

Message

From: Thomas Penny [/O=EXCHANGE/OU=ADMINGROUP1/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=THOMASP]
Sent: 15/07/2010 12:22:45
To: Jenkins Gareth GI [/O=EXCHANGE/OU=ADMINGROUP1/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=GARETH.JENKINS]
Subject: FW: Duplicatation of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns
Attachments: Gareth - Duplicated Records.statement.doc

Gareth

Please see note from Jon Longman. His addition to the statement relates directly to West Byfleet.

Kind regards

Penny

Penny Thomas


Security Analyst, Customer Services

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From: John Longman 
Sent: 15 July 2010 13:03
To: Thomas Penny
Subject: RE: Duplicatation of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns

Penny

Gareth's statement is fine. It explains why the duplications occurred and most importantly of all it confirms that it has no affect on Horizon's accuracy. I have added an extra paragraph to tie it in with the trial of Seema Misra and confirm that only ARQ447 has any duplications within the disc you produced as PT/02.

The defence must be made aware of this issue and I would be grateful if a signed copy of the statement could be sent to me direct.

Regards

Jon Longman

From: Thomas Penny [GRO]
Sent: 15 July 2010 12:30
To: John Longman
Subject: FW: Duplication of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns

FYI

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From: Thomas Penny
Sent: 08 July 2010 14:52
To: 'Mark Dinsdale'
Cc: Alan X Simpson; Jane M Owen
Subject: RE: Duplication of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns

Mark

Thank you for your note.

Please find attached our proposed witness statement for review.

Kind regards

Penny

Penny Thomas

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From: Mark Dinsdale [mailto:mark.dinsdale] GRO
Sent: 07 July 2010 10:26
To: Thomas Penny
Cc: Alan X Simpson; Jane M Owen
Subject: FW: Duplication of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns

Penny, as discussed our legal team in principle are happy with this and have agreed that if yourselves provide a witness statement covering your explanation below and additionally the following points then the work-around gets the green light.

Juliet suggested the additional points to cover include, what are we doing about it, and over what period did this anomaly occur (i.e. upon migration to HNGX). She also suggested that the witness statement be completed by Gareth Jenkins, your expert witness.

Regards

Mark

From: Mark Dinsdale
Sent: 02 July 2010 15:31
To: Marilyn Benjamin; Juliet Mcfarlane
Cc: Jane M Owen
Subject: RE: Duplication of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns

Juliet, not sure if this will make total sense, I'm struggling a little.

We had a meeting with Penny from Fujitsu today in respect of a problem that has potentially being in existence since January.

It appears that the audit data has a number of duplicate transactions contained within (live data is not effected). It is potentially as a result of systems backing and re-checking itself up towards the close of play as it only appears to affect data from around 16:40 until close.

The duplicate transactions have the same transaction number so can be readily identified, so there is no danger of mistaking them for fraudulent duplicate transactions such as POCA duplicate withdrawals. Unfortunately you may feel this works in favour of the defence as this may strengthen claims as the question the integrity of Horizon.

This is a further comment provided by Penny Thomas to Alan Simpson (Info Sec)

The duplication of audited records has not, in any way, affected actual physical transactions recorded on any counter at any outlet. The duplication of records has occurred during the auditing process when records were in the process of being recorded purely for audit purposes from the correspondence servers to the audit servers. It should be noted that this duplication of data in the audit stream has always been happening. However the Horizon retrieval process automatically discarded duplicate records before creating the ARQ spreadsheets, while the current HNG-X retrieval process for Horizon data does not do so.

Therefore I'm not sure of the course of action we should not take. My initial response was to request that Fujitsu provide a witness statement to quantify the above that we could attach to each case (as appropriate), and treat each case where this is not accepted individually.

Can you please offer any guidance as to what we should do. Fujitsu will not send any further ARQ requests until we tell them that we are happy with the potential work-around or are able to come up with another solution.

Regards

Mark Dinsdale
Security Programme Manager
Security Team, Post Office Ltd

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GRO

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GRO

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Postline:

GRO

Post Office HR Help

<http://iplatform.intranet.point/rmg/Services/HR+Help/Post+Office+Ltd/Pol_Hr_Help.htm>

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From: Thomas Penny [GRO]
Sent: 30 June 2010 13:33
To: Sue Lowther; Mark Dinsdale; Jane M Owen
Subject: Duplication of Transaction Records in ARQ Returns

Sue/Mark/Jane

We have identified that a number of recent ARQ returns contain duplicated transaction records.

With Horizon counters, the mechanism by which Data is audited has always worked on the principle that it is acceptable to audit the same data more than once - in particular if in doubt as to whether or not it has been previously audited successfully.

The Mechanism used on Horizon to retrieve the data took this into account and only presented one instance of such duplicate data in the ARQ extracts.

However it has recently been noticed that the HNG-X retrieval mechanism does not remove such duplicates and a quick scan of the ARQs provided to Post Office Ltd since the change to the new system indicates that about 35% of the ARQs might contain some duplicate data. A Peak has been raised to enhance the extraction toolset and remove such duplicate data in the future. However until the fix is developed, tested and deployed, there is a possibility that data is duplicated.

The reliable way to identify a duplicate transaction is to use the <Num> attribute that is used to generate the unique sequence numbers. This attribute is not currently included in the Excel version of ARQ data that has been passed to Post Office Ltd in the past. This will be included in all future ARQs until the problem is fixed. A workaround, using the <NUM> attribute is suggested, and a detailed process is attached.

Note that we have identified a scenario with Postal Services transactions where multiple, identical mails items are accepted (ie the Quantity button is set to greater than 1), but Postage Labels are printed for each individual item. This results in separate transactions being generated for each item, which are identical in the ARQ extracts (there is another minor difference in the raw data apart from the <Num> attribute, but this different attribute is not currently included in the ARQ extract).

I've put together a spreadsheet detailing affected ARQs, which is also attached.

Mark/Jane I've tried to call you both this morning but I understand you are both tied up. Please call and we can discuss.

Kind regards

Penny/Tom

Penny Thomas
Security Analyst, Customer Services
Information & Security Services

Tom Lillywhite
Principal Security Consultant

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