
- 24 Right. Now, you know by this point, because of 25 what's been going on in the press and you know

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1 from your involvement in the Post Office, that 2 people had been prosecuted by the Post Office, 3 yes? 4 A. Mm-hm.

5 Q. Now, at this particular juncture, on leaving the Post Office at that time, do you think to 6 7 yourself, well, some of these subpostmasters and 8 mistresses have been prosecuted and imprisoned 9 in the past under a regime that you, in fact, 10 regarded, it seems, as being inadequate?

11 A. The period I've just described in terms of the 12 service management was -- so in 2004, what 13 happened, we moved from a system that was -- you 14 might have loosely described it as a batch 15 system, where if there was a failure in 16 Fujitsu's central infrastructure, it would have 17 little to no effect, immediate impact, on the 18 branches -- to the online world of banking.

> So when there was a problem with the infrastructure, it would impact the branches in a big way. It was that transition that Fujitsu didn't make at that point in time. They didn't make the -- I suppose, in my view, it's about technical people not seeing boxes and wires but seeing customers in branches and, you know,

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1 to the juncture where you're leaving, you're 2 writing these emails when you're trying not to 3 write them when you're hot tempered --

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5 Q. -- you're dissatisfied with what you have learnt 6 about the system, yes?

7 Α. Yeah.

8 Q. You, in your own mind, believe that it's been 9 inadequate, it's been insufficiently insightful 10 into the basic nature of problems, yes?

11 A. What -- there's two things that I feel at this 12 stage. One is I'm uneasy about the sorts of 13 problems we're getting. They're problems that, 14 when you look at them, you say that really 15 oughtn't to have happened, yes? And the second 16 point is about the way in which Fujitsu as an organisation appears to be reacting to the 17 18 issues as they arise. The fact that we're

19 hearing from the office that the service is 20 down, not from Fujitsu picking up the phone and telling us the service is down.

21 22 Q. Right, so let's pinpoint this. 2010, the time 23 when you're about to move on, you've got this in 24 your head, problems that shouldn't be arising 25 and, secondly, you're learning about it from the

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counter clerks, subpostmasters, trying to serve them.

So Fujitsu didn't change the mindset. You know, this is happening here and now. People are being impacted here and now, as opposed to in a batch world where the impact on people was perhaps more delayed.

And, secondly -- and, I mean, what we found subsequently as a result of the review that I asked Fujitsu to undertake, was that certain tools and techniques that ought to have been implemented as a result of moving into the online world hadn't been put in place and, in fact. I think Fuiltsu invested over £1 million in those tools and techniques, and I recall actually being -- taking a trip to Bracknell and spending a day going through and being shown how those tools and techniques helped Fujitsu manage the service.

So I would say, at the beginning of the process, Fujitsu services management was way, way short of industry standards. But 12 months later, it had caught up and what I was observing was fit for purpose.

25 Q. What we're talking about is, by the time you get 114

1 offices, rather than Fuiltsu.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay, these two big problems, yes?

4 Α.

5 Q. Now, at that time, just when you're about to 6 move on, you also know in your mind that people 7 have been prosecuted and prosecuted before the 8 criminal courts or chased for debts before the 9 County Courts, and some people have gone to 10 prison. You also know that fact as well, don't 11 you?

12 Α. Yes.

13 Right. Now, with the information that you've 14 got in your head, which was the problems that 15 were unexpected and, secondly, you're learning 16 from the wrong part of the system about issues, 17 with that, did you by any chance go to the legal 18 department at POL and say, "There may be a big 19 problem here in relation to historic cases, I'm 20 not satisfied with what's been going on, and we

21 need to look into those past cases"? Did you do

22 that, Mr Smith?

23 No, I didn't. Why would I take something about 24 a new system that was only just being introduced 25 and reflect that back to things that had

1		happened you know, quite different system?
2	Q.	You didn't think the two
3	A.	No, they were two completely different systems.
4		Two completely different systems. Now, I did
5		and in the Rule 10 bundle, I think this was
6		around one of the incidents I think I did get
7		involved with certainly, Fujitsu's legal
8		people were involved on whether this had
9		an implication in terms of any prosecution that
10		might arise. But that was looking forward, not
11		looking backwards. Linking what's happening
12		Horizon Online to what happened in Legacy
13		Horizon, I don't think you'd do that, would you?
14	Q.	Didn't occur to you, Mr Smith?
15	A.	No, of course it wouldn't.
16	MR	STEIN: Thank you.
17		Questioned by MS PAGE
18	MS	PAGE: Thank you, I'm also representing a number
19		of the subpostmasters in this case, Flora Page.
20		The first thing I want to ask you about is
21		going right back, if I may, and if I could have
22		a document brought up, it's POL00092888. This
23		document, I hope, is one you've had a chance to
24		have a look at but I know you've seen a lot of
25		documents. It's apparently an account by
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1		that didn't relate to me.
2	Q.	That's absolutely fine. I just wanted to be
3		clear whether you had any memory of having
4		actually dealt with the subpostmaster
5		experiencing Horizon difficulties?
6	A.	No.
7	Q.	No. All right. Well, then let's then move on
8		a little and what I'd like to ask about is the
9		process that was part of the IMPACT Programme
10		which removed lines from the removed the
11		suspense lines, as you put it, from the
12		automated cash accounts. You put that in your
13		statement and I just want to understand that
14		that's what you is that the way that you
15		would describe the removal of the facility to
16		put money in the suspense account?
17	A.	I think if I recall my witness statement,
18		I think I will have referred to that in terms of
19		the implementation of Legacy Horizon, and I used

1 a subpostmaster who was experiencing 2 difficulties with Horizon and it seems to have 3 been in 2001 because that's the date stamp we see at the top. 4 5 If we scroll a bit further down and if we just stay there. If we zoom in a little bit on 6 7 what's in the lower part of the screens we'll 8 see your name is mentioned. 9 A. Ah. A Dave Smith. 10 Q. A Dave Smith. That's why I wanted to ask you. 11 A. I mean, generally speaking, the discipline we'd 12 operate is for me not to contact subpostmasters 13 direct. At times almost impossible to, because 14 we, as senior managers, we used to address 15 meetings of subpostmasters on a regular basis. 16 The idea is that if a lot of managers got 17 involved in solving out subpostmasters' issues, 18 they weren't passing through service management. 19 Service management, therefore, didn't get 20 a complete overview of --21 Q. That's fine, if what you're saying is this 22 wasn't you. 23 A. No, I don't think this was me, no. Q. You don't have any memory of this? 24 25 A. I got a lot of correspondence for Dave Smith 118 1 The other thing that came up was the fact that certain moves that the people in 2 3 branches -- and I include both our own branches

4 in that -- could take to deal with the 5 discrepancy was to bury it for later 6 investigation. And what I was referring to in 7 my witness report was the fact that the -- with 8 Legacy Horizon, some of those avenues were 9 closed down to people in branches. 10 Q. As part of the IMPACT Programme? 11 A. As part of -- no, as part of Legacy Horizon. 12 I don't think -- if you could point me to the --13 Q. Well, there are two bits of your witness

statement which deal with this, so perhaps we can bring it up.

A. Yeah, if you could, that would be helpful.

16 **A.** Yeah, if you could, that would be helpful.17 Thank you.

18 Q. I'm just trying to find the reference but I hope19 somebody else might have it.

 $20 \quad \textbf{MS KENNEDY:} \quad I \ think \ it's \ WITN05290200.$

21 **MS PAGE:** That's very helpful. Thank you. It's
22 paragraph 17 and paragraph 29 of the areas which
23 deal with this. I think it must have been 29
24 that refers to the suspense lines in automated
25 cash accounts.

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to visit offices that -- where the systems had

up and in particular on balancing the back

office printing, which was, you know, a big

cause of the problem.

been implemented and one of the complaints --

I mean balancing was the thing that always came

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1		I tell you what I think's going on here,	1		Also, when I was going around, I remember
2		we're probably looking at the wrong witness	2		going to Colchester branch a Crown Office
3		statement. I'm sorry.	3		and the branch manager and the assistant branch
4	MS	KENNEDY: That's completely my fault. It's	4		manager spending an hour berating me about the
5		WITN05290100.	5		fact that they couldn't tuck these things away
6	MS	PAGE: Yes, that's the one. Thank you.	6		for later investigation but I really had no
7		So if you want to cast your eyes over	7		insight into
8		paragraph 29 there.	8	Q.	Just to pick you up on that, because that's new
9	Α.	Yes, this refers to Legacy Horizon not	9		for us. So on a visit, a person running
10		So it's certainly I'm not talking Horizon	10		a branch said to you and was berating you, that
11		Online, we're both talking about Legacy Horizon.	11		they couldn't put things in the suspense
12	A.	It's Legacy Horizon, yes.	12		account?
13	Q.	The Inquiry has heard evidence to suggest that	13	Α.	Yes, and my response was "And you're not
14	٠.	these facilities were taken away as part of the	14		supposed to because you weren't supposed to
15		IMPACT Programme?	15		before. You weren't following the instructions,
16	A.	The IMPACT Programme, yes, IMPACT Programme	16		you weren't meant to use the manual system in
17		did I mean, IMPACT Programme changed	17		that way". The thing with manual systems is
18		radically the way that branch accounting was	18		they're much easier to manipulate than automated
19		carried out. I'm not hugely familiar with the	19		systems, which are much more rigid.
20		detail of that. The fact that I was able to	20	Q.	Well, that's the way the things were under the
21		recount rather more detail on Legacy Horizon	21	Ψ.	manual system. Then we have Horizon in its
22		was I spent, I think, the best part of	22		original iteration before the IMPACT Programme,
23		six weeks when I first joined the Post Office	23		in which people were still able to use the
24		being a cash account, being the supporting	24		suspense account to
25		documents, and it kind of cemented in the brain.	25	A.	They were indeed, yes.
		121	20		122
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1	Q.	park discrepancies.	1		agents to make good unknown errors in branch
2	Α.	Yes.	2		accounts will be used instead."
3	Q.	Then the programme introduces the requirement	3		Yes?
4		to, if there is a discrepancy, not to put it in	4		Yeah.
5		a suspense account but to make it good	5	Q.	
6		immediately?	6		given the history of Al376 and what we know
7		Yeah.	7		about that and what we know about the fact that
8	Q.	Yes? There's some documents around that and	8		0.6 per cent was the target and so, therefore,
9		I don't necessarily need to take you to them but	9		even if hitting the target, there would still be
10		there is one point from one of those documents	10		some errors, would this not have been recognised
11		that I would like to put to you, just to sort of	11		as unfair, that unknown errors had to be made
12		solidify this point, if I may.	12		good, no matter what?
13		It's POL00038878. If we can go, please, to	13	Α.	Well, there's a lot tied up in that question.
14		page 22. Now, if we zoom in on that middle	14		First of all, the 0.6 per cent. Unfortunately,
15		section and the bottom part of it, it says here,	15		I've seen a lot of documents, I've got
16		and this is just as I say, I don't expect you	16		a trolley-load behind me how 0.6 per cent was
		to have seen this before but it's to put this in	17		arrived it is not at all clear from the
17		a context for you. What it says is, part of	18		documents but I did trawl through them all and
18		this IMPACT Programme:	19		the point about the integrity check, it was
18 19					
18 19 20		"The analysis has also identified	20		so what TP were doing, they were taking the cash
18 19 20 21		requirements to more tightly control and police	21		accounts as committed by the subpostmasters and
18 19 20		-			

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branch accounts, only a limited subset of the

existing suspense account products will be

retained. The contractual requirements for

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information and deriving a cash account and the

But the system process to harvest the

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two should correspond.

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transaction information was not working properly. There were gaps in it and Fujitsu, to be honest -- I mean, a lot of these integrity controls should have been in the design from the outset. I remember a conversation -- it's almost -- a conversation at the time with Ruth Holleran, the business assurance manager, saying it's almost as if they didn't realise it was an accounting system. 10

So the idea of this check was to trap faults in that harvesting process. Now, if you go into the third agreement, I forget the exact title of it --

14 Q. Supplemental.

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15 A. -- the Third Supplemental, and you go deep into 16 the detailed terms of it there's this wonderful 17 statement "An inaccurate cash account is not 18 an inaccurate cash account (non-data error)", 19 and if you drill down into what that means, is 20 that in a limited number of circumstances, there 21 are cash accounts -- the cash account committed 22 by the office -- which are wrong, and it does 23 list the number of circumstances from which 24 those can arise.

> Now, clearly, those shouldn't count in 125

targetry terms against Fujitsu. And I can't prove this because there is not a complete audit trail but I believe that may indeed be part of what the 0.6 allowance was for: faults that were not Fujitsu's fault.

The second point buried in there around situations where Fujitsu have identified a fault but haven't been able to implement the fix. As a result of that, there's a sort of a side agreement that says, "But you can supply the correct information manually". And again, quite clearly, it -- I mean, that would still come up in the comparison of the derived cash account and the cash account as a fault, but it's quite clear that that shouldn't count as part of Fujitsu missing the target because they have corrected it -- corrected the derived stream, albeit manually.

So I think the 0.6 per cent was not a relaxation of the target. I think there's plenty of stuff deep in that Third Supplemental Agreement which suggests that these were let for --

Now, this point here, is something completely different. This is about preventing 126

- 1 offices from using the suspense account for 2 reasons that it shouldn't be used.
- 3 Q. Well, let's just go back to what you were saying 4 about the various agreements. What they 5 certainly do is recognise there's the 6 possibility of unknown errors arising, don't 7 they?
- 8 A. Clearly, with the term "incorrect cash accounts 9 which are not data error", it not only accepts 10 that there can be errors in the cash account but 11 it actually lists down the reasons why those 12 occur.
- 13 Q. So given that, wasn't it more fair to allow 14 postmasters a place to put discrepancies if they 15 thought they were unknown, if they couldn't 16 understand why they were being caused?
- 17 A. Well, at that time in Legacy Horizon, they did 18 have a place to put them, which was the suspense 19 account. It wasn't until IMPACT came along that 20 that was -- that area started to be closed down.
- 21 Q. Okay. Well, in those circumstances, do you 22 think it would have been fair and appropriate to 23 do a proper investigation of what was going on 24
- with the usage of suspense accounts, how much 25 money was going into them, whether it had grown 127

- 1 or decreased since Legacy Horizon was 2 introduced, et cetera, before introducing the 3 removal of the suspense account facility?
- 4 Well, I -- you know, that wasn't -- I mean the 5 people driving these requirements were the 6 people from TP and from the Network, that wasn't 7 my -- you know, this is a reflection of the 8 requirements that were handed --
- 9 **Q.** Do you think it would have been fair?
- Um ... I think, you know, I think when you've --10 11 when you want to get rid of something, then you 12 should understand the implications, both 13 positive and negative, of the actions that 14 you're taking. And, I mean, one of the things 15 that often, I think, happens with system 16 developments is that, you know, this change is 17 introduced because it will reduce this level 18 of -- pool of error over here, and then 19 implement and then suddenly you find this level 20 of error has appeared over here as 21 a consequence.

So, yes, as good practice, you would think through the changes that you are making and make sure that you fully understand all the implications of them.

- 1 **Q.** Did it perhaps suit Post Office to remove the
- 2 sums from the suspense accounts in this way,
- 3 because that, in fact, removes an indicator that
- 4 Horizon may have been generating unknown errors?
- 5 $\,$ **A.** Sorry, can you repeat that again, just make sure
- 6 I've got --
- 7 Q. Well, if money is going into the suspense
- 8 account it rather highlights, doesn't it, that
- 9 postmasters are saying there's unknown errors
- 10 here?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. If that money is no longer going into the
- 13 suspense account, you've no longer got that
- 14 indicator?
- 15 A. Yeah, but you would still expect that if there
- 16 was an unexplained error, that the subpostmaster
- would pick up the phone to the helpline and to
- 18 pursue it through that route.
- 19 Q. But then it gets buried, doesn't it, in the
- 20 helpline and you haven't got to be a big stark
- 21 figure saying, "Here it is in the suspense
- 22 accounts"?
- 23 A. Um, well, I mean, even if the -- as I understand
- 24 it, and I'm not hugely familiar with the
- 25 processes within TP at the time, but I think
 - 129
- 1 A. Mandy Talbot.
- 2 Q. So Mandy passed on to you what she thought
- 3 Mr Castleton's solicitor had advised him of?
- 4 **A**. Yes

- 5 Q. Did that strike you as unprofessional at all?
- 6 A. I can't add to that. I mean, I wouldn't know.
 - I'm not a solicitor or a barrister and, you
- 8 know, I don't know your professional standards.
- 9 Q. Did she mention, for example, that, in fact,
- 10 Mr Castleton was now acting for himself?
- 11 A. Oh, yes, I was aware of that. I was aware that
- 12 he -- you know, his solicitor went and that he
- 13 conducted matters himself thereafter, yes.
- 14 Q. Was there any suggestion or thought, do you
- think, from her, when she'd relayed this
- 16 information to you, that Mr Castleton may have
- 17 run out of money because of the Post Office's --
- 18 A. I don't recall that. I don't recall that. But
- 19 that doesn't mean, you know, she didn't say
- 20 that. I mean, we're talking about some years
- 21 ago. So I don't remember every word in every
- 22 conversation. That's what I recall, and
- 23 I wouldn't have got that from any other source,
- 24 than from Mandy.
- 25 MS PAGE: Thank you. Those are my questions.

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- 1 even if the subpostmaster has to make it good,
- 2 there was a process for registering the fact
- 3 that the subpostmaster didn't agree with the
- 4 fact that they'd had to bring it to account
- 5 themselves.
- 6 Q. Can I just turn to one more small issue before
- 7 I finish, and it's relating to the slides that
- 8 evidence already had a look at, and it's
- 9 POL00090575, page 6. What I'm just going to
- 10 focus in on, if I may, is the two sort of
- 11 sections in the middle there:
- 12 "Believe Castleton's solicitor examined
- 13 audit trail and concluded that there was no
- 14 substance to Castleton's claim and advised him
- 15 to settle.

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- "Castleton sacked solicitor and proceeds."
- 17 Now, in actual fact, and fairly obviously,
- 18 you can't have known what advice he received
- 19 from his solicitor, can you?
- 20 A. No, no.
- 21 Q. What I'm interested in is how you came to
- 22 believe this, where did this come from, this
- 23 idea that he had been advised because his
- solicitor thought there was no substance in his
- 25 claim?

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Questioned by MR MOLONEY

- 2 MR MOLONEY: Mr Smith, my name is Mr Moloney and
- 3 I represent a number of subpostmasters.
 - I have really just one issue to ask you
- 5 about if I may. Do you remember Ms Kennedy
- 6 asking you this morning about the counter
- 7 application integrity report to do with
- 8 transactions being recorded twice?
- 9 A. The Derby incident, yes.
- 10 Q. Yes. I hope I recount your evidence correctly
- 11 but you said you couldn't remember receiving
- this report; is that right?
- 13 A. No, I couldn't -- I don't remember seeing that
- 14 report but I was aware of the Derby incident.
- 15 Q. Forgive me for this but may I just take you to
- one document to show that you did receive it.
- 17 A. Okay, yes.
- 18 Q. It's a document that was disclosed to Core
- 19 Participants yesterday, and it's FUJ -- yes,
- 20 I didn't even need to read it out, thank you
- very much, it's on the screen now.
- 22 It's FUJ00142176, and we see that this is 23 an email from Alan D'Alvarez on 10 March 2010
- 24 and it's to you, and also copied are Mike Wood
- 25 and Gavin Bounds.

A. Mm-hm. 1 key was still there. 2 Q. It's: 2 And that, to me, is sort of a classic case 3 3 "David, of something that, you know, we've changed here 4 "Please find attached the report from the 4 a process, the two keys are still there, you 5 5 review undertaken as a result of transactions should test to make sure that the process 6 being recorded twice." 6 filters out someone incorrectly pressing the 7 7 That's: "Settle" key after "Fast Cash". 8 "[Regards] 8 Q. Thank you, Mr Smith. Can I just press you 9 "Alan D'Alvarez." 9 slightly on that in this way: you obviously were 10 A. Yes. 10 concerned about this. 11 Q. Okay. Does this -- and it may not, but just in 11 Mm. 12 order to be clear, out of an abundance of 12 This was something important, it wasn't a minor 13 caution, does this assist your memory in 13 issue, it's something that had to be dealt 14 relation to this report at all? 14 A. Mm. 15 A. No, it doesn't but I think I, you know, in 15 16 response to Ms Kennedy's questions, I said to 16 -- and you will see that this is a report from 17 you this did concern me because at the root of 17 the review that was undertaken as a result of 18 this incident was something which, in my 18 transactions being recorded twice? 19 opinion, others may disagree, ought to have been 19 A. Mm-hm. 20 covered in negative testing, ie there was 20 Given your concern about this, did you 21 a Legacy Horizon process that required the 21 understand that this was a review that would be 22 transaction being settled by using both the 22 independent of those people who were making 23 "Fast Cash" key and the "Settle" key, and that 23 decisions about this or was it something that 24 24 was changed under Horizon Online to just using had been made by a review, essentially conducted 25 the "Fast Cash" key, even though the "Settle" 25 by the people who were responsible for this in 133 134 1 anv event? 1 with the Computer Weekly article in 2009, and so 2 A. I can't recall who the people were who carried 2 on -- whether, from your recollection, around 3 3 this time POL -- Post Office Limited -- or out the event but I think there's a full 4 4 Fujitsu ever considered input from an external description in the report of the steps taken to 5 correct the error and I think that, you know, in 5 third-party expert? 6 all honesty, that's the most important thing. 6 The email that Ms Kennedy pulled up earlier --7 We've identified the root cause, we've gone in, 7 From Ms Lowther? 8 we've fixed it, we've re-tested it and we've 8 -- where I wrote to Gavin Bounds, I did make the 9 proven that the error couldn't occur again. 9 point there that, you know, I think I said in, 10 That's what I'd be looking for in that report. 10 you know, why wouldn't I ask for an independent 11 I mean, I wouldn't have thought that this 11 external report if I don't hear of actions from 12 12 particular issue in itself would have called for Fujitsu that are going to change the game that 13 a fully independent view. Had a report been 13 we're experiencing here. 14 produced that didn't satisfactorily outline root 14 Q. Yes. cause, correction and what have you, then one 15 15 A. So, I mean, I was very close. I mean, this 16 might say "Look, I need someone, a fresh pair of 16 asking for an independent report is not a card 17 eyes, to come and look at this incident". 17 you play every day but I had played it three 18 Q. Thank you. Just on that now, obviously you were 18 times previously during my tenure. And, 19 concerned with issues of integrity, and the 19 generally speaking within Fujitsu -- with 20 subject line of this email is "Review of system 20 a technical issue, you wouldn't get them getting 21 integrity", as we can see on the screen. Can 21 a third party coming in but what you would get 22 you recall whether, given the ongoing concerns 22 is people from the very top of the organisation

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about integrity during Horizon Legacy and in

Horizon Online and, of course, with the recent

adverse publicity -- or recent to then, in 2010,

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with no current connection to the Fujitsu

was going on.

account, brought in as a team to examine what

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1		And that sort of thing was taken very, very
2		seriously in Fujitsu. I think they have a term
3		"red light issue", and it would mean that also
4		any recommendations in that report would get
5		a high priority in terms of being met,
6		particularly when it came to resources. So
7		that's what I was you know, if you don't show
8		me that you've got some actions here to, you
9		know, significantly change what's going on, then
10		I need you to do this.
11	Q.	Just from your recollection again, if I may, as
12		the last question, did anyone within POL ever
13		suggest to you that a forensic review of Horizon
14		was needed? Away from those emails that we've
15		seen, did anyone ever suggest that to you?
16	A.	No.
17	MR	MOLONEY: All right. Thank you very much,
18		Mr Smith.
19		Questioned by MR WHITTAM
20	MR	WHITTAM: Mr Smith, Richard Whittam on behalf of
21		Fujitsu.
22		Do you accept that any system as complex as
23		Horizon was bound to have some level of bugs,
24		errors and defects?
25	A.	Absolutely, absolutely.
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1 Q. Their detection could probably fall into three 2 categories: those that were detected, so found; 3 those that were at any particular point in time 4 undetected; and those that might be introduced 5 at a later stage by way of an update, a fix or 6 something like that. 7 A. Yes.

8 Q. That was therefore something to look for, those that might be introduced by bugs -- sorry, fixes 9 10 to pre-existing bugs?

11 Yes. Α.

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12 Q. I'd just like to return to your second statement please if we may, WITN05290200, page 5, please. 13 14 We can see there paragraph 12:

> "The ultimate decision whether to release new software into the network was a business decision. This was taken at a Release Authorisation Board which I normally chaired, although very much in a non-voting capacity, my role being to lead the meeting through the process. The Fujitsu release would be just one input as invariably other systems changes would be involved and business as usual departments would also have deliverables that required 'green' [light] status for the release to be

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approved. The practice was to hold rehearsal meetings in advance of the decision point and thus surface early any potential no-go issues. This would include the progress with testing of Horizon."

If we went to, please, another document POL00030283, thank you, and we can see that's a "Release Note -- Deferred PEAKs List" with a reference number CS/REN/032, and we can see this is 13 October 2005. The "S80 Release Note -- deferred PEAKs List -- Counter", details what it is and the abstract:

"This document details those PEAKs that are outstanding at S80."

Although it's a Fujitsu document, we can see that its external distribution, included Marc Reardon and Jamie Dixon, who were people at the Post Office, weren't they?

19 A. Yeah, yeah.

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20 Q. If we just go through, please, to page 5 of the 21 document. The "Introduction":

> "This document is an addendum to the S80 Release Note detailing those PEAKs, which remain outstanding once S80 has been implemented. This document only includes PEAKs that impact on the

counter. Data Centre PinICLs are detailed 1 within a document", and it gives the reference 2 3

> It then describes the PEAKs as either being PEAKs which were outstanding at S60, S70 or S75 and had previously been targeted at S80 or raised in S80 testing and agreed to be deferred.

We can see, if we just go to the next page, so we can just follow the document through, please, there was no table of PEAKs deferred from previous releases. But if we can, please, just go to page 7, we can see there that this is the table of PEAKs identified during the S80 testing. First one listed there, I won't read the number out, but we can see it's a stock unit trial balance report differing from the layout specified in that it's missing a blank line, and that was the first one to give it some context.

If we could go through to page 13, please. Thank you.

The first one listed there has a number, PC0116293. It relates to an imbalance warning clearing automatically:

"If there is an imbalance in an SU then a warning is displayed at rollover. This 140

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warning has a 'Continue' button and should not be cleared until the clerk presses the button, but it actually clears by itself. So if you're not looking at the screen you may miss seeing this message."

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The analysis and proposal is that it's not a new problem at S80 and the problem of SU imbalance is not a regular occurrence. Also, the message tablet, that's displayed for the duration of time it takes to print the report, it's thought at this time was low, and it's going to be dealt with at a future release.

I'm not going to go through the other entries in it but what was your attitude towards a document like that when you were considering release?

17 A. So as far as -- so if we go to these two 18 different processes. The acceptance and, by 19 contractual definition, low severity errors are 20 not an issue for acceptance. Medium severity, 21 usually there is a maximum number of medium 22 severity faults that can be tolerated. The 23 usual practice with all medium severity faults 24 was that there would be a workaround. So it 25 would be possible to work round the problems 141

these things. And I mean, many of them, like
the first one, which were of no consequence at
all, these things would be handed over to
service management, and the Service Management
Team would -- so at the point of rolling out the
solution into the network, control would pass
from my area, project programme management,
effectively, to service management for them to
follow up

10 Q. So somebody within the Post Office, once things
11 like this were drawn to their attention, would
12 be monitoring them, checking them, following
13 them up?

14 A. They would have them on their radar screen and 15 decide whether they were worth following up or 16 not. I mean, sometimes some of these things 17 were brought through my process as part of 18 change control, and one of our challenges, very 19 much, was almost a business case challenge. So 20 what's the benefit of actually fixing this? Because very often there was -- as with, you 21 22 know, reinsert a blank line -- it's very 23 difficult to prove that there was any benefit 24 from making the change at all.

Q. The issue you've told us about in relation to 143 1 created by the fault until such time as the 2 fault was fixed. And then high severity faults, 3 which prevented --

Now, high/medium/low is reference to business impact, and the view of low items was -- I mean, I think the first one you referred to was a missing blank line on a report.

9 **Q.** Absolutely.

10 And those would be treated as low. Very often 11 they weren't fixed at all. Some were. And they 12 wouldn't -- low items would not feature in 13 acceptance, and they wouldn't feature in release 14 authorisation. Release authorisation, you would 15 get a full list of the medium items with the 16 appropriate workaround. And that applied not 17 just to Horizon, but it would apply to any other 18 systems that were involved, or indeed the 19 readiness of a business unit. You could have 20 a high severity business unit fault. 21 Q. Would you, at any stage, follow up whether any

21 **Q.** Would you, at any stage, follow up whether any fix had been put in place?

23 A. I wouldn't have done personally, no.

24 **Q.** Why not?

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25 **A.** Because it was -- I mean, there were hundreds of 142

1 Mandy Talbot and her concern that all Post 2 Office, civil and criminal litigation might 3 collapse if things weren't resolved, was brought 4 to your attention in November, the following 5 month of the same year. Did that trigger any 6 concern about whether any fixes had actually 7 been put in place, and there was any system 8 within the Post Office to check?

No, because the -- you know, what Mandy brought to me was the question where what was happening in the court -- as I understand it, the expert the jointly appointed expert was saying this could have happened, changed the position of the Post Office. It's now incumbent upon the Post Office to prove that that event didn't happen, and that was the question that I was addressing. And as it happened, there was an existing process in place which was used in criminal cases via the security team, which I referred, in effect, Mandy to.

And she took that forward. I think she convened meetings. I didn't personally take part in those meetings. Keith Baines, my commercial manager, did. Because the action for my area would have been to put in place the

1 commercial arrangements with Fujitsu to make 1 joint expert reported to the board was actually 2 more opportunities to access the database 2 correct. All right? It's all about how do we 3 3 available. deal with knocking down his thesis, so to speak. MR WHITTAM: Thank you. 4 4 I'm just wondering whether it's fair of me 5 5 Sir, may I just have one moment? to have gained the impression that in 2004, when 6 I'm grateful, sir. That's all I ask. 6 this was unfolding, the Post Office simply would 7 7 MS KENNEDY: Chair, I think that completes the not accept that Horizon could have caused the 8 8 questions from the Core Participants. shortfall but, further, did nothing 9 9 independently to assess whether in fact that was Oh, Chair, you're muted again. 10 Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS 10 possible. 11 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I was anxious for there not to be 11 The report that the independent expert produced 12 extraneous noise, so I keep muting myself. 12 was, in my view, deficient. This Inquiry has 13 Mr Smith, just following what Mr Whittam was 13 taken a great deal of -- put a great deal of 14 asking you about what in effect, I think, he was 14 effort, in terms of making sure it gets the 15 talking about was the Cleveleys case, yes? 15 right people to produce the evidence. The 16 16 expert didn't do that in doing his research. Α. 17 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: You deal with that, and I don't 17 I think, on the Fujitsu side, he spoke to 18 want to bring it up, but you deal with that at 18 someone from the helpdesk. You'd expect, in 19 paragraphs 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 of your second 19 asking questions about whether the Horizon 20 witness statement. All right? You set out your 20 System could create problems in the balance, for 21 understanding of what was going on. I read it 21 him to talk to someone like a Gareth Jenkins, 22 22 carefully and, if I've missed it, I'm sure and he didn't do that. 23 Ms Kennedy or someone else will contradict me, 23 Equally, on the Post Office side, the people 24 24 but I can't find in those paragraphs he spoke to were at a fairly -- were at a level 25 a recognition of the possibility that what the 25 where I wouldn't have expected them to be able 146 145 position?" And, as I've said, the only thing 1 to provide the kind of inputs he would have 1 that I think we could do in that situation was 2 needed to make the judgement that he came to. 2 3 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So that I can be clear, are you 3 to call for the audit file. 4 saying that you personally read the expert 4 In this particular case with Cleveleys, 5 report and reached the conclusion that it was 5 because I think it dated back to 2001, the 6 flawed in material --6 retention period for the audit file was --7 A. Yes. Because the expert didn't speak to --7 I forget the number of years, but it wasn't the 8 8 didn't speak to the people with the kind of seven years that it was subsequently changed to. 9 knowledge necessary for him to come to the 9 So the audit file was no longer available. 10 conclusion that he reached. 10 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. Rather than try and 11 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Was that viewpoint put to the 11 work out the detail, which may not be 12 12 judge who determined the case? Because, as productive, am I right in gaining the 13 I understand it, the Post Office lost the case. 13 impression, then, that your view of the expert A. I think it -- at the time I was involved, it had 14 evidence produced in that case was that it was 14 15 already gone past that. 15 inadequate, and therefore could be ignored, 16 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Sorry, as I've understood your 16 going forward, provided certain other evidence 17 witness statement, you were being asked to come 17 like the audit file was produced? 18 up with suggestions as to how you could counter 18 **A**. Yes. I mean the -- bearing in mind that the

the expert report. At the stage I think you 19 expert witness in this case was the Post were consulted, or that's the impression 20 Office's expert witness, because the Post I gained from --21 Office, at a very junior level, and the defence, A. I think it was more general that -- sorry for 22 agreed a joint appointment of this witness. So interrupting, sir. I think it was more general 23 I think, for the Post Office having agreed the than that, the question that was asked. It was 24 appointment of the expert witness, to then sort "Is there anything we can do, given this 25 of say well, the expert witness got it all 147 148

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1	wrong, I don't think is a very credible position	1	MS KENNEDY: We are, yes. We have Mr Stephen
2	for the Post Office to take.	2	Grayston on Monday.
3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, no doubt by examining the	3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So I'll see you at 10.00 on
4	file we can discover whether that's a wholly	4	Monday. Thank you.
5	accurate characterisation of what occurred.	5	(2.48 pm)
6	Do you know, Mr Smith, that an expert	6	(The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am
7	witness, whether appointed under the direction	7	on Monday morning)
8	of the court or by the agreement of the parties,	8	
9	has a primary duty to the court?	9	
10	A. Not particularly, no, sir.	10	
11	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: You didn't know that?	11	
12	A. No.	12	
13	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Good. But you would have	13	
14	expected that the solicitor of the Post Office	14	
15	would have known?	15	
16	A. Absolutely.	16	
17	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. Yes. Thank you very	17	
18	much.	18	
19	Well, thanks very much for coming this	19	
20	afternoon and this morning to answer all these	20	
21	questions. I think that probably sees an end to	21	
22	it now, since I usually have the last word.	22	
23	MS KENNEDY: Yes.	23	
24	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Unusually, Ms Kennedy, we are	24	
25	sitting on Monday, are we not?	25	
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