

Royal Mail Group

ROYAL MAIL GROUP – CONFIDENTIAL Record of Taped Interview

Short Descriptive Notes
Record of Taped Interview Summary
Full Taped Interview Transcript

(delete as applicable)

Person interviewed: ELENA HERD (EH)
Place of Interview: INTERVIEW ROOM AT STOCKPORT
BRANCH OFFICE

Exhibit No:
Number of pages: 19
Signature of interviewer producing record

Date of Interview: 7.7.11
Tape reference no.: 074346
Interviewing Officers: ANDREW WISE (AW)

Time commenced: 11.30
Time concluded: 12.14
Duration of Interview: 44 MINUTES
STEVEN BRADSHAW (SB)

Other persons present:

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		Usual introductions made, caution administered and explained. Forms GS001 and GS003 completed. EH declines the presence of a Post Office friend or Solicitor.
7.55	AW	So on the 16 th June there was a number of rejected labels that were put through the system where the actual label was put on an item, what can you tell me about them?
	EH	I rejected the label to cover up a loss that I had in my stock.
	AW	Ok so in front of me now I've got photocopies of 3 items which we'll call AW3, AW4 and AW5 and also a rejected label summary for that day which is AW6 and the three photocopies of packets that were posted by yourself or by a customer through your position and yourself, they were done by user name EHE001, can you confirm that that is yourself?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	EH	Yes.
	AW	So these three items can you just explain how you've put them through the system for me please?
	EH	I did a normal transaction and spoilt, well rejected a label and finished it to stamps.
	AW	And what did you then do with the label?
9.38	EH	Put it on the package.
	AW	What did you do with the money for the value of the label?
	EH	It stayed in the stock.
	AW	And what was the reason for that?
	EH	Like I just told you I tried to cover up a loss that I had on my stock.
	AW	Ok. So can you just tell me how you account for the postage stamps that go through the system?
10.17	EH	Reverse the stamps.
	AW	And when would you do that?
	EH	I don't know.
	AW	Ok so on the date of the 16 th , on the spoilt postage label report which is AW6 there's a total of 1,2,3,4,5,6, 6 that was rejected by yourself, 3 of which the photocopy identifies the label number against the report so did you treat those 6 items the same way?
	EH	No I don't spoil every label.
	EH	Well just looking at this report that we printed off the Horizon system which details all your transactions for the 16 th this will be called AW7, this details all the postage labels that were rejected for that day along with a stamp ordinary transaction that's the same amount as the postage labels where you've settled to stamps afterwards so that's happened on 9 occasions on the 16 th so were all them 9 occasions you

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		rejected the postage labels settling it to stamps and still using the label on the system?
11.52	EH	I don't know.
11.57	SB	On the 16 th right Andrew's pointed out to the 6 right and that's when it's first come to the attention of your Branch Manager and the Assistant Branch Manager, a further 3 had gone off from then, now the 16 th isn't that far, that long ago it's only a couple of weeks now it's a fairly simple question of how many labels you actually done that day and what you've rejected?
	EH	I don't remember.
	SB	Ok you don't remember what you rejected right so just to take you a step back before Andrew goes on the to labels, he said, Andrew asked you a question about what you'd done with the stamps and you said you reversed the stamps out ok and then he then asked you when did you do that yeah?
	EH	At some point during the day.
12.52	SB	Ok before you went home, after you done the labels?
	EH	Before I went home.
	SB	Before you went home and how did you know how much to reverse out in the stamps?
	EH	Declared the stamps.
13.12	SB	And the stamps showed you.
	EH	Showed over.
	SB	Showed over so you took the difference between what you should have to what you took out?
	EH	Yeah.
	SB	Ok and these were to cover a loss yeah?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	EH	Yeah.
13.43	SB	In the stock. How much was the loss?
	EH	36 something.
	SB	36 something loss?
	EH	Yeah 30 odd.
	SB	Is that the only loss on this day 'cos we're just talking about the 16 th now?
	EH	Yeah.
	SB	So you had a loss that day of £36.00 and you reversed these, rejected these labels to cover that loss?
14.20	EH	Yeah.
	AW	Right so on the 16 th these were rejected in FF stock which it shows on that particular report there and it gives you the stock unit ID which were all done by yourself EHE001 on FF stock and the till ID is the positions, that's position number 6 so this £30 loss when did that occur in that stock unit?
	EH	I don't know.
	AW	That day the day before?
	EH	Probably that day 'cos I wasn't in it the day before.
14.55	AW	How did you realise there come to be a loss in that stock unit?
	EH	Declared the cash.
	AW	At what time did you do that?
	EH	Don't know (indistinct) work.
	AW	You see FF stock was balanced the day before and it actually balanced so it couldn't be previous to that.
	EH	No.
	AW	So, and also FF was balanced afterwards and it balanced so there was no

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		<p>other loss in there for that particular day but if there was a loss, if you were trying to recover money for a loss, that loss would show up when it was balanced after you were suspended.</p> <p>EH (indistinct) 'Cos I reversed the stamps it didn't show.</p> <p>15.58 AW When somebody else balanced that stock unit if you're saying you've lost £30 then that loss would show up when the next person balanced it because they would correct any stamp discrepancies, they would declare the cash and the loss would show up so why did the loss not show up after you'd left if there was a loss in there?</p> <p>EH Because I've done the cash, I've declared the cash and the stamps before.</p> <p>AW I don't know what you mean by before?</p> <p>EH Before I was suspended when we were doing work.</p> <p>AW Right so when you say you declared the cash and the stock before you were suspended, did it balance then?</p> <p>EH I think so yeah.</p> <p>AW Well we'll just leave the 16th for the moment then and we'll go back to the 15th we'll call this identification AW8, this is the 15th June this is in a different stock unit this is in a different counter position, this is still yourself as the user ID 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 rejected postage labels we've got on that day on the 15th all with the corresponding postage ordinary entry and then later in the day a reversal of postage ordinaries so can you explain what had happened on the 15th in this stock unit?</p>
17.53	EH	Did I put all them labels on the packages?
	AW	Well you've got corresponding postage ordinary entries to support the amount, the label was rejected and you're reversing out stamp ordinary later in the day for similar amounts so that would indicate that yes you've put rejected labels on all them packages. Can you explain that?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	SB	Elena I know it's difficult but it's fairly straight forward there. You've already conferred that EHE001 is your user ID and as far as we're aware nobody else knows your password is that correct?
	EH	Correct.
	SB	So if nobody knows your password only you can open up the system, all transactions performed on EHE001 must have been performed by yourself during them days. Now only you know the majority of rejected labels what you've done with them right. What we're saying based on the evidence in front of us is that you've rejected a label, put it on a packet, put that packet through the post, the customer's gone away paying whatever the amount of postage is, you've probably give him a receipt and in order to get the balance you've taken the money out of the till, in effect stolen the money.
19.44	EH	I didn't take the money out of the till.
	SB	So Andrew's asked you a number of times to explain why the money's isn't in the till, can you give us an explanation now?
	EH	As I said I tried to cover up a loss I have a loss.
	AW	Is this another loss or is this the same loss?
	EH	Another one it's another stock.
20.08	AW	How much was that loss for?
	EH	I don't remember.
	AW	And when did that loss appear in the stock unit?
	EH	The day before.
	AW	The day before so you see they total around £50 or £60 worth of rejected labels for that day and you reversed out £62.00 worth of rejected labels.
	EH	There are other reasons, well there are other reasons to reverse stamps.
	AW	We're not disputing that but the pattern falls where you reject a label, you

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		<p>put it through as ordinary stamps and you reverse out later in the day.</p> <p>Now when I've gone through this report if there's no corresponding stamp entry because we do accept that labels do reject and can happen to anybody but there wouldn't be a corresponding stamp entry because you would reprint the label and there are cases where you do that where you just reprint the label and you don't put the stamps through so them I've not shown because they look like genuine transactions. These transactions follow the pattern of you putting the label through, rejecting it, settling to stamps, putting the label on the package and then reversing the stamps out later. So all the ones I'm showing you on this report for the 16th, 15th June follow that pattern and they total around £60 worth of rejected labels that we think you've taken that money for out the till.</p>
21.43	EH	I don't take the money out of the till.
	SB	Can you explain to us then why you're having this daily loss of about £50 or £60 then?
	EH	I can't.
	AW	So have you had losses previous to that?
	EH	Yeah.
	AW	And how much are these losses for how regular?
	EH	I don't know, sometimes.
	AW	Is it every day?
	EH	No.
	AW	And how long has it been going on for?
	EH	A few weeks.
	AW	So for a few weeks you've been having losses in your stock unit and to try and recover that money you've been putting postage labels through rejecting them putting through as stamps so that in effect balances the

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		loss that you've been having that you say has been happening for a few weeks.
23.02	SB	Did you pick on any particular label?
23.19	EH	Special.
	SB	Why, why specials?
	EH	Don't know.
	SB	You see I think you're just lying to us Elena I just think you're just, whatever you're saying you're just saying anything that comes into your mind and you're not answering the questions and you think that by just giving us any little old answer we'll just say fine. Unfortunately what Andrew's shown you needs an explanation and you know just to remind you of the caution you know if the matter does go to a Court and you give a different explanation they're going to wonder why you didn't tell us the truth at the beginning. So would you like to tell us the truth now why you rejected these labels and used them 'cos I don't believe for one minute and I'm certain Andrew doesn't believe for one minute that you were having a daily loss of £60 so you just thought, well I'll reject a few labels and leave the money, I don't believe that, Andrew doesn't believe that so would you like to tell us the truth now?
	EH	That's the truth.
	AW	Ok we'll move onto the 14 th June then which we'll call this report AW9 which again lists the rejected labels for EHE001 user ID, again EE stock unit till number 7 so for the 14 th June we've got 1, 2, 3,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 rejected labels following the same pattern where you reject the label, you sell stamps through then there's a reversal of postage stamps later in the day. What is the explanation for that particular day?
25.24	EH	Same.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	AW	The same so when you say a few weeks you've been having these losses can you be more precise with that? So this happened on the 16 th June, 2 weeks before that, that's a few weeks that would put it to the beginning of June is that around the time where the losses started?
	EH	Yeah I think it's kind of snowballed out of my control.
	AW	So from the beginning of June this snowballed out of your control. How did it snowball out of control?
	EH	I don't know, I don't know where the losses came.
	SB	Just to go back again you see these losses that are snowballing out of control on a daily basis, when did you first notice each day that you were suddenly having a loss and how much it was? Right what time do you normally come in for work?
	EH	In the morning.
	SB	Yeah right so you come in the morning if we say the 16 th June what time did you come in for work that day?
	EH	8.50
	SB	8.50 so you come in for 9 o'clock when the branch opens and you carried on working ok. When did you notice that you were having a loss, when did you know that your money was down?
	EH	I was paranoid that I was putting transaction correctly.
	SB	Sorry?
27.13	EH	I was afraid I was putting transaction correctly a couple of weeks ago, well not a couple yeah a few weeks ago I gave this woman £200 extra you know just go to clear it off the stock paid it out.
	AW	Which stock was that in?
	EH	5.
	AW	EE or FF?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	EH	EE.
	AW	EE so you had that in EE you had another one in FF on the 15 th , on the 16 th , now the next report well the next 2 for the 9 th and the 8 th June which we shall call AW10 and 11, now these ones happen in the Bureau de Change stock unit so you've just told us you had a £200 loss from giving too much money to a customer in EE but you're rejecting labels in FF and you're rejecting labels in the Bureau de Change stock unit, again over these 2 days well 9 rejected label transactions following the same pattern, you reject the label you put stamps ordinary through and there's reversals against postage transactions. Over these 2 days the 8 th and 9 th June also the 7 th June which is AW12, the 6 th June which is AW13 all done in Bureau de Change stock unit. So now you're across 3 different stock units so your loss of £200 in EE.
	EH	No that has got nothing to do with Bureau.
	AW	But you're rejecting labels in the Bureau stock unit. If your loss was in EE why are you rejecting labels in the Bureau stock unit? You see what's happening here Elena you're telling us one thing and we're going back and disproving that so in effect you're lying to us, you're telling us one story we're moving on disproving that and you're lying again and again. All this is doing is picking holes in your little story that you're telling us. Did you take the money out of Bureau de change stock unit for these rejected labels?
29.54	EH	No.
	AW	Why are you rejecting labels in the Bureau de Change stock unit if your loss is in EE?
	EH	'Cos Bureau had a loss Bureau always has a loss I was supposed to balance it that week probably.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	AW	So are you the only person that works out of Bureau?
	EH	No it's a shared stock.
	AW	So you suspect there's a loss in that stock unit that a number of people.
	EH	Don't suspect it's, you never know that it's a loss.
	AW	So was that loss your fault?
	EH	No not necessarily.
	SB	Elena can I just take you back to finding out these losses. I accept you know EE stock you said you give £200 to a customer too much, can you remember what that date was?
	EH	Saturday.
	SB	Saturday when in May, June?
	EH	I can't remember.
	SB	Ok. Just to go back so if that's in EE that would in theory be cleared up wouldn't it because on the 16 th June you were working out of FF stock so let's just concentrate on the 16 th June first. You come into work at 9 o'clock you got your stock out and you started serving customers right. How did you know you had a loss in that stock that day to prompt you to reject labels and keep the postage whether you've taken it out of the drawer or whether you've left it in the drawer, how did you know you had a loss. You're sitting there serving, was it busy that day?
31.43	EH	Fairly.
	SB	Fairly busy not a minute to yourself. What time did you go on your break?
	EH	I don't remember exact time.
	SB	Ok irrespective of what time you went on your break, how long did you have for your break?
	EH	15 minutes.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
32.44	SB	15 minutes right so just tell us right, the time's coming up so we'll give you a break at 10.45 right. You finish serving a customer round about 10.45 what do you do, what did you do for your break?
	EH	Went downstairs had a coffee.
	SB	Right so what did you do on the counter, you'd finish serving your customer it's 10.45 it's time for your break? Ok we'll help you along the way did you lock your drawers?
	EH	No.
	SB	Right you left the drawers open?
	EH	Well.
	SB	Yeah you left the drawers there ok?
	EH	Closed them.
	SB	Closed them ok. The screen did you lock the screen?
	EH	I will have done yes.
	SB	So you've served the customer, closed the drawers, locked the screen and got up and walked away?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	Yeah. 15 minutes later you come back you put your password back in the screen and you called your next customer opened the drawers and carried on serving yeah?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	What time is your lunch? Can't remember?
	EH	Can't remember exact times.
	SB	Ok so we'll make your lunch 1.15. How long did you get for your lunch?
	EH	Half an hour.
	SB	Half an hour so 1.15 you're serving a customer you finished them, it's now time for your lunch what did you do the same?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	EH	Same.
	SB	Closed the drawers locked the screen go away on your lunch come back at 1.45 put your password back in the screen called your next customer yeah and carried on serving. Do you get an afternoon break?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	Yes so we'll make your afternoon break 3.15, 15 minutes again?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	Did we do exactly the same thing finished serving your customer?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	Closed the drawers?
	EH	Yes.
33.57	SB	Locked the screen?
	EH	Yeah.
	SB	Go on your break, come back, password in, open the drawers, ask for the next customer yeah is that what you done on that day?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	And that what you've done most days?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	Ok what I can't work out now is how you knew you had the loss because you haven't at any time you said you're busy, how did you know you had a loss? Have you got an explanation 'cos you haven't done a cash dec you haven't done anything else 'til the end of the night and we can get data and we can find out when your cash decs are done as well, we can find out when cash declarations are done if required so as you've gone on your breaks and you didn't do any count your money or do anything, print off any Horizon reports, how did you know you had a loss on the 16 th to start taking money? You didn't have a loss did you?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	EH	I did have a loss.
36.55	SB	I don't believe you 'cos we've just gone through one day of working life of what you normally do and there is no way in there that you would know you would have loss or you've got to tell me you gave a customer too much money. You see if everything was above board and you had an explanation you would be speaking to us you wouldn't be sitting there in silence and as Andrew said to you every time you're asked the question you're giving us an answer and we're picking holes in your answer and then we're back to square one and you're just telling us the same old same old, I've had a loss and this is what I've done but we've just gone through your daily, your day, 'cos all that happened after you've had your afternoon break or before your afternoon break is you got suspended because other things come to the fore and they checked your stock and there was no loss in the stock was there so how did you have a loss, know you had a loss on that day to enable you to do rejected labels, steal the money off the customer 'cos that's what you've done 'cos they think they're paying for the service and the fact is they haven't, you've put rejected labels on and package has gone through so how did you know you had that loss to be able to do that? Same question applies to which ones did Andrew ask you about the 15 th ?
	AW	The 15 th in stock EE.
	SB	The 14 th in, was that the Bureau?
	AW	Stock EE, no the Bureau was the 6 th , the 7 th , the 8 th , the 9 th June.
	SB	Right so the question is how did you know you had a loss each day in all them?
	AW	'Cos you know 'cos you do a cash dec.
	SB	No no we just, when did you do a cash dec then?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
37.37	EH	Did a cash dec on the 16 th .
	SB	Yeah fine yeah what time?
	EH	Middle of the day.
	SB	Middle of the day and what do you call the middle of the day. Middle of the day could be dinner time if we start work at midnight, middle of the day could be 2 o'clock if we started work at 9 o'clock so when do you think on the 16 th you done your first cash dec?
	EH	When we did our work round about 1 o'clock.
	SB	1 o'clock round about 1 o'clock. Would you say before 1 or after 1?
	EH	After 1.
	SB	After1 I'm sure Andrew's about to tell you now what time you done your first rejected label on the 16 th ?
	AW	The first one went through at 12.44, 13.01, 13.06, 13.10, 13.41 then all through the afternoon as well.
	SB	So you've done it before 1 o'clock. I know it's, we're being maybe picky on the time but I didn't think you done a cash dec.
	EH	I did the cash dec on that day.
	SB	At round about 1 o'clock?
	EH	Slightly later I start doing work and then do the cash dec.
	SB	Yeah you normally do, by doing work do you mean doing up your daily reports?
	EH	Yes.
	SB	Right and you do them at 1 o'clock?
	EH	Do them when we're relatively quiet.
	SB	At 1 o'clock?
EH	(Sighs)	
SB	It's alright sitting there and breathing heavy and (indistinct), it's important	

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
39.49	EH	<p>either to prove your story 'cos that's all you're telling us it's a story to me. Are you saying that you done up all your daily work 'cos we can soon solve that because all your daily work would be downstairs so you're saying you've done all your daily work up at 1 o'clock and you done a cash dec and you went "oh I'm out, I'll just start pinching some money from the rejected labels to make the money right" is that what you're saying? Or did you do your work up when you normally do your work up towards the end of the working day?</p>
	SB	I really can't remember what time we did the work up.
	EH	What time would you normally do your work up?
	SB	We do it at different time when we're quiet.
	EH	What time would you normally do your work up by being quiet, what time do you normally do them up?
	SB	Well normally about 3.
	EH	Right 3 o'clock isn't 1 o'clock is it?
	SB	No.
	EH	And I would have a guess and I stand to be corrected and Andrew may know a little bit more about this than me but I would say the work would normally, earliest is probably 4 o'clock unless you're finishing early. What time did you finish on the Friday?
	SB	It was a Thursday.
	EH	Sorry on the Thursday 'cos the Friday you got suspended didn't you so on the Thursday what time or that week, what were you working that week?
	SB	4 o'clock.
	EH	4 o'clock is normal finishing time?
	SB	No.
	EH	No.

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
41.18	EH	About 4 o'clock is when I finished that day.
	AW	We got as far back as the 6 th June, earlier you said you think it's been going on for a couple of weeks a few weeks you said so that might take us to the beginning of June maybe the end of May that's a few weeks, is that accurate? The next report I've got which is AW14, again it's a print off of Horizon transactions this covers the period of the 31 st May to the 4 th June, again it's your user ID, stock unit is EE through, position number 7 and we've got 3 pages worth of rejected transactions where a postage labels gone through where we have postage stamps reversed out later in the day and the exact same pattern this is from the 31 st May to the 4 th June so we've started bulking them together rather than doing individual days. Can you give me an explanation for that period. Does this fit into your when your losses started snowballing out of control?
	EH	Yes.
	AW	There's 41 rejected labels over that 4, 5, day period. Was that to cover a loss in stock EE or was you taking the money?
	EH	To cover a loss I was not taking the money. Master tape seal signed on number 074346 Interview terminated at 12.14