## (9.45 am)

MR BEER: Good morning, sir, can you see and hear us?
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you.
MR BEER: May I call lan Henderson, please.
IAN RUTHERFORD HENDERSON (sworn)
Questioned by MR BEER
MR BEER: Good morning, Mr Henderson.
A. Good morning, Mr Beer.
Q. You know that my name is Jason Beer and I ask questions on behalf of the Inquiry can you give us your full name please?
A. My name is lan Rutherford Henderson.
Q. Thank you for giving evidence today and for previously providing a long and detailed witness statement; it's 60 pages long and is dated 20 May. The URN is WITN00420100. Can we turn, please, to page 60, of that witness statement.
A. Yes.
Q. Is that your signature?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. Can we just go back to page 59, and paragraph 163, which is at the bottom.
A. Yes.
Q. You say:
A. Correct.
Q. In terms of your prior career before Second Sight, you were Manager of the Investigations Division at Lloyd's of London, with responsibility for investigating fraud worldwide; is that correct?
A. Correct.
Q. You were subsequently Head of Investigations at what was then the country's largest financial services regulator?
A. That's correct as well.
Q. You worked on a part-time basis for the Criminal Cases Review Commission, the CCRC, for four years; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. You subsequently joined Second Sight Support Services Limited and Second Sight Investigations Limited; is that right?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. In broad terms, in the year 2020, what did those -sorry, 2012 -- what did those companies do?
A. A variety of professional services. My appointment was as a contractor, consultant, and I was assisting Ron Warmington in the -- in various, sort of, projects that the company was involved with.
Q. Was one of those projects the Horizon project for the Post Office?

> "In the course of our work, I increasingly felt that your overriding duty was, in a phrase attributed to Alan Bates, to help 'the skint little people' who didn't have a voice and who had been so badly treated by 'the Post Office'."

Is there an amendment that you wish to make to that paragraph?
A. Yes, there is.
Q. Can you tell us what it is?
A. I'm delighted to say that Sir Alan Bates has recently -and I have not updated my witness statement, so I'd like to change Alan Bates to Sir Alan Bates.
Q. Thank you. If we go over the page, please, to page 60. You've told us that that's your signature. Are the contents of the witness statement true to the best of your knowledge and belief?
A. Yes, they are.
Q. Thank you very much. That can be put to one side. In terms of your background, I'm going to take this shortly Mr Henderson, if I may. You served in the British Army for nine years and then, in 1980, qualified as a chartered accountant; is that right?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. You're now, I think, a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales?

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A. Yes, it was.
Q. I think in 2012, you were a member of the International Society of Forensic Computer Examiners --
A. That's correct as well.
Q. -- and a certified computer examiner?
A. Correct.
Q. As you tell us in your witness statement, they're all listed in your witness statement, you have provided written and oral evidence in a large number of civil and criminal cases and regulatory cases as an expert witness?
A. Correct.
Q. Thank you. Can I turn, then, to the appointment of Second Sight. I think it's right that Second Sight was approached by the Post Office in mid-2012 with a business proposal to undertake some investigatory work for it; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. In your witness statement -- no need to turn it up -it's paragraph 22, you state that:
"Ron Warmington prepared a business proposal dated 1 June 2012 and Susan Crichton produced a document describing the objectives of the investigation."
A. Yes.
Q. Can we look at that document, please. It's POL00096575
and it'll come up on the screen for you
A. Thank you.
Q. You'll see from the top that this from Susan Crichton to Alice and Paula Vennells and it's dated 6 June 2012. Is this a document you would have seen at the time or is it an internal Post Office document?
A. I'm pretty sure this is an internal Post Office document and we wouldn't have seen it but it does reflect the proposal prepared by Ron Warmington.
Q. It states in the first paragraph that:
"Post Office has decided to conduct an independent review of a number of closed and possibly some open fraud and theft cases."

If we scroll down, please, under "Objectives \& Scope":
"The Post Office has instructed an independent third party organisation, Second Sight Limited to provide a proposal to conduct a review which would include the following tasks:
"[1] Select a representative sample of cases that have led to prosecutions/court-appointed [resolutions]. The sample needs to cover cases [and they're listed].
"[2] Carefully review all company-held documentation [et cetera].
"[3] Interview company investigators ...
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Q. You were essentially being interviewed for the position of investigators of Horizon, correct --
A. Yes.
Q. -- ie the MPs wanted to see whether you were suitably skilled and independently minded?
A. Correct.
Q. If we scroll down, please, and just go over the page please, if you look five paragraphs from the bottom -have you got that? It'll be marked for us. "IH", that's a reference to you, I think?
A. Yes.
Q. "[lan Henderson] said that a systems-based approach (code review etc) would take over 6 months and cost over $£ 500,000$. This [is] further complicated by the fact that Horizon is now in a new iteration, and is [the] old code available?"

Is that an accurate record of what you said or the kind of things that you said?
A. Yes, I think so. I mean, we were not qualified to do a code-level review but we wanted the MPs to be aware that that was always an option. However, we felt that the costs were probably disproportionate and wouldn't necessarily represent value for money.
Q. You say you weren't qualified to do a code review because you were, essentially, forensic accountants,
A. Yes, I do

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rather than --
A. Software engineers.
Q. -- software engineers, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. There was the additional point about whether the code from Legacy Horizon was, in fact, available for review; is that right?
A. Yes, I mean, Horizon was constantly changing and, as we got into this, we realised that, in fact, throughout the country, there were various versions of Horizon in operation, which would make any code review virtually impossible.
Q. Can we turn, then, to POL00180832, please, and scroll down. Sorry, if we just scroll up, please, to the top of the page, you'll see this is an email of 4 July, so I think the same day as that meeting that we've just looked at, from Mr Warmington to Susan Crichton, Simon Baker and copied to you. It's about "Today's Meeting"; do you see that?
A. Yes.
Q. If we go to page 2, please, and about eight lines down, you'll see the words "We carried", that will be marked for you. Mr Warmington said:
"We carried out a reality check here, saying that we'd NOT been asked to dig deep into Horizon looking for
(2) Pages 5-8
deeply-embedded bugs at the code level ... indeed, we'd not recommend that course of action (certainly not at this stage)."

Again, does that accurately reflect what went on in the meeting between you and the MPs?
A. Yes, it does.
Q. It continues:
"Rather, we trust our instincts and experience that a deep review of a sample of cases, focusing not on whether there had been False Accounting but on IDENTIFYING THE UNDERLYING ROOT CAUSE OF THE DISCREPANCY, would without doubt help us to formulate a recommendation as to whether some such deep digging would, later, be worthwhile."

Again, does that accurately reflect, firstly, what you told the MPs?
A. Yes. I mean, with one qualification: I mean, false accounting was a potentially relevant issue, so we wouldn't have ignored that, but we were concerned at identifying the best evidence without doing a code review, and that was going to be looking at a sample of cases.
Q. So drawing these threads together, it's right that you didn't recommend, and in fact recommended against, a systems-based or code-based review at this time; is 9
to work."
In describing your appointment as not being straightforward, are you there referring to the things that follow in that paragraph; are they the reasons why it wasn't straightforward?
A. I think the main reason -- and in my experience, it was unique -- we work being appointed to do a task by one group of people but it was actually Post Office who was going to be paying the bill but didn't have any direct control over the scope of work that we were doing or the length of time it was going to take. That, as I say, was an unusual situation.
Q. I'm going to come to that in a second.
A. Okay.
Q. What impression did you gain, if any, from the Post Office, as to why the Post Office appointed Second Sight over other forensic accountants?
A. I don't know. I mean, I suspect it was because we were relatively cheap, compared with the big professional firms, but, of course, they had to be satisfied that we would do a competent job, which I believe we demonstrated, both at the time and subsequently.
Q. From the outset, were you and Second Sight alive to the possibility that the Post Office may have had an ulterior motive for commissioning this investigation
that right?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. Did there come a time later in your work that you ever recommended or Second Sight ever recommended a systems-based or code-based review --
A. We were always open to that possibility. I don't think we ever made a formal recommendation that it should happen. I mean, after the termination of our appointment, I'm aware that some sort of code review was considered but it was possibly a bit inconclusive.
Q. Considered by who?
A. By Post Office.
Q. Do you know why that wasn't taken forwards?
A. No, I don't.
Q. Thank you. That can come down. Can we go back to your witness statement, please, and if we do pull this up on the screen it's paragraph 23 , which is on page 8 . You say in paragraph 23 , if we scroll down, please:
"Our appointment was not straightforward. Alan Bates [as he then was] and the Justice for Subpostmasters Alliance (JFSA) were concerned that we would not be truly independent and would say whatever Post Office wanted us to say. Post Office needed to be assured that we had the necessary skills for the task. MPs did not want to support something that wasn't going 10
or this review?
A. Well, it was clear throughout that Post Office didn't want to commission a review and it was only through the efforts of people like the MPs, James Arbuthnot in particular, that they were forced to agree to it. I do recall hearing -- I don't know whether this is true -that Post Office was told, if they didn't agree to it, it was going to be raised in the House and a review would be forced upon them, so it would be better to at least agree to it in the way that they subsequently did, even though somewhat reluctantly.
Q. That can come down. Thank you.

You tell us in your witness statement -- this is picking up a point that you made a moment ago -- that you came deeply to regret that, although Second Sight's clients comprised the MPs and the JFSA, as well as the Post Office, the contract was between Second Sight and the Post Office.
A. Um --
Q. What was the problem there?
A. I'm not sure the contract was between Second Sight and the Post Office. I mean, I always regarded that our terms of reference were set by the MPs. However, we were being -- our professional fees were being paid by the Post Office and we had to sign confidentiality 12
agreements and non-disclosure agreements with the Post Office. So that element was a contract but I regarded throughout, and still do, that our ultimate duty lay on behalf of the MPs and what they were asking us to do.
Q. Did you, in fact, sign a contract with the Post Office?
A. We signed various bits of paper that probably did represent a contract but they were principally dealing with non-disclosure and confidentiality issues.
Q. Was there a contract between Second Sight and the Post Office that set the terms of reference for the investigation?
A. Yes, I believe there was and, of course, it changed over time. I think Post Office somewhere referred to Job 1 and Job 2, and so on, and certainly, once we got into the Mediation Scheme, that was a separate set of work.
Q. So it was the fact that you were appointed by MPs at the request of subpostmasters but your professional fees were paid by the Post Office -- was that the concern?
A. It wasn't so much a concern. I recognised that was a very unusual situation and had to be handled quite sensitively.
Q. Did it, in fact, cause problems subsequently?
A. Certainly, the issues of non-disclosure, confidentiality, and so on, were raised by Post Office subsequently. They were very concerned about us 13
"... to consider and to advise on whether there were any systemic issues and/or concerns with the 'Horizon' system, including training and support processes, giving evidence and reasons for the conclusions reached."

Just stopping there, "to consider and to advise on whether there were any systemic issues and/or concerns with the 'Horizon' system". It's right, therefore, that the issue of a consideration of whether there were systemic issues was part of your terms of reference from the very start; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Looking back now, would you consider that that remit was too broad?
A. I don't know whether it was too broad in itself, it was certainly widely misunderstood and I regret the fact that the word "systemic" had ever been used in this context. "Systemic", of course, means system-wide and the main focus of our review was going to be on individual cases not a code review, not an in-depth review of the entire system. So there was some difficulty with the word or term "systemic", which, I think, was first used by Susan Crichton, General Counsel for Post Office, rather than us.
Q. You said that the term "systemic" was widely misunderstood; misunderstood, in your view, by who?
disclosing, you know, confidential information without their authority and they still are.
Q. To this day?
A. To this day, as far as I'm aware.
Q. You tell us in your witness statement that, over the course of three years, Second Sight investigated about 140 individual cases?
A. Yes
Q. Did those cases include cases in Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as those in England and Wales?
A. No, they were principally England and Wales.
Q. Was that deliberate or were your doors open to the referral of any cases?
A. I think it reflected the geographical sort of structure within Post Office and also reflected the way that cases were referred to MPs. There was a small group of MPs who exclusively, I think, were representing English constituencies, it just so happened that we didn't get any cases from either Northern Ireland or Scotland at that stage.
Q. Thank you. Can we turn to the remit of the investigation and you refer to this in your witness statement. It's page 17, paragraph 55 , if that can be brought up, please. The remit of the Inquiry, you say, was described as:
A. Well, again, no criticism of Sir Alan Bates but I was using the Oxford English Dictionary of systemic, in other words of the whole system, system wide. Alan, I think, saw "systemic" as caused by the system, which is a much narrower definition and it certainly had the potential to cause confusion.
Q. At this point, at the beginning of the investigation, rather than at the end, was there any attempt made to define what "systemic" meant?
A. Not that I can recall.
Q. What was the Post Office's attitude to the use of the word "systemic" in your dealings with it?
A. I don't recall having any detailed sort of discussion, so it's not something that I really considered in any detail. I just felt it was an unfortunate sort of term that -- not one that we had adopted.
Q. You do use it in your Interim Report of 8 July 2013 --
A. Yes.
Q. -- albeit in brackets, after the word, you say "system-wide".
A. Yes.
Q. Was the effect of the use of word "systemic" or the phrase "systemic issues", both here and subsequently, to allow the focus to be on the fact that there were no system-wide issues with Horizon, thus diverting 16
attention or focus away from bugs, errors and defects which did exist?
A. I think that was how it was used by Post Office. I do recall various press releases, and so on, that trumpeted the fact that Post Office claimed that we had said that we had found no systemic or system-wide issues with the Horizon system, which was, of course, not what we said at all.
Q. You tell us in your witness statement -- I'm moving forwards now, if we go to page 26 and paragraph 78, we're going to come back to the detail in a moment but I'm just looking at the use of language at the moment -you say that your overall conclusion at this stage, July '13 -- that's the month of publication of the Interim Report -- was that:
"... Post Office Horizon was not the robust, error-free system claimed by [Post Office]. I was also concerned about the potential loss of integrity caused by working practices within Fujitsu, such as remote access without the knowledge or consent of individual subpostmasters. I was beginning to form the view that no prosecution relying on Horizon evidence could be safe."

Do you make it clear, or did Second Sight make it clear, at the time of publication of the Interim Report, 17

Legal.
Q. So you were physically in the office. Which office was this?
A. This was in the Old Street office, their previous headquarters.
Q. Was this is an open-plan office?
A. The main office area was open plan. Some of the senior executives did have their own offices but I was sitting in the open plan area and, therefore, could see what was going on, had access to case files, and so on.
Q. I think you just said that you sat near to or closest to Jarnail Singh; is that right?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. How were files stored in the Legal Department, so far as you could see?
A. Somewhat shambolically and haphazardly. I think I described it as a rather old-fashioned office, where the focus was on paper files rather than electronic. Whilst they -- you know, they obviously used IT technology, they tended to print everything out and put a paper copy on a file and it was the paper files that were the master copies. When I first started work in the Legal Department, I seem to remember there was only a very small number of files available and this reflected the somewhat decentralised sort of nature of 19
that you or Second Sight were forming the view that no prosecution relying on Horizon evidence could be safe?
A. Bear in mind it was an Interim Report and that any conclusions were preliminary and needed to be -- you know, further work needed to be performed. That was certainly the view that I had formed at that stage. Whether we expressed that as clearly as perhaps we should have done I think is arguable.
Q. You've spoken about the messaging of the Post Office and its reuse of the phrase "no systemic issues". Were you frustrated, at the point of publication, with that messaging?
A. I felt it was probably somewhat misleading. It was not a phrase that we would have chosen, even though we did adopt it and use it in our report. It was widely misunderstood and was not clear communication.
Q. Thank you. That can come down.

Can I go back to the beginning, then, to the start of your work in mid-2012 with the Post Office. I think it's right that you worked physically close to the Post Office Legal team during your investigation?
A. Yes. I spent most of my time actually based in the Legal Department, which was an open-plan office, sitting next to Jarnail Singh and immediately outside Susan Crichton's office, who was the Post Office Head of 18
the way that they operated.
Bear in mind also that they had only recently divested from Royal Mail Group and it was a subset of much larger Legal Department of Royal Mail Group that travelled with the Post Office part of the organisation.

So the department was relatively small. They had a policy of outsourcing many of the prosecutions to regional firms of solicitors who maintained their own files so that, when I started work, there was only about 10 or 12 legal case files available to me.
Q. You say in your witness statement -- no need to turn it up, it's paragraph 36 -- you were surprised at the small size of the Legal Department within Post Office?
A. Yes. Now --
Q. Why were you surprised?
A. Well, bear in mind the size of the Post Office, you know, at that time probably 11,500 branches; we now know over 700 prosecutions. The visibility of the Legal Department, that I could see anyway -- and it might have been, you know, the tip of the iceberg, I just don't know -- but I only met probably a maximum of about ten lawyers and that seemed to me to be relatively small, bearing in mind the size and the importance of the organisation.
Q. You also say in that paragraph that you noticed the 20
difficulties that the Legal Department had in getting case files under control. What did you mean by that, please?
A. Again, I'm probably referring to the decentralised way of operating. The fact that, you know, if there was a prosecution in the north of England that would be handled sort of locally and the file would probably be held locally, and it was only when I asked for all of the relevant prosecution files to be moved to a central location that it actually happened.
Q. You tell us in your witness statement, at paragraphs 32 and 36 , that you noted at the time that Susan Crichton relied on Jarnail Singh for criminal law matters; is that right?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. Did you witness that?
A. Yes. I mean, I had conversations with Susan. I had met Susan Crichton in her previous role when she was working for -- I think it was General Electric and I knew her as a civil or commercial lawyer not a criminal practitioner and, therefore, she'd have to rely very heavily on a specialist criminal practitioner for advice on prosecutions and that was Jarnail Singh.
Q. He was your main day-to-day contact within the Post Office Legal Department; is that right?
we published our report."
Then this:
"I subsequently noticed that a copy of the 'Receipts and Payments Mismatch Problem' was included [in] the hard copy file relating to the Seema Misra prosecution. In 2024, as a result of seeing the evidence of Simon Clarke to the Inquiry, I realised that this document was not disclosed at her trial and had been subject to a [PII] certificate exemption."

Breaking those things down first, if we go to the foot of the page, page 25 , first, last sentence, you say:
"I subsequently noticed that a copy of [and then you describe something] was in the hard copy file ..."
"Subsequently", does that mean after June 2013?
A. I can't remember precisely when I first became aware of that. It was certainly disclosed to us by someone called Simon Baker who worked for Post Office. But it was when I was listening to the evidence of Simon Clarke to this Inquiry that I realised that it had not been disclosed to Seema Misra.
Q. So is it the case that you can't remember now when you saw that it was included in the hard copy file?
A. I can't remember precisely, no.
Q. Okay. In what circumstances did you come to see it on
A. As far as prosecution matters were concerned, yes.
Q. As your main day-to-day contact, did you form a view of Mr Singh?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. What was that?
A. He didn't strike me as a lawyer. He struck me more as an administrator that was dealing with farming out of potential cases, dealing with administrative matters, chasing progress by third-party solicitors around the country. His level of knowledge of prosecutions actually seemed, in my mind, to be quite limited. I was having to do, you know, my homework and look at the Code of Conduct for Crown Prosecutors, for example. I was putting technical legal questions to him and he often didn't -- wasn't able to answer me, which found surprising.
Q. How long did you spend embedded in the Legal Department?
A. I can't recall precisely but it was a number of weeks.
Q. Can we turn up, please, page 25 of your witness statement. Page 25, at the foot of the page, please, paragraph 77. Again, we're moving forwards here but I want to pick up something that you say. You say:
"The 'Receipts and Payments Mismatch Problem' and 'Local Suspense Account Problem' were disclosed to us by [the Post Office] in June 2013, just a few days before 22
the hard copy file?
A. I think it was when I was in the Legal Department at Post Office and we were looking at -- I mean, the two files I recall in particular were Jo Hamilton and Seema Misra. Out of the relatively small number of files that were made available to us, those were certainly the most important.
Q. Just stopping there, Mr Henderson, so you saw the file in Old Street --
A. Yes.
Q. -- in the Legal Department --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and a document that you describe there was on the file? Were the files bound in any way?
A. They were the old-fashioned spring binders where you could file individual sort of documents. Do you remember those spring things that used to go through punched holes?
Q. I'm too young --
A. (The witness laughed)
Q. -- for that. Do you mean a paper file?
A. It was a hard copy paper file, yes. Not a ring binder.
Q. There were two sprigs that came out of it, maybe plastic --
A. Yes.
Q. -- or metal, and you would add documents to it --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and then put a clip over the top of it --
A. Well done, yes.
Q. -- is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Okay. Was this bound, the document you're talking about, or can't you remember?
A. No, it was a working file and, again, the working style of Post Office was to produce individual documents, letters, memorandum, and file them on these hard copy files.
Q. I see. Was there a filing cabinet within the Legal Department for these files to be kept?
A. I assume so. I mean, they were produced to me -- in terms of files, I had a desk about this size and I do recall that I had, you know, about ten hard copy files piled up on that desk and I was working through those.
Q. In terms of the document that you say that you saw, you say that "a copy of the 'Receipts and Payments Mismatch Problem' was included". Are you referring there to the not of the meeting about the receipts and payments mismatch problem?
A. The document I recall was one, I think, that I discussed with Gareth Jenkins and it was a filenote prepared by 25

I just it get the sequencing right with you,
Mr Henderson. I'm just reading your paragraph 77, so the bottom of page 25. You say:
"The 'Receipts and Payments Mismatch Problem' and 'Local Suspense ... Problem' were disclosed to us by POL in June 2013, just a few days before we published our Interim Report."

But then you say:
"I subsequently noticed that a copy of the 'Receipts [et cetera]' was included in the hard copy file relating to the Seema Misra prosecution."

So my reading of that was that you were told about the mismatch problem shortly before your report was disclosed and that, some time later, though you didn't specify precisely when, you actually saw a copy of the document. My impression from your evidence this morning is that you say you saw the document when you were embedded in Old Street, which, of course, as I understand it, would have been before June 2013. Now, am I making a mountain out of a molehill, or what, Mr Henderson?
A. Sir, you're not and I think the missing link here is that, as part of my research prior to giving evidence today, I revisited the file listing that I think I have referred to in my witness statement, that was a list of 27
him, I think it was dated 2010, so it was, you know, well before I had access to the files.
Q. Okay, so it was a Gareth Jenkins authored document?
A. That's my recollection.
Q. Okay, we've got that. We can look at that. It's September, 29 September 2010. That's the document you're referring to; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. You say, in the last sentence there, that that had been the subject of a Public Interest Immunity certificate exemption. From whom did you learn that?
A. The Inquiry and the evidence of Simon Clarke.
Q. In the Inquiry, we haven't called any evidence about a PII application in the Misra case about that document.
A. Right, well, I may have misunderstood Simon's evidence but I thought he said it had not been disclosed to Seema Misra because of a PII immunity.
Q. Okay but that sentence is based on what you've subsequently heard --
A. Yes.
Q. -- in the Inquiry, is it, rather than something at the time?
A. Correct.
Q. Thank you very much. That can come down.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Before we leave it there, Mr Beer, can 26
some 34,000 documents that I had held at one point and had returned to Post Office. When I checked that file listing, which was provided both to the Inquiry and to the Metropolitan Police, I could see that there was reference to this receipts and payments mismatch document.

So it was definitely included in the documents that we did hold, at some point previously, but then returned to the Post Office, in 2015.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, sure. I'm not for a minute doubting that you saw these documents; I simply wanted to get the sequence correct, if you see what I mean. So was it you saw the document and then some time later, in June 2013, just before the publication of your Interim Report, POL formally disclosed it to you, or is it that they formally disclosed it to you and then you actually saw it in the file? I'm not asking you for dates or anything, just the sequence.
A. I can't be precise about the sequence. I do recall seeing it before we finalised our Interim Report.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right, fine. Thank you.
MR BEER: Thank you. That can come down.
You mention that you focused on two specific files, the other one being Jo Hamilton; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Was that a focus of yours in the course of the initial investigation?
A. Yes. It was. I mean, purely by happenchance, I mean the first file that I came across when I was in the Post Office Legal Department was Jo Hamilton's file, so that was the first file that I looked at in any detail.
Q. I want to -- again, I'm taking things out of order -turn to an issue involving Josephine Hamilton's case that arose in the Mediation Scheme. So this is much later. This is post-8 July 2013. Indeed, it's into --
A. 2014.
Q. -- 2014 --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and, indeed, '15 and just use it as an example or an exploration of the kind of issues that you faced.
A. Okay.
Q. In the Mediation Scheme, did parts of the process include the Post Office sending a report to Second Sight called the Post Office Investigation Report?
Q. Then Second Sight would create a Case Review Report, a CRR; is that right?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. Then that would go to the applicant, the subpostmaster, to the Post Office and to the Working Group; is that 29
the applicant's complaints; the Post Office's investigations into them; and then the Post Office's conclusion about them?
A. This is fairly typical of many of the reports produced by Post Office. I mean, they often said errors made at the counter was, you know, the explanation for any discrepancy. I think I felt that they -- this demonstrated a lack of in-depth investigation and didn't match the findings on the file that I subsequently reviewed.
Q. If we turn to page 8, please, and if we scroll down, so we can see all of that -- thank you -- is there a list of documents that were provided to Second Sight?
A. Yes.
Q. Was, again, this the common approach, that there would be a list of documents that the Post Office would provide along with this report, the POIR, to Second Sight?
A. Yes, and if you look at the left-hand column, it's all pre-fixed by M035, which was the case number, and then the description of the document. So it was following a consistent pattern across many of the cases that we were looking at.
Q. You'll see that they're sequentially numbered M035 underscore something and then ending in $01,02,03$,
right?
A. Yes.
Q. Can we look, please, at the Post Office Investigation Report in Ms Hamilton's case. POL00034551. We will see that it's headed at the top "Initial Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme, Post Office Investigation Report". The applicant's name on the left-hand side "Josephine Hamilton" and then the case number M035. Was each applicant given a unique reference number like that?
A. Yes, they were.
Q. Then you'll see that there's an executive summary and then a narrative account, if we scroll down, of the Post Office's views and the investigations that it had conducted. Keep scrolling, please, across page 2 and on to page 3. Thank you, stop. That all culminates in a "Conclusion" by the Post Office. In this case, it reads:
"In conclusion the evidence examined provides no support for the Applicant's claim that the Horizon System caused a shortfall in the branch. Given that no systemic error has been identified in Horizon, the more likely reason for the shortfall is user error or fraud which could be due to the lack of poor controls in place, eg sharing of usernames and passwords."

Was that the usual format: a narrative account of 30
et cetera, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. If we scroll down, please, we'll see that fifth from the bottom is M035_POL_Security Report_PT_012, and that's described as a "Copy of the Security team report", yes?
A. That's correct.
Q. So this was a document provided with this POIR?
A. This particular POIR, yes.
Q. Yes. Can we look that document, please, the Security Team Report provided with this POIR. It's POL00430943.
If we can just look at the top left-hand side of the document, can we see that it's marked in that way?
A. Yes.
Q. Is this what happened: that printed onto, or marked onto, each of the documents that accompanied a POIR was a copy of the document, but then it was branded with the -- I'm going to call it an exhibit number?
A. Yes. Exactly how that all happened, I'm not clear. But, certainly, the "M035" was the Second Sight reference to Jo Hamilton's case.
Q. So we can see from that marking that this is the document that was being referred to, five lines from the bottom on page 8 of the report, and so this is the document that would have been sent by Post Office to Second Sight, correct?

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A. With one qualification. I do recall -- I mean, this became known as the "Brander report". The author was a Post Office Investigator called Brander. I do recall there were various versions of this report, which we never got to the bottom of as to why there were different versions --
Q. I'm going to try to explore that with you in the next ten minutes or so.
A. Okay
Q. If we just scroll down, we're quite familiar with these. This is the original Security Department report prepared in Ms Hamilton's case. If we go to page 9 and scroll down, we'll see that it's dated 17 May 2006, by Graham Brander, the Investigation Manager, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. If we look at the top, the page, we can see again, it's marked with that -- I'm going to call it an exhibit number, yes --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and every page is marked in that way? So this is the original Security Department, Security Team report, with the purposes of the proposed prosecution of Ms Hamilton.

Can we look, please, at page 4, and the second paragraph from the bottom. This is in a part of the report that the Investigator, Mr Brander, is setting out 33
Q. We know that you subsequently referred to the contents of this report in your Case Review Report for Ms Hamilton?
A. Yes.
Q. Did you know that the purpose of these reports was to seek legal advice from the Criminal Law Team?
A. It's a difficult question to answer. I mean, these were reports prepared by an experienced Post Office Investigator. In many cases, no further action was taken; in other cases, prosecutions were considered. So, in this particular case, I was not aware that this report was addressed -- was prepared on the instructions of a lawyer or intended to be passed on to a lawyer.
Q. Did you feel inhibited in any way, in the circumstances it was given to you and in the light of any markings on it, in referring to the contents of it in your Case Review Report?
A. No, I didn't.
Q. Can we see what you did with this important information, then, please. POL00063517. Is this a copy of your Case Review Report in the case of M035, Josephine Hamilton?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. We can see it's dated 24 March 2015. If we just scroll through the first couple of pages, we can see there's an introduction setting out the terms of reference.
A. That's correct.

Scroll on, please. The documents you have been provided with -- just stop there.

At the top of the page, one of the documents that you had been provided with was the Post Office Investigation Report. That's what we've just looked at, correct?
A. Yes
Q. If we can scroll forwards to page 6, please, and read paragraph 4.10.
"The documents submitted by the Post Office include a Post Office Investigator's report, dated 17 May 2006 ..."

That's the Brander report we've just read, you've got the correct date.
A. Yes.
Q. "... (see Post Office Document 012) ..."

That's the right number because that's the suffix of the document we've just looked at:
"... that includes the following statements:
"'Having analysed the Horizon printouts and accounting documentation I was unable to find any evidence of theft or that cash figures had been deliberately inflated'."

If we skip over two paragraphs, thank you, you say:
"In our opinion, the fact that the Post Office's own 36

Investigator had found no evidence of theft as well as the endemic User ID and password sharing in the branch ... would have been relevant to the applicant's defence. No more detailed investigation was carried out by Post Office until it was preparing its [Post Office Investigation Report]."

Then in 4.11:
"As described ... below, we have not been provided with the complete legal files, which would enable us to investigate this matter in more detail. However, on the basis of the limited documents made available to us, we consider it to be possible (though it is clear to us that Post Office does not) that.
"a) the Prosecution realised that there may have been insufficient evidence to support a charge of Theft, but proceeded with it nonetheless;
"b) the offer by the prosecution to remove the charge of Theft may have been used to put pressure on the applicant to plead guilty to the False Accounting charges, even though the prosecution may have realised that a charge of Theft was likely to fail unless further evidence was ... discovered to support that charge;
"c) the threat of proceeding with the charge of Theft may have been used to put pressure on the applicant to agree to repay the losses and to avoid the 37
case.
A. Correct.
Q. Let's read it in full. We should look at the second page first. We'll see that it's signed by Rodric Williams, although we know from other evidence that this was drafted for Rodric Williams by Andrew Parsons. If we go up, please:
"We refer to the above applicant [that's Ms Hamilton] and, in particular, to your Case Review Report dated 24 March [that's what we've just looked at].
"At paragraph 4.10 of the [Case Review Report], you quote from a 'Post Office Investigators Report dated 17 May' (the 'Security Report'). At paragraph 4.11 of the [Case Review Report], you speculate about the impact the Security Report may have had on the criminal prosecution brought against the Applicant.
"The Security Report was not appended to the final version of the [Post Office Investigation Report] because it is protected from disclosure by legal professional privilege. That privilege belongs to the Post Office and does not extent to anyone beyond Post Office and its professional advisers. Post Office continues to assert privilege over the Security Report.
"As a consequence of your disclosure, on 6 May 2015 39
custodial sentence normally associated with a conviction for Theft;
"d) the purpose of proceeding with a charge of Theft may have been intended primarily to assist in the recovery of losses, rather than in the interests of Justice; and
"e) part of the agreement to remove the Theft charge included a demand that no mention would be made in court of alleged problems with the Horizon computer system."

Now, there's a wide range of conclusions reached there but are they founded, in part, on the inclusion in the Brander report of a recognition by him that there was no evidence to support a charge of theft?
A. Yes, they are.
Q. Was that very significant information for you, therefore?
A. Yes, it struck me that it was exculpatory evidence that had not been disclosed to Mrs Hamilton or her Legal Team.
Q. You were pointing it out to the Post Office in clear terms in this, your Case Review Report?
A. Yes
Q. Can we see what happened next, please. POL00025188. So this is a letter of 2 June 2015, so it's about two months after you prepared your report in Ms Hamilton's 38
we received a request from the applicant for a copy of the Security Report which noted that the document quoted in the final CRR at paragraph 4.10 was not present in the pack of documents appended to the POIR."

Just stopping there, unpacking what that sentence means, your Case Review Report gets disclosed to the applicant, correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Your Case Review Report included extracts from the original Brander report?
A. Correct.
Q. And it seems that, on 6 may, the Post Office received a request for disclosure of that Security Report from Ms Hamilton?
A. Yes.
Q. "We have responded refusing the applicant's request on the basis the document is privileged ..."

It seems like they attached a copy of the letter to Josephine Hamilton:
"We nevertheless remain concerned about your disclosure of the Security Report. Please therefore explain to us in writing why:
"1. You considered its disclosure to be consistent with the undertaking provided on 19 October 2012, a copy of which is appended to this letter, confirming that 40
certain documents provided by Post Office are privileged, [and] the benefit of that privilege shall at all times belong to Post Office, and that the documents and their contents 'will be held in complete confidence and will not be closed to any other party or used for any other purpose whatsoever without the prior written consent of the Post Office';
"2. [You need to explain I writing why] you referred to it when it was not appended to the POIR;
"3. [You need to explain in writing why] you referred to it in your final report only, and not in the draft CRRs on which Post Office was able to provide comment;
"4. You commented on it as you have when you are not in possession of all material information and when matters of criminal law and procedure are outside of your scope of expertise."

They look forward to hearing from you in seven days and they reserve their position in the meantime.

Can we see what your reply was, please, to this letter. POL00065542. You reply the next day, so the letter was dated 2 June and you replied on 3 June and you say that you're replying on behalf of both you and Mr Warmington. It's to Rod Williams, copied to Patrick Bourke, Jane MacLeod, to Mr Warmington, to Chris 41
obviously concerned that other misclassified documents may have been improperly withheld from disclosure.
"Dealing with the specific questions ...
"1. The undertaking ... is not relevant as the
'Security Report' was disclosed to the Working Group,
including Second Sight, in accordance with the terms of reference of the Working Group;
"2. It formed part of number of documents disclosed to the Working Group that were considered within the [Post Office Investigation Report];
"3. Second Sight considered number of representations and other matters after disclosure of the draft CRR. This resulted in the CRR being updated and finalised;
"4. We have requested access to the complete legal files held by Post Office relating to this and other cases. However, this access has not been provided, which we regard as regrettable. [This] limitation [of] scope was made clear in the final CRR."

You explain, just taking the facts to their final conclusion at the moment, in your witness statement, that the Post Office's solution to this was to create a new investigation report, POIR, which deleted any mention of the original Security Report, correct?
A. Yes.

Holyoak, who was one of your investigators, is that right --
A. Yes
Q. -- and to Mark Underwood?
A. He was Post Office, I think.
Q. Yes:
"Thank you for your letter ...
"The main premise of your letter is not correct.
The document in question, (the 'Security Report'), was quite properly disclosed to Second Sight and the Working Group via Huddle around March 2014. I attach a copy of the document that was disclosed to us. I am sure that the Huddle audit logs will provide further information about this disclosure"?

Huddle was an e-disclosure platform?
A. Document sharing system that we were using, that was managed by Post Office.
Q. You continue:
"The document was not marked as being subject to [LPP] and a careful reading of the document does not find any mention of legal advice, the normal basis upon which [LPP] is claimed.
"I would be grateful if you would explain in detail why you now consider this document to be subject to [LPP] and therefore protected from disclosure. I am 42
Q. Let's look at POL00034782, page 7, please. If we can look at that alongside POL00034551, at page 8. If we scroll down on the left-hand side to the bottom, we can see it there, document number 12, a copy of Security Team Report. So this is in their original POIR. Then on the right-hand side, please, if we scroll down, you'll see it's gone.
A. Can I just clarify: it is gone, however, the partial document reference has remained much the same. It's still POL_012 but it's now described as a "Security Interview", not the Security Team report.
Q. No, in fact what they've done, Mr Henderson, is they've just renumbered them. If you look on the left-hand side at what was $13,14,15$ and 16 --
A. It's gone up from 13 to 12.
Q. -- it's gone up from 13 to 12 .
A. Yes.
Q. So the document, the Security Team report, that contained the passage that said that the Investigator found no evidence of theft or deliberately inflated figures, has been removed?
A. Yes.
Q. Is this a fair summary of what we've seen, then? Firstly, the Post Office had set up a mediation scheme saying that it wanted to get to the bottom of complaints 44
and concerns of subpostmasters?
A. Yes.
Q. The Post Office said that, in some cases, it wished to get to the bottom of the complaints that they made, that there had been miscarriages of justice?
A. Yes.
Q. The Post Office had disclosed a document to you that contained important information that went to the propriety of charging Josephine Hamilton with theft?
A. Yes.
Q. That document wasn't marked as privileged?
A. Correct.
Q. You referred to it in your report?
A. Correct.
Q. The Post Office took a legal professional privilege point to seek to prevent the disclosure of information that was harmful to its interests?
A. Yes.
Q. Josephine Hamilton asked for the original document, the Post Office took the privileged point against her too?
A. Correct.
Q. You got a written telling off?
A. Yes.
Q. The Post Office provided a subsequent version of its report, in which the offending Security Team report was 45
seek the truth, irrespective of the consequences, and that very much reflected Susan Crichton's view.

However, as things progressed, the attitude of Post Office changed. They became much more adversarial. I felt that they were protecting the brand, they didn't want difficult information to see the light of day and we were having to fight constantly for access to documents that we felt were relevant to our work.
Q. You said in your correspondence that you wanted access to legal files but you never got them?
A. We were initially provided with access to the legal files. I was based in the Legal Department. The problem was, out of 700-odd prosecutions, they only held about a dozen files. So there was a lot that we weren't able to have access to. Fortunately, one of those files was Jo Hamilton and it was that that enabled us to find these documents.
Q. When reading the correspondence, it doesn't look so much as if it was by happenstance that you saw this originally in the Post Office Legal files that you examined from mid-2012 onwards; it was more that the Post Office, in their view, accidentally disclosed a copy of the Brander report, either on Huddle or as an annex to their POIR?
A. I think what actually happened was that there was 47
airbrushed out?
A. Correct
Q. You tell us in your witness statement that, when Mr Williams asserted privilege over this document, you found his assertion to be absurd?
A. Correct.
Q. You found it to be immensely worrying and that, to you, this began to look more like a cover-up than a genuine concern about legal professional privilege?
A. Yes.
Q. This sequence of events that we've just gone through in Josephine Hamilton's case, looking at these documents, was this one-off conduct by the Post Office?
A. I suspect not.
Q. Was the type of correspondence that we've seen, looking at these documents and your reply to the correspondence, the type of correspondence you were engaged in with the Post Office on a regular basis?
A. Yes.
Q. Did that approach of the Post Office occur throughout your initial investigation and the Mediation Scheme that followed it?
A. I think, to be fair to Post Office, their attitude changed over time. When we were first appointed, I formed the view that there was a shared commitment to 46
a small number of files available to us in the Legal Department. We were dealing with Jarnail Singh, Susan Crichton. As far as I'm aware, external lawyers weren't involved in the time -- at that time. Certainly I didn't meet Andy Parsons until the Mediation Scheme kicked off. And I think that's when Post Office started getting very concerned about disclosing documents to us.
Q. Can we turn, just before the break, to your witness statement, please, at page 12, and paragraph 39 at the foot of the page. Having dealt in paragraph 38 with that extract from the Security Report you say in 39:
"I could also see that Jo Hamilton had been charged with theft and false accounting which did not seem to be supported by the internal [Post Office] Security report."

Over the page:
"I raised this apparent inconsistency with Susan Crichton and was told to speak to Jarnail Singh, which I did. Jarnail told me that everything that needed to be disclosed had been disclosed and there was nothing to worry about."

First of all, can you help us as to when these conversations with Susan Crichton and then Jarnail Singh happened?
A. It was when I was based in the Post Office Legal 48

Department in Old Street. The exact date, I can't recall, I'm afraid.
Q. So that would be in the early stages of the initial investigation --
A. Yes.
Q. -- from sort of June --
A. 2012 --
Q. -- 2012?
A. Yeah.
Q. So this wasn't approximate to the production of your CRR as part of the Mediation Scheme that we've just looked at?
A. No, this was when we first had, or when I first had, access to the files in the Legal Department.
Q. So you spotted it then as well?
A. Yes. I spotted it as an apparent inconsistency, which concerned me.
Q. When Mr Singh said that everything that needed to be disclosed had been disclosed, was he referring to the criminal proceedings then, ie had been disclosed to the defence in the criminal proceedings?
A. It was -- that was certainly the context. So I assume that that's what he had in mind.
Q. Were you concerned about what he said?
A. I was very concerned. It seemed to be a breach of the 49
hear us?
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you.
MR BEER: Mr Henderson, can we go back to September 2012 -do you remember we jumped forwards -- by looking at POL00181574. This is an email exchange internal to the Post Office. Not something that you were copied into but it relates to a meeting, at which I think you were present, of 7 September 2012. Mr Baker says:
"Quick note from today's meeting with Second Sight."
At (1), he says:
"The number 1 issue is documentation, or lack of it. They are beginning increasingly frustrated."

Firstly, is that right: that by this comparatively early stage, September 2012, you were becoming increasingly frustrated with the lack of documentation being provided by the Post Office?
A. Yes, we were.
Q. $\mathrm{He}, \mathrm{Mr}$ Baker, says:
"Hopefully, things should start to get better as Angela has kindly nominated someone in her team to help us, and with Jarnail back next week we should be able to get our hands on the prosecution files."

Then at (4):
"Second Sight have expressed an interest in viewing, at a distance, how we approach a couple of live cases.

Code of Conduct of Crown Prosecutors, which he had a duty to comply with.
Q. Did you have any concerns about Ms Crichton's reliance on Jarnail Singh?
A. Yes. In the sense that she was a commercial lawyer, he was a criminal lawyer, she was supervising a department in charge of criminal prosecutions and that was not her area of expertise, and she recognised that and relied heavily on Jarnail Singh
Q. At the time, in mid-2012, was anything done about this?
A. Well, I raised it both with Susan and Jarnail. I don't know what happened internally within Post Office.
Q. This came back again, in the way that we've just seen, in the Mediation Scheme, through the production of your CRR?
A. Yeah.

MR BEER: Thank you.
Sir, it's 11.00 and therefore time for the morning
break. Can we break until 11.10, please?
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Certainly.
MR BEER: Thank you very much.
(11.01 am)

## (A short break)

(11.11 am)

MR BEER: Good morning, sir. Can you continue to see and 50

They are forming a view that we are poor at investigations but before they put it into their report would like to see how we now approach investigations as they believe we may have improved."

Firstly, had you, by this time, early September 2012, formed the view that the Post Office was poor at investigations?
A. We had, but in -- that view needs to be qualified because it was solely on the basis of looking at some of their case files: we hadn't spoken to any of their Investigators; we hadn't had a discussion with them as to how they approached investigations from a practical point of view.
Q. Did you express a desire to view at a distance some live cases?
A. Yes.
Q. The 10 or 12 -- I think those are the numbers you've mentioned, case files that you saw at this early stage, did they include the legal advice that the Post Office was giving to its investigators?
A. Yes, as far as I can recall.
Q. So they were the full prosecution files, in the sense that they were the internal POL file that included communication from Investigator to lawyer, and communication from lawyer back to Investigator? 52
A. Yes, and just to put this in context, my access to those files was approved by Susan Crichton, who is the Head of Legal. I was sitting outside her office. She was entirely happy that we were given access to everything. The only limitation was that there was a relatively small number of files held by Post Office in their Legal Department in London at the time.
Q. Did that openness or facility to look at legal files continue throughout the initial investigation --
A. No, it didn't, it didn't, and I think it changed, certainly after a few months when Post Office perhaps realised that we were becoming quite critical of the way that they conducted investigations and some of the prosecution decisions that were being made.
Q. So do I take from that that, in your mind, there was a link between the view on the merits that you were taking and the access to legal files that you were given?
A. Yes.
Q. At the very outset of your investigation, did the Post Office tell you about the classes of documentation that it held, for example, concerning the functioning of, or deficiencies in, the Horizon system?
A. I don't recall that they explicitly referred to it in that sense. The impression I formed at this stage, 53
emails, reports and the minutes of meetings regarding bugs, of which the Post Office was already aware?
A. I can't recall the relevant or the relative timing of that. I mean, we eventually got some limited disclosure but that, I think, occurred much later on in the overall process and certainly after I'd met with Gareth Jenkins at Fujitsu.
Q. Yes. So I'm talking about the initial stages: you're brought in; you're sat next to Jarnail Singh, outside Susan Crichton's office; you're looking into problems with Horizon, the suggestion by subpostmasters that it is faulty in its operation.
A. Yeah.
Q. I'm looking to understand whether the Post Office said, "We already know these things. Have a look at this suite of documents which tell you about the bugs that we already know about"?
A. No, there was nothing like that at that stage at all.
Q. "We've known about the Falkirk bug since 2006, we've known about the receipts and payments mismatch bug since at least September/October 2010" --
A. No.
Q. -- "this is what happened"?
A. None of that was disclosed at that stage?
Q. At the outset of the investigation, did the Post Office
which was sort of September/October 2012, was that Post Office didn't really understand Horizon. They weren't particularly interested in it. As far as they were concerned, it was a black box that worked reasonably well most of the time and they didn't take it any further than that.
Q. Did they tell you whether there was a central repository of material held about issues concerning the functioning of, or deficiencies in, Horizon?
A. Well, that was certainly a question that we asked and I think the answer was, "No, we don't hold a single case file sort of summarising those reports".
Q. Did they inform you about the existence of release notes that documented bug fixes or attempted bug fixes?
A. No.
Q. Did they inform you of the existence of major incident reports?
A. We certainly didn't see any major incident reports. I think -- and I don't recall any discussions about them.
Q. Did they inform you about the existence of Service Management documents?
A. No.
Q. At the outset of the investigation, did the Post Office provide you with documentation including, for example, 54
provide you with any expert reports regarding Horizon, that the Post Office itself had commissioned in past court cases?
A. Not that I can recall.
Q. For example, the Jason Coyne report prepared in the case involving Julie Wolstenholme in 2004?
A. No.
Q. The BDO report in the Lee Castleton case in 2006?
A. No.
Q. Did the Post Office provide you with witness statements in past Post Office prosecution cases, which set out the categories of documents that would be relevant to your investigation, for example, the existence of a species of documents known as PinICLs or PEAKs, and a species of documents called KELs, Known Error Logs?
A. No, they weren't disclosed at that stage or mentioned.
Q. Did the Post Office tell you about previous acquittals of subpostmasters, each of whom had raised, as part of their defence, the faulty operation of the Horizon system?
A. No, they did not.
Q. At the outset of the investigation, did the Post Office provide you with operational change proposal records which set out the existence of a facility for remote access?
A. No, they did not.
Q. What did they give you?
A. The position of Post Office -- and this was the senior people that we were dealing with, principally Alwen Lyons, Susan Crichton, Angela van den Bogerd -- was that Horizon was working perfectly and there were no known problems. That was consistently the Post Office position at that stage.
Q. So you were told, "Here are some files", and you were given access to some prosecution files?
A. Yes.
Q. Were you told or given the names of individuals that had been acquitted: Nichola Arch, Suzanne Palmer, Maureen McKelvey?
A. Not at that stage, no.
Q. In your witness statement -- perhaps we'd better turn it up. It's paragraph 53, which is on page 16. Paragraph 53, you say:
"Within days of being provided with CD1 ..."
Do you just want to remind us what CD1 was?
A. Right, I need to step back slightly. September/October, I was based in the Legal Department. We'd realised that we needed to preserve and control the legal files that were being made available to us, relatively small number, and I think my suggestion was to make them more 57
"We've done everything that we need to do, there's nothing to worry about".
Q. So what happened to the concern that you were raising: that you, Second Sight, may be looking at a significant number of miscarriages of justice?
A. To a certain extent, we parked it at that point, because we were still pressing for access to further files. We knew that there were a much larger number of prosecutions. What we didn't know was whether we'd get access to other files, other than the ones held or immediately made available to us.
Q. Did you consider at this stage sharing your views with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service in Scotland?
A. No, we didn't consider that. I don't recall looking at any Scottish cases at that stage.
Q. Did you know that they were continuing with Scottish Post Office prosecutions at this time?
A. No, I didn't.
Q. I just want to test, if I may, this point that, in late October 2012, you realised that you may be looking at a significant number of miscarriages of justice, by again looking forwards at POL00144687. Can we start on page 2, please?
A. This, of course, is much later. This is May 2013,
useful to us -- because these were, obviously, hard-copy files not electronic files, in the main -- we asked that they all be sent off to a scanning bureau and converted into searchable pdfs, so that they could be used more effectively, and that happened in October 2012.

By that stage, I'd conducted a manual review of about a dozen files and realised that there were significant, or potentially significant, numbers of non-disclosure of information by Post Office that could give rise to miscarriages of justice.
Q. So you say:
"... we realised that we may be looking at a significant number of miscarriages of justice. There was a lack of effective investigation, multiple disclosure failures and conduct by prosecutors that needed to be considered by experts in criminal law and prosecutions."
A. Yes.
Q. At this stage, late October 2012, did you share any of those initial views with the Post Office?
A. Yes.
Q. With whom did you share them?
A. Certainly Susan Crichton and Jarnail Singh, and Susan felt that it was outside her area of expertise. She was relying on advice from Jarnail. Jarnail's position was, 58

I think.
Q. Exactly. If we look at page 2 and scroll down. There's an email from Mr Baker to Mr Warmington copied to you and Alwen Lyons, and says:
"Ron
"Just to ensure we are on the same page, Paula would like to say we have agreed the following with Second Sight, can you confirm you agree."

Then:
"1. The investigation reports on 2-3 MPs cases by summer Recess ..."

Then:
"2. By using the 2-3 cases you will answer the question: have systemic defects in the Horizon system resulted in the wrongful conviction or suspension of subpostmasters?"

Then:
"4. From the investigation work done to date, if question 2 was posed to you today, you would answer 'no'."

If you'd already raised your concerns with the Post Office about possible miscarriages of justice, can you help as to why the Post Office were asking you to confirm that your investigation work to date had not revealed any wrongful convictions or suspensions? 60
A. Well, I think if you look at point 2 , it needs to be broken down. There's two separate questions there. One relates to were there systemic defects and, at that stage, we weren't aware of any. But we were aware of evidence that raised concerns about miscarriages of justice, therefore the wrongful conviction of subpostmasters.
Q. Can we just look at what Mr Warmington replied, then, by going back to page 1. He replies the next day, 22 May, and says to Mr Baker:
"I'm surprised at the questions you have raised as these include matters that are outside our scope of work."

Then skip over 1, and then answer to question 2, he sets out the question that Mr Baker posed and replies:
"Our role is to establish the facts relating to specific MP or JFSA nominated cases. We are not qualified to answer a legal question about what may or may not be an unsafe conviction or suspension." Then (4), he says:
"Please see my response to question 2 above."
Again, if you had already raised your concerns with
Post Office about possible miscarriages of justice wouldn't this have been the opportunity to include in a reply "But as you already know, we have concerns about 61
Q. You could, nonetheless, still make the point by saying,
"We are inexpert in this field but we've spotted things that require to be investigated by an expert or assessed by an expert" --
A. Yes.
Q. -- or would that be outside your terms of reference --
A. No, l--
Q. -- as you understood it?
A. I think we perhaps should have done more to highlight the apparent sort of deficiencies in the prosecution process that we'd identified. But we were equally conscious that we were getting pushed back by Post Office not to stray outside our terms of reference and not to stray into areas of criminal law and procedure.
Q. Was that a constant refrain from the Post Office?
A. It was certainly an attitude that we were very -- we were well aware of and knew that, if we strayed into that area, we would be challenged, I think quite rightly.
Q. Thank you. Can I turn to the issue of remote access, please, and start by looking at a document, POL00029846. To start with, can you help us what this is?
A. This looks as if it was one of the reports that Second Sight produced.
Q. Can we look, please, at paragraph 14.10 on page 2. You
miscarriages of justice, because of ineffective investigations disclosure failings, or prosecutorial misconduct that we've suggested ought to be looked at by an expert in criminal law?"
A. Yes, and I think that is the correct way to do it.

Second Sight was not an expert in criminal procedure prosecutions. We, I think, quite rightly could be regard as an expert in relevant evidence and it was the evidential element that we had sort of concerns about, and I think we certainly felt, at this stage, that those matters needed to be considered by experts in criminal procedure.
Q. What I'm testing with you, Mr Henderson, is if, by October 2012, you'd formed the view that there may be miscarriages of justice because of poor investigations, disclosure failings and other prosecutorial misconduct, why we don't see it here in this email exchange or indeed in your report of 8 July 2013.
A. I think we were concerned we didn't want to step outside what Post Office regard as our terms of reference and not to stray into areas where we didn't have the relevant expertise, and that included these views on criminal prosecutions. We were concerned about non-disclosure of evidence that appeared to be relevant, and that was our -- probably our main focus. 62
refer to a document called "Receipts/Payments Mismatch issue notes", which appears to be a minute of a joint Post Office meeting probably held in August 2010:
"The document refers to the impact of the bug as being ..."

Now, we're very familiar with that document. If we go over the page, Solutions One, Two and Three are set out.

Now, in this document that we're looking at, at the moment, which is essentially a briefing note --
A. I think produced by Fujitsu; is that right?
Q. Hold on, the document we're looking at is produced by Second Sight. You're referring to a meeting note. Can you recall how it was that you came to see the meeting notes referring to Solutions One, Two and Three?
A. I think it was a document that was disclosed to Second Sight by Simon Baker, who was the project manager within Post Office, who was our main liaison, particularly between us and Fujitsu.
Q. Can you recall when you came to see these meeting notes. We, at the moment, have not been able to see documentary evidence of you being provided with them and, therefore, able to date the provision of them to you, and where they came from, albeit it is plain from this document that you had got them?
A. I think it was very shortly before one of our reports.
Exactly which report, I'm not sure. This, I think, was
the Part 2 report.
Q. Yes.
A. But the exact date that it was first disclosed to us, I can't recall.
Q. But you remember it being handed to you or sent to you by Simon Baker; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Thank you. Okay, that can come down.

Can we go back to your witness statement, then, please, and look at paragraph 43, which is at the foot of page 13. Page 13, paragraph 43, you say:
"In September 2012 I met with Gareth Jenkins, the lead engineer for Post Office Horizon, at the Head Office in Bracknell. He told me that approximately 10 members of staff from Post Office were permanently based in Bracknell, dealing with various issues including bugs, errors and defects."

Then 44:
"Gareth Jenkins told me that Fujitsu routinely used remote access to branch terminals for various purposes. This was often without the knowledge or specific consent of individual subpostmasters. He also told me that members of his team could connect remotely to branch 65
manager, something that he had previously been unaware."
You tell us in 48 that, about this point, you
decided that:
"... the best way to resolve the issue was to request the full email archives for the [Post Office] employees at Bracknell, as this would shed light on what they were actually doing."

By this time, had Michael Rudkin made an allegation that, during a visit to the basement of the Fujitsu office in Bracknell in August 2008, an individual had demonstrated their ability to alter branch accounts remotely?
A. I think so and that was one of the reasons why we wanted to visit Bracknell and see what was actually happening on the ground.
Q. Rather than requesting full email archives to investigate the issue, could you not have asked Mr Jenkins to provide written confirmation supporting what he had told you rather straightforwardly in the meeting?
A. Yes, we could have done and, with hindsight, we probably should have done. Bear in mind that the meeting with Gareth Jenkins I'd always seen as a preliminary meeting to have, you know, some contact, to hear directly from the Horizon lead engineer, the architect of the system,
terminals and generate keystrokes that were indistinguishable from a subpostmaster accessing the terminal directly. They did this for various purposes, including collecting log files directly from branch terminals.
"In my opinion, this facility (if confirmed) had major implications for the safety of criminal convictions, as it meant that the subpostmaster was no longer in sole charge of data entries being input on his terminal."

## At 46, you say you:

"... subsequently shared the information with Alwyn Lyons ... and Lesley Sewell ... and was told quite firmly that [you] were mistaken and that [Post Office] had received assurances about this in various audit reports. This point was made very firmly to me [you continue], and I recall telling Ron Warmington shortly afterwards that I felt that if I made an issue of it there was a significant risk of Second Sight being sacked."

Then 47:
"I also discussed the issue of [Post Office] employees working at Bracknell with Simon Baker. He told me that he had researched the issue and was surprised to find that he in fact was their line
what was available, what wasn't available, and so on, and, even though I only had one meeting with Gareth Jenkins, we did have quite extensive follow-up correspondence where he sent me various internal reports and documents.
Q. Can I just attempt to nail down with precision exactly what was said, by looking at a witness statement that you provided in the Horizon Issues trial. That's POL00091426. This is your witness statement in the Horizon Issues trial. You'll see it's dated 28 September 2018.
A. Yes.
Q. Can we turn to page 3, please, and look at paragraph 2.2. You say:
"On 13 September 2012, I met with senior representatives of Fujitsu at their Bracknell office. One of the people who attended was Gareth Jenkins, who I believe was the Fujitsu lead engineer on the [Post Office] contract. He subsequently provided me with a number of technical reports describing the Horizon system and architecture and, as would be expected, he was obviously knowledgeable about its operation. At the meeting on 13 September 2012, one of the matters discussed in the meeting was remote access to terminals locate in branches. Gareth Jenkins confirmed to me that 68
this capability existed and was occasionally used to troubleshoot problems in the branch."

Just stopping there, I'm not going to look at it at the same time but in your current witness statement you say, paragraph 44:
"Gareth Jenkins told me that Fujitsu routinely used remote access to branch terminals for various purposes."

That seems to be slightly different, a routine use of it for various purposes, whereas, in this earlier statement, you said that he told you that it was occasionally used to troubleshoot problems. Which do you think is more likely to be accurate: your earlier statement or the one you've made now?
A. I think you need to drill into the detail because, on reflection, I realised that Gareth Jenkins was talking about a number of different things. At one level, he was talking about direct access to physical sort of terminals, using things like remote desktop protocol, where he was troubleshooting, it might be hardware failures, connecting to a terminal in a subpostmaster's branch. But l'm also now aware that remote access also extended to include back-end databases, and so on.

At the time that both these statements were made, I was probably unaware of that level of detail.
Q. You say in your Inquiry statement that Mr Jenkins told
Q. Do you think there's a possibility that that was something -- ie the ability to generate keystrokes that are indistinguishable from those of the subpostmaster -which you have later learned?
A. No. Again, I do recall that the exact technical method of accessing a branch terminal was described to me in September 2012.
Q. That can come down. Thank you. Irrespective of the frequency of remote access and the nature and purpose of the remote access, would you agree that Mr Jenkins was being quite open with you in your 13 September 2012 meeting that Fujitsu had the capability to use, and in fact had used, remote access in a way that affected data in branch accounts?
A. Yes, I felt he was being very open. If there was any sort of deficiency in our discussions, it was my failure to ask further questions. I mean, for example, at that stage, I was unaware that he'd given expert witness statements in relation to his work.
Q. Did it appear to you that Mr Jenkins understood the implications of the facility remotely to access branch accounts for criminal investigations and criminal proceedings?
A. I think I probably felt at the stage, at that time, that he did not appreciate that. As far as I was aware, he'd

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you that the capability was often used without the knowledge of subpostmasters. In this account of the meeting, you don't say one way or the other whether he said that or not.
A. Well, we were talking about the technical sort of capability. What he did tell me was that, in order for this remote access to take place: (a) it was often done out of hours, (b) he would often ask the subpostmaster to leave the terminal switched on overnight to facilitate that access. I apologise for not going into that level of detail but I do recall that's what he told me.
Q. Thank you. Then, thirdly, in your Inquiry witness statement, you say that he told you that he and his team could remotely access branch terminals and generate keystrokes that were indistinguishable from those keystrokes of subpostmasters. That's not something mentioned in this account of the meeting.
A. No, it's not. But I do recall -- and, again, I was trying to strike a balance between getting into some of the sort of the technical detail that perhaps would not be understood generally, such as the exact mechanics of how he did it, using, as I mentioned, remote desktop protocol and the wider sort of capability of what he was describing.
never been trained in expert witness evidence, and evidence generally: he was a lead technical architect, that was his area of expertise.
Q. Did, in this meeting, Mr Jenkins disclose the existence of any bugs, errors or defects to you?
A. Well, firstly, I don't think that was a term that he used. He was probably -- you know, the preferred term tended to be "anomaly" or "error". We certainly sort of discussed that but we didn't explore that in any great deal. He did offer to provide me with various reports subsequently, which he did do.
Q. You say that you raised this with Alwen Lyons and Lesley Sewell. Did you receive any assurances or indications from either of them that they would pursue the matter with Gareth Jenkins?
A. No, in fact, almost the contrary. I was told in very clear terms that I was mistaken, I must have misunderstood what Gareth Jenkins had told me and that they had third-party independent reports confirming the reliable of Horizon, and that I was quite wrong in what I'd reported to them.
Q. So it wasn't the case that, in your conversations with each of them, you formed the impression that the Post Office knew already the substance of what Gareth Jenkins was telling you directly; it was, instead, they denied 72
its truth and accuracy?
A. Correct.
Q. Did they mention from whom any reports had been received or investigations conducted, the third parties?
A. I recall certainly the suggestion was third-party audit reports, maybe Ernst \& Young, something like that. But again, I can't recall at this stage.
Q. Were you at all insistent with them that they should speak to somebody who was one of the principal architects of the Horizon system and viewed by the Post Office as the person from Fujitsu who could speak most knowledgeably about the operation of Horizon, that they needed to pursue this matter with him, given there was a plain conflict in what you were being told?
A. I certainly agree that there was a conflict of evidence. I felt at this stage that there was such a gap between what I had reported and what I was being told by Alwen Lyons, Lesley Sewell, in particular, was that it was not appropriate to pursue it further at that stage. It was then something that I took back and discussed with Ron Warmington.
Q. You, I think, formed the view that this did have some implications for the propriety or reliability of prosecutions or the evidence relied upon in prosecutions? 73

## positions.

Q. Can you explain in any more detail what Alwen Lyons or Lesley Sewell said to you?
A. I recall very clearly what they said to me: I must be mistaken. I told them about my conversation and they told me that they had been assured by various independent audit reports that what I had described could not happen.
Q. Why did you think that, if you made an issue of the issue, there was a significant risk of Second Sight being sacked?
A. The ferocity at which the strength of feeling was put to me led me to think that. It was more a response at an emotional level, perhaps, but it was made very clear to me that it was not something that Post Office would welcome being pursued.
Q. Did you, in fact, not pursue it further?
A. I certainly discussed it in detail with Ron Warmington. I think our position was we're dealing with a potential conflict of evidence, rather than make a major fuss at this stage, let's sort of tuck it away, see what further corroboration we can get as our work continued.
Q. I think you had been a party to -- or you knew about a telephone conference and, in fact, joined it earlier than this meeting with Gareth Jenkins -- involving
A. Yes.
Q. Were you concerned about a failure by the Post Office to disclose in prosecutions what you had been told by Mr Jenkins?
A. I think I was concerned but I was -- I had not been told by Gareth Jenkins or anyone else at that stage that Gareth Jenkins had provided expert witness statements in terms of the matters that he dealt with.
Q. Irrespective of his personal position and whether he was under an obligation to disclose it when he gave evidence, whether written or oral, more generally, you had got somebody with significant knowledge of the operation of Horizon telling you this information, which you've summarised for us. Whether Post Office needed to be disclosing that in current prosecutions or ought to have disclosed it in past prosecutions, was that not a concern?
A. I think it probably was but it was quite difficult to deal with because, on the one hand, I was very clear in terms of what the lead engineer from Fujitsu had told me. But I was also very clear as to the position being taken by Post Office, which was that Horizon was -- did not have problems and there were -- you know, and these matters did not need to be disclosed. It was a conflict of evidence and I was struggling to reconcile the two 74

Gareth Jenkins; is that right, back in July?
A. I can't recall the relevant positioning but I'm happy to accept that.
Q. Okay, let's look at a document to help you out, FUJ00232048. I don't think this is a note you would have seen at the time but you have subsequently seen it. It's a telephone conference note of 27 July 2012 and you'll see that you're listed as present on the call, along with Simon Baker and Jane Owens from the Post Office, and Penny Thomas and Gareth Jenkins from Fujitsu. Would this have been the first contact that you had with Mr Jenkins?
A. Simon Baker acted as a liaison sort of point. So I think the first time I had any contact with Gareth Jenkins was when I visited Fujitsu, I think, in September 2012. So, um ... yeah.
Q. Can you see in the second paragraph:
"Gareth explained the audit of the activities of the counter system which is retained for 7 years. We can provide transaction records for 31 days per outlet which equals 1 ARQ."

Then, if we scroll on, and then three paragraphs from the bottom, now four paragraphs from the bottom:
"Gareth suggested a workshop to discuss the system architecture. [Post Office]/AF ..."

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Not sure what "AF" means
A. "AF" was Advanced Forensics, which was the trading name of my business at the time.
Q. Thank you. So:
"[Post Office/Second Sight] thought that this was a good idea."

Is that what led to the meeting of 13 September 2012, that we've just referred to?
A. Yes, it is.
Q. That was essentially a workshop that you've described in paragraph 43 onwards of your witness statement?
A. Yeah, we had various sort of discussions about the best way to move this forward. I recall also there was a suggestion that we used the model office, which was a facility within Old Street that was a demonstration branch, Post Office branch terminal, that we were offered as a facility. But we felt that, in the first instance, a face-to-face meeting with Fujitsu was the best way forward.
Q. Now, the next paragraph:
"Raw data is not part of this service although we may be able to provide."

In context, is that Fujitsu speaking there?
A. Yes.
Q. "Raw data is converted to XML." 77
A. I did and he was very helpful throughout. I've got no criticism of him in terms of answering my questions and providing support.
Q. I think you went a little further, we're going to see, in a call that you had with Simon Baker. If we can look at that, please. SSL0000103. This is a transcript of a call that I think you recorded; is that right?
A. No, I think it was recorded by Ron Warmington.
Q. I see. It's undated. I've no doubt if we went through all 17 pages you could approximate its date -
A. The context puts it, I would have thought, September 2012, or thereabouts.
Q. Can we just turn to page 6, please, halfway down. Mr Baker says:
"Okay, so I'm going to take your advice. I'm not going to pick up SR05."

That's Spot Review number 5, that concerns Michael Rudkin's allegations; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. "I am going to, sort of, continue to dig around, I think ... just for my own benefit, and also I think I want to keep Alwyn and Susan informed of what l've come up with, because for them... you know, of what's going on. Because they are not aware of any of this by the way.
"Okay.

There's a commercial discussion to be had there too, it is said.

Do you understand this now, or remembering back to the day, that this was a proposal for a workshop and that Second Sight should receive raw data in XML format?
A. Yes, I recall this. There were basically two main data formats that were potentially sort of relevant: ARQ data, Audit Request Query data; and XML data, which stands for Extensible Markup Language, which was a technical term for another type of computer data.
Q. In this meeting was Mr Jenkins taking, on the face of it, a constructive approach to the engagement with Second Sight?
A. Yes, but also a commercial approach, in as much that there'd be a cost of producing this data. I recall at some point -- now whether it was at this stage or subsequently, I can't remember -- that I was told that Post Office had an entitlement to, I think from memory, 12 ARQ reports per month but, under the Service Level Agreement between Fujitsu and Post Office, they were not entitled to XML data and that there would be a charge for any XML reports, and Post Office were very reluctant to incur further expenditure.
Q. Did you take a view, in your dealings with Mr Jenkins, as to the extent to which he wished to help? 78
"Because I've told them that l've just found out from Fujitsu that there is a mechanism, and their faces dropped.
"Ian Henderson: And by the way, I mean, one of the key emails, you know, has Gareth Jenkins' name all over it. So it was absolutely clear that this was a widely understood capability within the system.
"Simon Baker: Well, Gareth did -- Gareth is the one that told me yesterday, and he didn't make any effort to hide it."

You:
"No, I'm not surprised. Gareth Jenkins has always struck me as, you know, straight as a die."

Mr Warmington:
"Yeah."
You:
"And, you know, I'm very happy to sort of deal with him. So what you've identified is pretty much what we found going through the emails, or certainly one aspect of them."

Can you help us. What was it in your dealings with Mr Jenkins that struck you and allowed you to say that he was straight?
A. He was not being evasive; he was happy to help; he was answering my questions; he provided promptly with 80
follow-up material that I requested; I mean, there was no hesitation in his willingness to answer our questions and to provide assistance.
Q. So he was willing to discuss remote access when the Post Office was not?
A. Yes.
Q. Can we look at a second example of you expressing a view on Mr Jenkins. SSL0000108. You are part of a call here with Paula Vennells, Mark Davies, Alwen Lyons, Susan Crichton, James Arbuthnot and Mr Warmington. This one is dated. This is 22 July 2013. Can we just go forward to page 11, please. Mr Warmington says:
"lan, one other point supporting what you just said, we've had incredibly high quality material put together by Gareth Jenkins of Fujitsu, who obviously knows the system like the back of his hand, and do I get the sense that he's coming up to retirement? That could be quite a problem for us, if he's about to leave. Did you get this?
"Susan: to be honest, Ron --
"Ron Warmington: I got that from lan. Ian, did
I imagine that or did you mention that to me at some point.
"Susan: let's take that offline, I think."
You:
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a sensation that he felt that Post Office maybe didn't take them particularly seriously, or didn't understand them, or weren't that interested in them. Looking back on it, that's a feeling that I've got. I'd be hard pressed to sort of pin it down any more than that.
MR BEER: Thank you, Mr Henderson.
Sir, it's 12.05. Can we take our second break until 12.15? That's the end of a topic.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, of course.
MR BEER: Thank you, sir.
( 12.05 pm )
( 12.15 pm )
MR BEER: Good afternoon, sir, can you see and hear us?
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you.
MR BEER: Good afternoon, Mr Henderson.
In your witness statement at paragraph $30-$-- no need to turn it up -- you refer to the agreed goal between the Post Office and Second Sight, at the outset of your investigations, to be "to seek the truth irrespective of the consequences". Was that the shared goal as articulated to you by the Post Office at the beginning of the enterprise?
A. I think that was articulated more by James Arbuthnot and MPs, which Post Office agreed to at the outset. So that 83
"Yeah.
"Mr Warmington: ... He is a particularly high quality individual and has done -- what he writes is really good. So, you know, if that were to be the case Fujitsu would need to field somebody nearly as good."

Ms Vennells intervenes. Then, at the foot of the page, you say:
"He's superb and he's sufficiently sort of mature to actually almost be independent, you know, even though he is a Fujitsu", and I think you meant employee.

Can you explain us to what in your contact with Mr Jenkins gave rise to this observation about independence and maturity?
A. I saw him as a technical expert and that he approached things from a technology perspective almost exclusively. He didn't strike me as a company person or feeling that he had to stick to a particular party line, in terms of supporting Fujitsu. He was dealing with things at a technical level, as a technical expert, and I found that rather refreshing.
Q. Was he taking the defensive position that the Post Office was, which you describe in your witness statement?
A. No, I think he was taking the view that he was providing various reports to Post Office. I probably had 82
was the phrase that I associate with the very early stages of our work, or our contact with Post Office.
Q. You tell us in your witness statement -- no need to turn it up, it's paragraph 45 and we've discussed it already -- of instances where you sought to query the safety of criminal convictions but your queries were disregarded. How is that consistent with a shared desire to seek the truth, irrespective of consequences?
A. I think that comes back to a strongly held view by Post Office, which we agreed with: we were not experts in criminal law, we were perhaps experts in evidence, and I think the inconsistency is explained by the two stages in that process. We might find evidence that we think needs to be reviewed by experts in criminal law but that would not be done by ourselves.
Q. You tell us -- we should turn it up, please -- at paragraph 88 of your witness statement, which is on page 28 , which is at the foot of the page, that:
"[You] remember that at the conclusion of one of the [Working Group] meetings, the acting [Post Office] Head of Legal (Chris Aujard) warned me to be careful about what I said. He told me that if I said anything that harmed [Post Office], [Post Office] would not hesitate to take legal action against me under the terms of my Non-Disclosure Agreement and that I would not be able to 84
afford the legal fees. I took this as a thinly veiled threat to bankrupt me if I continued causing trouble."

Can you remember the circumstances in which that veiled threat was made?
A. Not in any great detail, other than it was in the context of the mediation's Working Group. I mean, the Inquiry has heard evidence from Chris Aujard. He came across as an ambitious and, frankly, somewhat aggressive lawyer and that was reflected in the way that he dealt with Second Sight, to a certain extent. He was obviously concerned about some of the things that I was saying or raising in Working Group meetings and, yeah, I mean, I remember this conversation. I thought it was inappropriate and, to a certain degree somewhat surprising but --
Q. What had happened to the shared desire to seek the truth irrespective of the consequences?
A. I think we'd moved on from that!

I'd formed the view that, quite early on in the process, Post Office was getting advice from external lawyers about the financial consequences of what we were finding. The fact that they might be looking at very material amounts of compensation. I remember doing a back of a cigarette packet calculation and I felt that, if all of the claims being raised by 85

12 months of starting our work and as we started uncovering more and more evidence and we were identified as a potential threat to the Post Office business model.
Q. Can we turn to page 21 of your witness statement, please, the paragraph at the top. You say:
"Whilst this [that's a Post Office document dated
April 2013, you're talking about there] accurately
describes what MPs wanted, Paula Vennells was
increasingly attempting to steer us away from considering the safety of convictions."

Firstly, what did Paula Vennells do to attempt to steer you away from considering the safety of convictions?
A. I can't remember precisely but I do recall that the Mediation Working Group, she didn't want criminal -cases involving criminal convictions even to go to the Mediation Working Group. The terms of the Mediation Working Group specifically allowed that to happen -I don't know how hard Post Office fought behind the scenes to prevent that -- and we followed the terms of reference of the Mediation Working Group but we were aware, from Paula's public comments and feedback from other Post Office employees, that they would not support mediation involving criminal convictions, or were very reluctant to do that.
subpostmasters in -- through the Mediation Working Group materialised, we were looking at, at least, $£ 300$ million in compensation. That was a huge underestimate but those were the sort of numbers I had in mind at the stage.

I think that worried Post Office. They saw it as an existential threat to their business model. They were looking at further funding from the Government, they were very concerned about the PR aspects of their business model. PR was driving a lot of the decisions in Post Office at this stage.
Q. How did you know that?
A. Through contact with Mark Davies, who was the head of PR. It was very clear that Post Office senior management were very concerned about the public perception, the brand image. I mean, Paula Vennells in meetings was very open about it. She was determined to promote the brand of Post Office.
Q. You tell us in your witness statement -- no need to turn it up -- that protecting the brand was the priority, not supporting the subpostmasters; you felt that Post Office had lost its way.
A. Yes, very much so.
Q. When did this become evident to you?
A. Not to start with but probably within the first 86
Q. Can we turn to page 53 of your witness statement, please. At paragraph 142, you pick up this theme. You say:
"[She] frequently and consistently attempted to steer Second Sight away from investigating potential miscarriages of justice. Another example was Post Office's attitude towards criminal convictions and the Mediation Scheme.
"The Scheme documentation made it quite clear that an applicant with a criminal conviction was potentially eligible for the Scheme. [Post Office] seemed to disagree with this view and often challenged these applications.
"When I first met Paula Vennells, she told me that [the Post Office] was the nation's most trusted brand with a history of over 400 years. As our work continued, I increasingly formed the view that because of this history, [Post Office] somehow felt it was above the law and didn't need to comply with eg the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996, which set out the disclosure requirements for prosecutors (including those conducting private prosecutions) as was the case with [the Post Office]."

In what context did Ms Vennells frequently and consistently attempt to steer Second Sight away from 88
investigating potential miscarriages of justice?
A. The first thing I'd say is we had relatively little
direct contact with Paula. I mean, she certainly took part in some of the telephone calls, conference calls. The words that l'd quoted were made in evidence to the Select Committee but, through Angela van den Bogerd, and so on, and through their actions, in terms of making documents available, there was clearly a problem in Post Office's mind with the mediation of criminal convictions.
Q. In your witness statement, at paragraphs 159 onwards, if we can turn those up please, from page 58 -- so paragraph 159 -- you say:
"I have been asked [by the Inquiry] to reflect on what I would have done differently ..." You say:
"... a significant weakness in our relationship with [the Post Office] (and the Scheme) was the lack of independent oversight. Despite being owned by the Government, [the Post Office] is treated as an autonomous 'arm's length body'. There was little or no external scrutiny of the Board or its decision making. The Government appointed the Chairman of [Post Office] and also two Non-Executive Directors. It probably would have been better if Second Sight had had
address this omission." to have blown the whistle on?
A. I think I was concerned, as our work proceeded, that we were coming across evidence of misconduct by prosecutors. We raised those issues internally within Post Office but we couldn't take it any further forward. As you've referred to, we were threatened -- and I mean that quite sort of sincerely -- with sanctions if we breached confidentiality, if we breached non-disclosure. I feel that in some circumstances there should be an alternative option available to companies like Second Sight, if we followed everything that was available to us and still felt that matters needed to reach a wider audience.
Q. You make a comment about accountability in 161, which I'm going to skip over, and in 162 and 163 you say: a duty. [You] tried to go to where the evidence took [you], but increasingly we were facing evidence of questionable conduct by [Post Office], some of which, in my opinion, was probably criminal.
"In the course of our work, I increasingly felt that our overriding duty was, in a phrase attributed to Alan Bates, to help 'the skint little people' who didn't have 91

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Firstly, can you explain what you would have wished
"[You'd] like to say something about to whom we owed
a direct reporting line to the [Post Office] Chairman and the [Post Office] Non-Executive Directors."

I take it that that's something that didn't occur to you or Second Sight at the time?
A. Correct.
Q. Were you ever asked, when conducting either the initial investigation or your work in the production of reports and contributions towards the Mediation Scheme, to attend upon the Post Office Board?
A. No, we weren't and I think that was a mistake, a mistake both by Post Office and also a mistake by Second Sight. It's probably something we should have insisted on. We did have a meeting with the Chairman of Post Office towards the end of our -- or, in fact, after we'd been sacked but that was the only time that we met anybody from the Board.
Q. You say in 160:
"There was one other matter that I wish to bring to the attention of the Inquiry. That is the provision of a whistleblowing facility. If I had been an employee of [the Post Office], various protections would have been available to me. However, as a contractor operating under a draconian [NDA], no equivalent protections were available to me. I regard this as regrettable, and I do hope that the Government considers legislation to 90
a voice and had been so badly treated by [Post Office]."
Can I look, please, at an email, POL00102280. This an email towards the end of your engagement with the Post Office. It's from Mr Warmington to, ostensibly, you but also to Lord Arbuthnot's Chief of Staff, Janet Walker. You say, second sentence:
"... fear not, we'll not let the [subpostmasters], JFSA, James and his colleagues (and you) down. But the situation has become ludicrously untenable. It's clear that the Legal Team in Post Office no longer accepts (if indeed it ever did) that its employer (as regards its in-house lawyers) or its client (as regards Bond Pearce) is one of the SUBJECTS of this investigation. It is equally clear that the Post Office Legal Team does not accept that any influence that it exerts on us should be, as it were, 'light touch' unless ratified by the Working Group and by the other stakeholders (including, of course, James). Instead, it is clear to us that Post Office's attitude has hardened (from the Crichton era) to one where we (Second Sight) are viewed as being under contract/introductions to obediently follow our client's (ie Post Office's) instructions as to what we are to do -- or what we are to refrain from doing. It remains unclear -- certainly to me -- whether the 'lawyer tail is wagging the Post Office dog' here or whether the 92
in-house and external legal teams are doing the bidding of the Board/Chairman/CEO. It may even be a combination of the two. In either case, it has resulted in a wholly inappropriate 'Defend the brand at all costs' stance

Just stopping there, do you agree with what Mr Warmington there wrote?
A. Yes, Ido.

MR BEER: Thank you.
Sir, those are only the questions that I ask
Mr Henderson. I know that there are questions from one group of subpostmasters, which is through Mr Stein.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes.

MR STEIN: Good afternoon, Mr Henderson. As you may be aware, I represent a large group of subpostmasters/mistresses and people that worked in branches of the Post Office.

I've got some questions to ask you about suspense accounts, okay.

Now, you smiled, perhaps because this is an area that we have been pursuing in questions for other witnesses and it's an area whereby some of the answers have been a little opaque; do you agree?
A. It's also an area where I believe we were sacked because
A. Well, the reason we were interested in suspense accounts was we needed to know to whom did the money belong? Post Office was not printing money, it wasn't creating money out of thin air. If there are any funds in the suspense account, it was either going to belong to subpostmasters or it was going to belong to clients of Post Office, or at least those are the most likely explanations. And I felt that we had -- we were aware that there were substantial balances in suspense accounts that were being taken to the credit of the profit and loss account for Post Office and, therefore, ultimately used to pay dividends, bonuses and everything else.

I felt that there was at least a possibility, if not more than that, that those funds belonged to subpostmasters and may represent balances that -- and losses that had been allocated to subpostmasters. I felt we needed to get to the bottom of that and we weren't able to.
Q. Can we go further up the page, please, and we'll see then a draft response that was being considered. So if we go up the page, we'll see that there's an email, if we look at the date for this, we'll see it at -- you'll see the bottom of page 2. We'll see it's from Andrew Parsons, the date has moved on to 31 July, 2.47, and 95

## Questioned by MR STEIN

 93of our interests in suspense accounts. I think we've got a mutual interest in this topic.
Q. Can we take you, please, therefore, to a document which is POL00021762 and I'm going to take you to your -- it's an email from your good self, at page 3 , going into the top of page 4. So if we scroll down a little bit further we'll see, therefore, your email in its entirety.

So let's concentrate on what we have here. You can see that this is an email from you and the date is 30 July 2014, in the afternoon at 1.25 . It is to Belinda Crowe, copied to Mr Warmington, Angela van den Bogerd, Mr Parsons, Chris Aujard, and the subject matter is "Suspense account paper Second Sight". Okay?
A. Yeah.
Q. So you say this:
"In the light of the disclosure of rolling 3-year suspense account can we have details of month end balances for this account for the last 3 years together with details of amounts released to P\&L", that's profit and loss.

## Okay?

That's the question being asked by you. Can you help us understand why you were interested in this particular point at that particular time?
then we see the body of the email at page 3 , at the top. Okay?
A. Yes.
Q. So, again, this is Mr Parsons, recipients that are set out here, Belinda Crowe, Angela van den Bogerd:
"Belinda, Angela ..."
What's being said there by Mr Parsons is that he suspects that:
"... the information requested by lan [that's you] below is highly commercial sensitive.
"It may also be that the figures in question are quite high and this may then be portrayed as if there are significant sums each month that cannot be reconciled within [the Post Office's] accounts. The inference from this is that [the Post Office's] processes/accounting systems are flawed given the volume of discrepancies. Whether or not this is correct, it is an easy leap to make."

Then he sets out he's penned out a short response to you below. You can see there that he's suggesting that this may be a way of dealing with your question and the proposal was to tell you:
"The information you are seeking is highly commercially sensitive and therefore would only be made available in exceptional circumstances.
"As described in the Suspense Account Note provided to you, sums in POL's suspense account do not impact on branch accounting but reflect unresolved matters between POL and its clients."

Now, as far as we know, this particular draft response was never sent to you. Can you just help us and see whether you agree with what was being written by Mr Parsons:
"... sums in POL's suspense account do not impact on branch accounting but reflect unresolved matters between POL and its clients."

Do you accept that would be right or not?
A. It may be right but, equally, it may be wrong. I felt the most likely explanation -- bearing in mind that losses were being allocated to subpostmasters, I felt that the most likely explanation was that, ultimately, those suspense account balances were connected with losses that were being allocated to subpostmasters.
Q. Following on from that, if we can work out what the effect might be of being able to analyse shortfall money going into suspense account, would it also be a way of looking at the overall integrity or operation of the Horizon system, in other words a kind of canary in the coalmine?
A. It's possible but, equally, I mean, suspense accounts 97
subpostmasters' money --
A. Yes, to the credit of their profit and loss account and being used to pay bonuses and dividends.
Q. Now, if we just continue with the email chain, we'll see this is carried on in discussion within the Post Office. If we go up to page 2 , please, you'll see there that, from the top, from Belinda Crowe, 1 August, to Charles Colquhoun, Rod Ismay, Belinda Crowe, Angela van den Bogerd, Rodric Williams, "Suspense account paper Second Sight". The first part is:
"Second Sight have now come back on the paper and asked for information on the suspense account."

It goes on to say this:
"Charles had previously suggested providing a ballpark figure, but if we do that we would have to wrap a significant amount of information around that as context. However, Andy Parsons has sketched out a suggested response below [and you and I have just gone through that, Mr Henderson]. I do not know whether the published accounts give any details or whether we do ever make this information otherwise available but I would be grateful for advice on how best to respond."

Going on to say:
"I think that we should consider this through the lens of an FOI request and how we would respond to that.
are a feature of modern commercial practice. Most companies will operate suspense accounts. However, most organisations will ensure that those balances are reconciled and resolved within a very short period, typically one to two days. What we were finding was that very substantial amounts -- and I think I'd set out a table in my witness statement that showed that, in some cases, hundreds of thousands of pounds were being held in suspense accounts for periods in excess of six months. I mean, that is very poor accounting practice and, as I said, I was concerned that at least those -part of those funds should have been reallocated to individual branch accounts.
Q. What would be the alternative, if there was -- let's say, using a figure you've just mentioned, maybe $£ 100,000$ or so in a suspense account, what would be the alternative or better alternative to putting it in profit and loss account?
A. Analysing it properly and making sure that you didn't carry forward balances in a suspense account more than two or three days, which, as I said, is normal commercial practice by most organisations. It was very poor accounting, at the end of the day.
Q. From what you're saying it also carries with it the danger that, essentially, the Post Office is taking

Anyone could ask the question (and may have done so in the past) therefore we need to be sure that whatever response we give would not result in less information being released than if they requested the information under FOIA."

Then it refers to Second Sight producing a draft report.

This discussion then continues and, if we go to page 1, we'll see as far as we get to by 5 August 2014. You'll see that, in fact, at the very top, it's 6 August but let's go to the one on 5 August, just at the top two-thirds of the page.

From Belinda Crowe, date 5 August 2014 to Charles Colquhoun, Belinda Crowe, copied to herself, it looks like, probably another email address:
"Charles
"As discussed. Here's Rod's email [probably Rodric Williams].
"If you could send it to Rod and get an answer."
Then we see what's being said there:
"Belinda I agree with Andy -- I'd like to avoid giving anything if at all possible (less is more), but if we do, rather than give them the data they've asked for, we should provide MI which gives context ..."
"MI"?
100
A. Management information.
Q. "... including:
"rather than raw three-year data, give the monthly average over the past $3 / 5$ years;
"what that figure is as a proportion of total month ending transactions; and
"average time to clear sums in suspense."
Then gives:
"eg something along these lines: 'The amount held in suspense accounts across the Post Office network averages $£ X X$ per Trading Period", so it then sets out the potential draft response.

So just going through what was being discussed at that stage within the Post Office, "I'd like to avoid giving anything if at all possible (less is more), but if we do, we can provide the information which includes, rather than raw three-year data giving the monthly average over the past three to five years"; would that have helped answer your question?
A. No, I don't think so. I mean, we wanted to know the detailed breakdown of the balances held by the suspense account down to individual transactions and what they are proposing here is not that. I don't think we would have been able to tell whether or not we could link it to individual branch accounts.
"As you will see, I really need someone from your team who is technically switched on re suspense accounts, and can handle themselves in front of an adversarial audience.
"As you can imagine, I am concerned that we give Second Sight no more information than is necessary to address the narrow proposition that money that is 'missing' from [a subpostmaster] account is somehow taken into our suspense account and then appropriated to our [profit and loss]."

Now, this is not an email that you would have seen at the time. Can you help us with your view on what's going on here and the way that this is being discussed?
A. Well, Chris Aujard, as we've previously discussed, had protection of Post Office at the centre of most of his activity. Al Cameron was the newly appointed Finance Director in January 2015, who I think, perhaps, shared our view that we had asked an interesting question and could see perhaps some merit in getting an explanation. But that was being resisted by, certainly, the Legal Team within Post Office.
Q. To this date, today, where have we got to with suspense accounts and the answer to your questions; have we got answers?
A. We never got a detailed answer. I mean, we know that 103
Q. Then "what that figure is as a proportion of total month end transactions and average time to clear sums in suspense", again?
A. Again, that's taking it away from the level of detail that we'd asked for. It's a cover-up, again.
Q. Now, I'm going to take you forward in time, please, to another email, an internal email, from Mr Aujard who you have discussed already with Mr Beer. This is an email from Mr Aujard to Alisdair Cameron, dated 16 January 2015, it is POL00040805. Page 3 of 4. So POL00040805.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Mr Stein, while that's being put up, was there a reply to Mr Henderson's or Mr Warmington's request in the email chain at all?
MR STEIN: Not that we're aware of, sir.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine. Okay. Thank you.
MR STEIN: Mr Henderson, can you clarify the answer to Sir Wyn's question?
A. Not that we saw, I don't think.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right, thanks.
MR STEIN: Thank you, sir.
So we should have on the screen a document l've just been discussing, page 3 and 4 . You see at the top there from Mr Aujard, date 16 January 2015, to Mr Cameron?

The request from Mr Aujard to Mr Cameron is this, I'll read the second paragraph: 102
hundreds of thousands of pounds were taken into the profit of Post Office that could have been related to individual branch accounts and losses that were paid by subpostmasters. I felt it was a huge mistake that it was not investigated at the time when we first raised it and, of course, investigating events that took place, you know, 10 years ago is much harder now than it would have been at the time.
MR STEIN: Excuse me one moment, Mr Henderson.
Thank you, Mr Henderson.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Is that it, Mr Beer?
MR BEER: It is, subject to one thing, and I've realised that I omitted to ask Mr Henderson something.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, by all means.
Further questioned by MR BEER
MR BEER: Thank you.
It was something I was going to ask Mr Warmington and, just for completeness sake, I think I should ask you too, Mr Henderson. It's an issue which the Inquiry has been pursuing and is of interest, in particular, to the counsel team and to the Chairman.

It's the Jenkins advice, Simon Clarke's Jenkins Advice of 15 July 2013. Can we look, please, at POL00006357. You've been provided a copy of this document in order properly to prepare for your evidence 104
session today, Mr Henderson. If we look at the last page of the document, which is page 14 , and just scroll to the bottom, we can see this is signed off by Mr Clarke on 15 July 2013, he being a barrister at Cartwright King Solicitors. This advice addresses the position of Gareth Jenkins and his reliability as a witness.

When did you first see this document?
A. I think only very recently. I don't recall seeing this at the time that we were working for Post Office.
Q. Gareth Jenkins was providing evidence to you and information to you in the course of your investigations --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and you were in part relying on what he was saying?
A. Yes.
Q. You told us earlier that you didn't know that he had previously been used as a witness to give evidence about Horizon in criminal prosecutions?
A. As an expert witness, yes.
Q. Yes. As a witness at all, I think, is that right? You didn't know --
A. I think both are true. Yes.
Q. Yes. I think it must, therefore, follow that you were not shown a copy of this advice at the time because this 105

Office's attitude towards him changed.
Q. So that was in, we saw, the first telephone conference in July 2012 --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and then your meeting with him in September --
A. September, yeah.
Q. -2012.
A. So, at that time, he was not a discredited witness, as far as I'm aware.
Q. Did you have any subsequent meetings with Mr Jenkins?
A. We had email contact. We didn't have any further meetings. We may have had the odd phone call.
Q. In any event, you were raising your concerns with the Post Office about possible miscarriages of justice --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and the Post Office were in possession of this document but didn't describe the substance of it to you?
A. Correct.

MR BEER: Thank you.
Sir, I think that is all of the questions.

## Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Just one from me, really, and, again, it's just to see if you do know anything. In the Interim Report which Second Sight produced, I believe, on 8 July 2013, there is reference to what I will call
would have revealed that he had given evidence before as a witness?
A. Correct
Q. You were, I think, looking at files that included the Seema Misra case; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. This advice specifically addresses the evidence given by Mr Jenkins in the Seema Misra case. Do you think you ought to have been shown the advice?
A. When I was looking at the files held by Post Office, I expected those files to be a complete record of the documents that were relevant to the matter. So I would expect the Clarke Advice to form part of that case, yes.
Q. Aside from being shown the document itself, did anyone from the Post Office convey the substance of the Advice to you, ie that Mr Jenkins was described as a discredited witness who couldn't be relied on in any criminal proceedings?
A. Well, I think we need to look at the timing quite carefully. At the time that I was dealing with Post Office and Simon Baker, Gareth Jenkins was being represented as the Fujitsu expert and the go-to person that Post Office routinely dealt with. That's why Post Office introduced me to him and facilitated that meeting. It was obviously after that time that Post 106
bugs. Can you tell me, Mr Henderson, how it came to be that you got that information?
A. I do recall that, shortly before we published our Interim Report, Simon Baker, again on behalf of Post Office, did disclose some late information to us that -of certainly two, if not three, types of bug that we were previously unaware of.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Was that disclosure by Mr Baker done orally or did he send you a document setting it out, so to speak?
A. He sent us -- I mean, it was both. We had a lot of telephone contact with him but he also disclosed those documents to us and we referred to them in our report.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. Thank you very much.
So I think that concludes your evidence,
Mr Henderson. I'm very grateful to you for participating in the Inquiry by both providing a detailed witness statement and by giving oral evidence this morning and into this afternoon. Thank you very much.
THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So what time shall we resume, Mr Beer?
MR BEER: 1.55, please.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine.
MR BEER: Thank you.

| (12.54 pm) |
| :--- |
| (1.55 pm) |
| MR BEER: Good afternoon, sir, can you see and hear us. |
| SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you. |
| MR BEER: May I call Ron Warmington, please. |
| RONALD JOHN WARMINGTON (affirmed) |
| Questioned by MR BEER |

MR BEER: Good afternoon, Mr Warmington. My name is Jason
Beer and I ask questions on behalf of the Inquiry. Can
you give us your full name, please?
A. Ronald John Warmington.
Q. Thank you, you've made two statements to the Inquiry,
the first 54 pages long and the second 12 pages long.
Can we look at the first, please, it's dated 20
May 2024, WITN01050100, and I think there's a correction
you'd like to make on page 20; is that right?
A. That's right, Mr Beer. There's a sentence, the very
first sentence at the top of page 20, which starts with
"not only" and finishes with the word "integrity". I'd
like to remove that. It was mistaken.
Q. Thank you. Then if we go to the last page, please,
mhich is page 54 -- Yes.
Q. -- is that your signature? 109
which I would have taken from your witness statement.
A. Right, my --
Q. Oh, you're quite right. '66. My fat fingers! In any event, it was a company that was subsequently acquired by Ernst \& Young?
A. That's right.
Q. Between 1975 and 2002 you worked for Citibank; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Variously as a Regional Head of Internal Audit, Chairman of the Audit and Risk Committee, CFO, Head of Investigations for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and then Global Head of Investigations?
A. That's right.
Q. Between 2000 and 2010, you were a Director of GE Capital as Head of Fraud Management in Europe, the Middle East and Africa?
A. Yes.
Q. In 2009 and 2010 you became part of, and then a director of, Second Sight Support Services Limited?
A. Yes.
Q. Thank you. Before we get into some of the detail, can I seek to explore with you at a higher level the issues that are raised in your witness statement, so a summary?
A. Mm-hm.
A. It is.
Q. Including the correction you've just made, are the contents of that statement true to the best of your knowledge and belief?
A. They are.
Q. Thank you. Can we turn to your second witness statement, please, which is dated 10 June 2024, WITN01050200. Is that your signature on page $12 ?$
A. Sorry, it's here. It is.
Q. Are the contents of that witness statement true to the best of your knowledge and belief?
A. They are.
Q. Thank you very much. Can we look at your background to start with, please. I think you became a chartered accountant in 1971; is that right?
A. That's right.
Q. In 1979, you became a Fellow of the Institute; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. In terms of your work career, you worked as an external auditor between 1968 and 1975, for a company that was subsequently acquired by Ernst \& Young; is that right?
A. I think it was from 1966. September '66 onwards. Have I made a mistake somewhere?
Q. I don't think it matters. I've got in my notes '68, 110
Q. To summarise, is this right, you were an independent forensic accountant contracted by the Post Office to conduct an investigation into, broadly speaking, Horizon?
A. Yes.
Q. You had the backing of MPs, who were trying to get the Post Office to address their concerns, ie the concerns of MPs raised on behalf of constituents?
A. Yes.
Q. In the course of your work, you had access to senior people within the Post Office, who either themselves had access, or could access, information concerning issues with Horizon --
A. Yes.
Q. -- and could access information about criminal, civil and disciplinary action taken against subpostmasters?
A. That's correct.
Q. According to your statement -- no need to turn it up, it's paragraph 22 -- you initially received clear promises of cooperation, assistance and unrestricted access to whatever documents you might call for?
A. Yes.
Q. Those promises were made by Susan Crighton, Paula Vennells and Alice Perkins?
A. That's right.
Q. Despite this, you tell us in your witness statement, you found that the Post Office reneged on those promises?
A. Yes.
Q. By withholding documentation and information from you?
A. Yes.
Q. By failing to provide proper answers?
A. Yes.
Q. And you eventually formed the view that the Post Office considered that Second Sight was "entirely under its control and could be ordered to do or could be disallowed from doing whatever it, the Post Office, wanted"?
A. Yes, that was clearly their position and view; it wasn't my position and view.
Q. You say in your witness statement that you experienced the Post Office's strategy of denying problems that it, the Post Office, knew of?
A. Yes.
Q. Of trying to remove oversight or investigation which may have led to adverse conclusions about Horizon in particular?
Q. At the time you were doing the work, did those thoughts occur to you?
A. Oh, yes.

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two, or so, years' work?
A. I'd say right from the very outset. I warned Post Office top brass of that possibility from day zero.
Q. In terms of what you say in your witness statement about the promises of cooperation, assistance and unrestricted access being reneged on, when did that start to occur?
A. Difficult to put an exact date on it. It must have been probably about February 2013. As early as that, within months of us starting work.
Q. The Inquiry has seen a number of internal Post Office documents that show that, at least in 2013, individuals within the Post Office were contemplating minimising the role of Second Sight or ending the role of Second Sight completely. You've described in your witness statement a "ferocious pushback from the Post Office" during your investigation. Do you think there was ever a time when the Post Office staff were cooperating with your investigation fully?
A. Oh, yes. Initially. The response from Susan Crichton and from Simon Baker, the young IT expert that was assigned to help us to get access to data attitudinally, had exactly the right -- they definitely shared or appeared to share our objective of seeking the truth regardless of consequences.
Q. What caused the ferocious pushback?
Q. This isn't after the event?
A. Oh, most certainly not.
Q. At the time you were doing the work, why did you think, it, the Post Office, was conducting itself in this way?
A. Well, very much along the lines of what Mr Henderson said: that it was very clear that Post Office knew -insofar as a corporation can know anything -- the people at the top knew that they were dealing with an existential issue, that, if it turned out that Horizon was generating spurious shortfalls, that they had a lousy investigation function, that they had wrongfully prosecuted people. That would be existential.
Q. In what sense would it be existential and why? What were the stepping stones?
A. Well, the need to rely on the integrity of Horizon in order to be able to, if you like, control the network of subpostmasters, their agents. To be able to exercise or to carry out that sort of level of control, to have it known that the Horizon system was unreliable, or that the supplier of the Horizon system, Fujitsu, or that the user of it, the purchaser of it, Post Office, was -- it could not be relied upon, would mean that all hell would break loose in the branch network.
Q. Was this a view that you formed in the course of your 114
A. I think when they started lawyering up. It was pretty clear that, as soon as lan came to me and said, "Look what I've found, I'm finding some really odd stuff in these legal files and we" --
Q. Stopping there, when was that?
A. It was very early on. Again, I would say it was during August 2012. I may be mistaken but it was very early on.
Q. What was the "odd stuff" that lan was finding?
A. Well, you've looked at it earlier today, the Brander report, and considering he was only looking at a dozen or so files, and we knew there were cases behind that, it was giving very clear evidence of what I saw or we saw as wholly inadequate investigation work.
Q. One of the accusations that is levied against Second Sight very frequently in the internal Post Office material, and it sometimes breaks out into things said, for example, to James Arbuthnot and then subsequently to Sir Anthony Hooper, is that one of the chief problems with your investigation was the slow pace at which it was proceeding. Was that a view that was expressed to you at the time?
A. Yes, it was.
Q. Was there substance in the view?
A. Yes. It was taking longer, particularly in the --

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during the Mediation Scheme, with 150 applicants, each with a very detailed story, and the need to wait for evidence to be produced by Post Office, which was taking much longer than we that ever expected it to.
Q. What was the cause of the delay, firstly in the initial investigation, ie up until the Interim Report of 8 July 2013?
A. Well, part of it, I think, Mr Beer, was because Post

Office -- this is not unusual in big companies -- Post Office seemed to be excessively siloed with different departments, each of which would have some but not all of the information and so, gathering in the information, which Simon Baker was helping us to do, just proved to be like swimming up a waterfall. It was really, really difficult to get the information, and that slowed -that was -- I'm not trying to shoulder duck the issue or pass off blame, but getting the data to us to be able to reach any conclusions was taking an inordinate amount of time.
Q. If we turn up paragraph 41 of your witness statement, please, which is at page 18 , it'll come up on the screen for you.
A. Yeah, sure.
Q. Page 18, foot of the page. You're here in the Mediation Scheme, and you say:

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help us with, without specific examples, but what you're talking about there "monstrous pushback" and "illogical pushback" on sentences used in your reports?
A. Yes, I mean, it was constant. So -- and much of it revolved around what Post Office was asserting, with some justification, was inadequately evidenced remarks that we were making. A good example of that would be in connection with the contention by many of the subpostmasters that they'd never seen a copy of their 114-page contract prior to sort of running into the barbed wire fence in legal action some years later. And Post Office was saying, "Well, hang on a minute, you can't -- you're just spouting anecdotal evidence given to you by a few postmasters", and my reaction was, "Well, hang on a minute. I can't provide evidence of that because I have yet to see a contract that has been signed and dated by a subpostmaster". And then we were getting the -- what became almost like a mantra of the Post Office's position is that "We would have, our procedures would have ensured that this had happened".

Similarly, when I was trying to get across the point, this -- this is one of scores of points -- that the postmaster -- that risk had been transferred on to the postmasters' shoulders without their acknowledgement or, for that matter, knowledge, on matters like the 119
"Where we couldn't resolve a point of a conflict within a report, we would flag it in the relevant place. An example of a conflict within a report would be the issue regarding Fujitsu's Bracknell office (ie [the Post Office] denying that Michael Rudkin had ever arrived at the meeting that he said he had been invited to). I encouraged Michael to search through his emails to locate the original invitation which, fortunately, he found. I had requested this email from [Post Office] multiple times, but they said they could not find it. It was this kind of pushback that meant that our CRRs [Case Review Reports] went through multiple drafts, sometimes five or more. I had never before encountered such ferocious and determined pushback from a business or client. I was very used to dealing with conflict in my profession but had never encountered such ferocious resistance to almost every sentence used in every report. Every point we raised, that we knew to be true, received monstrous and illogical pushback. Their approach was, in my experience, unprecedented, particularly during the drafting of our final report and many of the [Case Review Reports]."

You've given one example there of Mr Rudkin seeking an email that might have confirmed his presence on Fujitsu's premises in Bracknell, as he said. Can you 118
doing away with paying-in slips, or the fact that they no longer had any local record of cheques that had been sent in for processing and might turn out to be mangled and totally shredded in the cheque-clearing machines, the cheque-processing machines -- matters that ordinarily I would have had zero difficulty in communicating in conversations like this, just seemed to be beyond the ken of people in the Post Office.

And at first I was taken in by that; later, I wasn't.
Q. When you say you were "taken in" by it, what do you mean?
A. I took it at face value. I took it that I was pretty pathetic at explaining points and had lost the knack of explaining things simply. But, eventually, I twigged that, in my judgement -- I may be wrong -- it was feigned ignorance, not real.
Q. Did the Post Office seek to influence the drafting of your final CRR reports?
A. Oh, yes.
Q. How did they do that?
A. Well, by examining every word, every phrase, every full stop and comma. Again, I -- I mean, we made a point, my entire team made a point of writing things with extreme clarity. We checked for that. So it was unusual to 120
have any report that wasn't completely clear and, yet, Post Office seemed to find reason to challenge just about everything we said.
Q. Did you adapt the words used, the language used, in the reports, the CRRs, as a result?
A. To a degree. You probably realise that Mr Henderson and I , and in fact our colleagues, are not easily -- not necessarily for turning. So there were some pretty intense scraps but we obviously listened to and tried to accommodate the changes they were requesting and certainly, where we'd made mistakes, we corrected them.
Q. In his witness statement, Mr Henderson said at page 22, paragraph 71, said:
"To the credit of the Post Office, they [the Post Office] did not try to directly to interfere with or influence Second Sight's reports other than by withholding potentially relevant documents."

That's slightly different from what you're saying now, that there was an attempt to interfere with or influence the language used.
A. Yes, there is a little bit of difference there. I mean, I was involved in a lot more of what lan himself would have referred to having been down in the weeds and dealing with a lot of the accounting issues in minute detail, and so I probably encountered a lot more 121
"We in Second Sight, held the view that those concerns, that had been so clearly expressed by the MPs, and their equally clear expectation we would be investigating them, had certainly not gone away but that our Interim Report was to focus, in the main, on the narrower issue of 'systemic flaws in Horizon'. The inference -- and our understanding -- was that the original, far wider, scope had never simply vaporised, and that we were still expected (by the MPs and by the JFSA) to address them. On reflection, it would have been helpful had we included words to that effect in our Interim Report, although it seems now to be pretty obvious that [the Post Office] would have fought hard to avoid conceding that. It is now clear that the Post Office really had hoped that, after Second Sight's Interim Report, that wider scope investigation would simply never happen."
A. $\mathrm{Mm}-\mathrm{hm}$.
Q. Can we just look at your Interim Report, please. POL00099063. This is the Interim Report of 8 July. Can we look at page 8, please. Paragraph 8.1:
"This is an Interim Report and there is much work still to be done."

At this point, what in your mind was still to be done?
pushback than he did, although he was encountering pushback on matters to do with the evidential quality.
Q. I was going to ask you: what was the division of responsibilities between you and Mr Henderson?
A. Well, he's better than I am, so, I mean, he got the difficult stuff to deal with. Essentially, it was pretty obvious. Ian is a specialist in documentation, computers, evidence handling and also he was living in London, I wasn't. It made sense for him to be onsite at Old Street, whereas I was haring around the country making face-to-face contact with the subpostmasters, which, of course, l'd been asked to do by James Arbuthnot and his colleagues.

So it was very clear that -- and I omitted to mention that, of course, lan had had that very valuable experience with the CCRC. So I had far less knowledge of criminal procedure than he did but neither of us put ourselves forward as lawyers.
Q. Can we move --
A. I hope I answered the question adequately?
Q. Yes, you have. Can we move forward, please, to paragraph 58 of your witness statement, which is on page 28, the foot of page 28. You're here dealing with -- at about the point of publication time of the Interim Report, and you say:

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A. Well, lan referred to this earlier. We -- colloquially, we had come to regard the work that we were doing as what we called Job 1 and Job 2. In fact, that terminology was accepted by Post Office. Job 1 was the broader investigation that definitely included consideration of the conduct of investigations and prosecutions but this -- this was narrower and, as we went into the Mediation Scheme, that became a more narrowly defined piece of work, which we referred to as Job 2. The reason we called it the Interim Report was because it was an Interim Report.
Q. In your witness statement, you describe things the other way round: that the narrower piece of work was Job 1, it focused, in the main, on the narrower issue of systemic flaws in Horizon. Why was the narrower issue the issue of systemic flaws in Horizon?
A. If that's what l've said, Mr Beer, I've got it the wrong way round because Job 1 was, unsurprisingly, the first piece of work which the MPs had asked us to do. The narrower job was -- manifested itself principally in the Mediation Scheme, which was under way at this point.
Q. Let's look at your witness statement alongside this then, please.
A. Yeah, I -- may have got it wrong.
Q. It's page 28 of the witness statement.

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A. You may have caught me out.
Q. Page 28, paragraph 58 at the bottom. I'll read the whole sentence:
"We, in Second Sight, held the view that those concerns, that had been so clearly expressed by MPs ... had certainly not gone away but that our Interim Report was to focus, in the main, on the narrower issue of 'systemic flaws in Horizon'."
A. Well, I have expressed that the way I intended to, but I think the confusion which I've allowed to creep in here, for which I apologise, is that the Post Office's understanding of the Mediation Scheme was that that, in a sense, displaced/vaporised the original work that we'd been asked to carry out, and we did not share that view. We, as far as we were concerned, the initial request by the MPs, which involved "taking the JFSA along with us", had definitely not gone away but Post Office completely disagreed with that position.
Q. So without reference to the documents, then, if I can just try and get an understanding of it, it was your view that there were always going to be two pieces of work: Job 1 and Job 2?
A. Yes.
Q. That the first of those, which is reflected in the Interim Report, focused on the existence or 125

Complaint and Mediation Scheme, what was still left after the production of the Interim Report?
A. Well, had the Mediation Scheme not fired up and diverted our attention onto the 150 applicants' is it cases, we would have continued to do the work that the MPs had asked us to do and which had been covered in my original proposal of work, which had never been other than acknowledged. There that never had been an initial letter of engagement.
Q. So all of the other issues raised by the MPs on behalf of their constituents still fell to be addressed?
A. Yes.
Q. The Post Office determined that that should be done through the Mediation Scheme?
A. Yes.
Q. At the time, was it your view that that was an appropriate means of addressing those issues?
A. Yes, seemed like a good idea.
Q. Why did it seem like a good idea?
A. Well, I think it was -- I mean, at that point Susan Crichton was still involved and still -- there still seemed to be this persuasive search for the truth, and it involved seeking applications from the entire network, and we wanted to get cases that could be efficiently or even at all investigated and, getting
non-existence of system-wide or systemic problems with Horizon?
A. Yes, Mr Beer, but I think the point that has been confusing everybody is that Job 1 was actually very broad but that the Interim Report was not -- it probably should have been but it was not an attempt to answer all of those broad questions that had been posed by the MPs. At that point, we'd been asked to just produce a report, the Interim Report, on these narrow issues --
Q. Okay.
A. -- which was, you know, probably absurd and we should have said no.
Q. I was about to ask. Was it a request of the Post Office that led to the production of the Interim Report?
A. Yes.
Q. Why did Second Sight agree to it?
A. Well, because it wasn't just the Post Office that was communicating that. The MPs were getting quite -"irritated" wouldn't be too strong a word, that the investigation had been chuntering along for a year at that point and there didn't seem to be much output from it. So at least we should produce a report that said something, and so this narrow request was agreed upon.
Q. I see. In your mind, putting aside the events which happened, namely the development of the initial 126
newer cases, where the data was more likely to be available still, was clearly going to be a good thing.
Q. This conclusion at 8.2(a), on the right-hand side:
"Our preliminary conclusions are:
"We have so far found no evidence of system-wide (systemic) problems with the Horizon software ..."

On the investigation of how many cases was that preliminary conclusion formed?
A. I think it was about 50/49, something like that. We had, I think, 29 cases from the MPs, 18 from the JFSA, that's 47 by my counting. So I think it was based on those. But, of course, we'd narrowed that down. We had to, because we -- investigating 49 cases right across the detail wasn't feasible, so that's where I think lan came up with the good idea of spot -- what we called spot reviews: just focus on events within a case and dig into those.
Q. Is it right, therefore, that that conclusion is based ultimately on the examination of four cases?
A. I think, by that point, we had about -- we had 20-something spot reviews but only four of them had really been bottomed out and, even then, one of them was Spot Review 5, the Rudkin matter, which hadn't been bottomed out. So there were still lots of unanswered questions as we wrote this.

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Q. So that preliminary conclusion was reached on the basis of the four cases that had been investigated the most --
A. Yes.
Q. -- one of which was still incomplete?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you think, on reflection, that ought to have been made clearer in paragraph 8.2(a), so that it might not be misused or misappropriated by others for a different purpose?
A. Well, with the benefits of hindsight, absolutely. I wish we'd said that. I think lan mentioned earlier, it would have been probably better if we'd spelled out exactly what we meant by "systemic". We didn't use the word by accident and a considerable amount of thought and discussion went into the word we used there. But, with the benefit of hindsight, Post Office pounced on it and, as lan said, trumpeted it from the rooftops, and Alan had warned us that that would happen.
Q. Before you wrote it or afterwards?
A. Oh, before, because of course he was entitled to and was seeing the drafts of these documents. I think he saw the draft of this. Certainly, he'd -- Sir Alan, as we all know, pretty astute, and I think he was -- he foresaw better than I did the danger of this.
Q. Can I look at something that you later said a year and 129
you say here, systemic errors had been disclosed to you by that time?
A. Mm , it is contradictory, I see the point, and probably not very wise wording at the time. Let me clarify. "Systemic", to us, meant that this was something that was occurring right through the network of the 12,000 -odd branches, and, had there been such systemic bugs, they would have been glaringly obvious to at least some of -- quite a lot of the people. That was the opposite of what we'd found.

What we found was that the -- whether it was bugs or other forms of error and defect that were manifesting themselves were unusual, were rare, but had life-changing impact on those that the bugs hit, but were inconsequential in the context of the entirety of the system.

So Mr Cameron -- Al Cameron, was one of the few witnesses that's referred to the comparative impact, the materiality of events that, in Post Office's world, are immaterial but, in the individual cases, are hugely material. And so I guess I'm still, in this transcript, probably still being a little bit muddle headed into the use of the word "systemic". I wish we'd never used it, you know. We did, we used it advisedly, we gave it a lot of thought but it led to such abuse that I wish 131
a half later about this in a call that you had with Tim McCormack, just to explore what was meant here and what you thought this conclusion was meant to represent. Can we look, please, at SSL0000126.

This was a recording or a transcript of a recording that I think you made with Mr McCormack on 26 October 2015.
A. Yes.
Q. If we go to page 3, please, and scroll down, please. It's that section there. You say:
"You know, should [anyone] be surprised? Of course there are bugs in the system. Now, we were at pains, you probably are aware, in that, when we released that Interim Report, we studiously avoided using the term that there had been 'systemic errors', even though there had been some disclosed to us. We steered [clear] from that. We have now -- I've made it clear in emails to Cameron, Freeman, the Minister herself, we are now of the view that, not any did systemic bugs exist during the time of these cases arising, but that systemic bugs in all likelihood definitely still exist."

Then you carry on. The point there "we studiously avoided using that term 'systemic errors', even though some had been disclosed to us", why did you avoid using the term "systemic errors" in the Interim Report if, as 130
we'd used a different form of words.
Q. Thank you. That can come down. Can I go right back to the beginning, then, the initial instruction of Second Sight. You describe this in your witness statement, if we can turn it up, please, at paragraphs 15 and 16, which is on page 8. You're here referring to a PowerPoint proposal that we've seen many times, I'm not going to go into it, but you say, by reference to that PowerPoint proposal:
"I suggest that no reasonable person could possibly have failed to understand that the review envisaged in my proposal was intended to address the possibility of prosecutorial misconduct."

Just stopping there, you're saying that a matter of plain language and fair reading of the document?
A. Oh, yes.
Q. You go on to say:
"Indeed, we had been informed that this was the primary focus of the MPs who had brought pressure to bear on [the] Chairman and CEO to carry out a review."

Stopping there, does that sentence reflect the fact that the MPs were not concerned with whether there were intricate or arcane coding problems in the Horizon system; they were concerned that some of their constituents had been wrongfully prosecuted? 132
A. Yes. The simple answer to that is yes. The one or two of the MPs expressed, as the Inquiry has already heard, a desire to sort of carry out some sort of deep code review and we'd said it's going to be difficult to do that. You need to find exactly which piece of software existed on a particular date but the short answer to that question was that -- it was crystal clear that all of the MPs, their primary concern was that there'd been prosecutorial misconduct.
Q. You say:
"In due course, as we met [them], it became crystal clear that this indeed was their primary concern."
A. Yes.
Q. In 16, you say:
"I have subsequently learned, on reading a two-page email [of] 6 June 2012 [you hadn't previously seen it], that Susan Crichton had summarised [your] PowerPoint for Paula Vennells. [It] is largely a cut and paste from [your] PowerPoint, with relatively few changes. Having now read that email, I am even more shocked than I was when, as early as May 2013 and thereafter, Paula Vennells contended that Second Sight had never been invited to look for any evidence of unsafe prosecutions."

Was that something that was emphasised to you by 133
"I have just met Ron Warmington and want to put on record that he would do an excellent job for us: exactly the right quality level of engagement, etc, we're looking for. I made it very clear to Ron that our primary objective of this exercise is to be transparent and to deal with whatever outcomes and conclusions he comes to."

Does that fairly reflect the meeting that you had with her in June 2021 (sic)?
A. Yes, it's a bit of an abbreviation of it, but yes.
Q. An abbreviation in what sense? I mean, obviously this is a minute of the meeting, it's the -- a summary of the outcome?
A. As best I recall, she's probably referring to the meeting where I sort of laid it on the line that there were extraordinary risks associated with this search for the truth and I might, although she might think me to be a good choice, I might not be. That she might be better off with somebody that would do things differently.
Q. Did you receive any formal feedback on the PowerPoint proposal that you presented?
A. Well, strangely enough, and I kick myself on this, I don't think we did. It was just we said, "Look, we'll work on" -- initially, it was a very small job, seemed to be a very small job. So we said we'll just proceed 135

Paula Vennells?
A. Um --
Q. That it wasn't part of Second Sight's brief, its terms of reference, to look for evidence of unsafe prosecutions?
A. Well, as a matter of huge regret -- and not only myself but my colleagues at Second Sight -- that we had far less face-to-face contact with Paula Vennells than I would ordinarily have expected us to have, and that, therefore, we'd been shunted down to the second level of, as I say -- I think they called themselves conduits, who were, as far as we were at first aware, were conveying to us what Paula wanted and didn't want. So I'm using a sort of shorthand there.

I now see from the material that I've read that I hadn't seen before, that it's pretty clear that she was pushing that, but we were getting messages from Paula of Paula's intentions and desires through the conduit of people like Aujard, Alwen Lyons, and others.
Q. Can we look, then, at what her initial reaction was to your proposals by looking at POL00180779. This is an email you wouldn't have seen at the time. It's from Paula Vennells, one of her staff, in fact, is sending it to Susan Crichton, copied to Alice Perkins and Alwen Lyons:

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on a time and materials basis, and these days, of course, we would have insisted on a proper contract and a proper letter of engagement, and so on, otherwise, you know, we'd be missing out. But it was just sort of "Go ahead". I now know that, behind the scenes, there was a considerable amount of debate on a sort of putting together a letter of engagement but it was never communicated to us.
Q. After the meeting with Ms Vennells did you believe that she meant what she said, rather -- namely what's recorded in this email, namely the Post Office's objective, primary objective, was to be transparent and deal with whatever outcomes and conclusions Second Sight reaches?
A. Now, call me stupid, but I believed that and I later learned that probably wasn't the case. Well, I think it probably was the case at that point. That was what she conveyed, convincingly, and I accepted it.
Q. Do you know why, or did you know why, the Post Office appointed Second Sight over other forensic accountants?
A. Haha! As lan said this morning, we were cheap. We were certainly, with fewer overheads and less greed. We had a pretty good value for money proposition but I think the driving factor was that Susan Crichton -- with whom I've never played tennis, incidentally -- held a view 136
that I had form for pursuing evidence of innocence when people looked guilty and very, often finding that the innocent had been or would have otherwise been fired or worse for acts that they had not carried out themselves.
Q. Was that in Citibank or at GE Capital?
A. Principally in Citibank. My role at GE Capital was more sort of fraud management with an occasional investigation thrown in, whereas in Citibank it was pure investigations, often into the conduct of employees at all sorts of levels right up to the top brass.
Q. If we go back to your witness statement at page 9 , please, and look at paragraph 19 on page 9 , you say:
"In due course, Second Sight was approved by all the parties and a decision was made, which we later came deeply to regret, that although Second Sight's 'clients' comprised the MPs and the JFSA as well ... the contract would be between Second Sight and [the Post Office], with no oversight by the MPs and only some 'mild' oversight on behalf of the JFSA, by Kay Linnell."

Why were you concerned when you learnt that Second Sight was to be contractually engaged only with Post Office, rather than all of the interested persons?
A. Well, it was very clear from the outset that the subject, the principal subject -- or subjects of the investigation were to be the postmasters, who may well 137
coming up with suitable candidates --
A. Yes.
Q. -- because of your years of work in this field; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. You brought in three further investigators; is that right?
A. Yes.
Q. Are those, or were those three investigators, Chris Holyoak?
A. Yes.
Q. Did he join the investigation in about February 2014?
A. Yes, I think shortly after he retired from his bank that he was --
Q. We've got a confidentiality agreement with him --
A. Yes.
Q. -- dated 8 February 2014 --
A. Yes.
Q. -- which would tend to indicate, if things were working well, that would be the beginning of his engagement?
A. Yes, that was when we were realise that the two of us wasn't going to cut the mustard.
Q. Did Kim Evans join the investigation in about July 2014?
A. Yes.
Q. Again, we've got a confidentiality agreement of 30 July 139
have had their hands in the till, and Post Office. They were the two parties involved, and perhaps Fujitsu. To have the subject -- the principal subject of an investigation also be the paymaster is absurd, and it was Andrew Bridgen, as I say in paragraph 20, who was the most outspoken on that point. He spotted that problem right upfront and was very angry about it.

I mean, I -- we accepted that, the Treasury apparently said, "We haven't got any money and, therefore, Post Office is going to have to pay for it" but it was a daft decision.
Q. Was that explored at the time: the Treasury being the paying client rather than the Post Office itself?
A. I don't think it was. I don't think it was -- Oliver Letwin was representing the Treasury at that point and his view was it's out of the question, Post Office is going to have to pay for this. But they could have paid for it through a conduit of the Treasury
Q. Thank you. That can come down. You say that it was obvious from very early on that the number of cases that you were expected to investigate was increasing and you would, therefore, need to hire in additional investigators, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. You say that you and Mr Henderson had no difficulty in 138

## 2014?

A. Yes.
Q. Lastly, Niall Young. Did he join the investigation in about August 2014?
A. Yes.
Q. So does that mean that, for the time up until the publication of the Interim Report, there were the three of you?
A. Yes.
Q. Were there any attempts made to bolster your resources in that time?
A. Not by us. I think the answer is no because, by then, we knew how much had been invested in acquiring the knowledge of what had been going on, and we recognised that bringing anybody in, no matter how good they were as an investigator would divert attention by lan and myself onto bringing that person up the curve. It was a bit of a Catch- 22 situation.
Q. The number of cases, I think, increased sharply from around 10 in June 2012, at start-up --
A. Yup.
Q. -- to 49 or so by February 2013; is that right?
A. Yes, that's right.
Q. Did that pose resourcing problems?
A. Yes. Broadly.
Q. When you started the investigation, I think you were struck by the lack of what you call a general file, is that right --
A. Yes.
Q. -- to deal with already reported Horizon-related events; is that a fair description?
A. It most certainly is.
Q. What were you expecting to find?
A. Well, my experience as a corporate investigator meant that, whenever broadly similar events occurred, whether it was ATM shortfalls or fraud by customers, or whatever, the Investigation Team would draw those cases together, look for linkages, and help -- in order to help its investigators get to grips with what systemically had gone wrong to allow that fraud or that event to occur. So you would normally have, you know, a case management system that would draw things together and then be searchable to say "What other cases have we had involving motor vehicle licences or, for that matter, that involved remittances in or out that have gone adrift?" Ordinarily, you'd be able to say, "Yeah, we've had 25 of those cases, let's have a lock if there are any similarities", and that was completely absent.
Q. It may sound a bit of a noddy question but why would you expect an organisation in receipt of a series of 141
A. Yes.
Q. News pieces, articles in The Grocer, Computer Weekly?
A. Yes.
Q. Letters to the Sunday Times saying, "I have wrongly been gifted $£ 2,500$ worth of Premium Bonds", that kind of thing?
A. Most specifically including that kind of thing, yes.
Q. Would it also include matters that had come up through any form of Helpdesk that the Post Office or Fujitsu operated?
A. Yes, that's a subject in itself, isn't it? The answer to the question is yes.
Q. Would it include reports on any bugs, errors or defects, however they are described, that were found to have caused or potentially caused balancing or other data integrity issues?
A. In any company l've ever worked for, yes. Those sort of things, all of the above, would be included.
Q. When you were instructed, and in the absence of such a compendium of material, were you, in fact, made aware by the Post Office that there had been acquittals in criminal trials of subpostmasters who had alleged that Horizon was responsible for the shortfall of which they were accused of either stealing or falsely accounting?
A. No.
complaints or grievances or suggestions or allegations to draw them together in a central repository for the purposes of investigation and analysis?
A. Well, quite frankly, Mr Beer, it's hard to see how an Investigation Team could deliver an effective service to its employer without having that. So, you know, being able to answer questions like, in the extreme, how many people have committed suicide or attempted it, you would expect that sort of answer to be available and, less seriously, how many instances have we had of customers who have said, "I got lucky, I got a windfall, there's something gone wrong, I've had something for nothing, l'd like to tell you about it"? There was no -- you would expect there to be scores of those sort of cases but to be told that there haven't been any is just -- it's ludicrous. I hope that's an adequate answer.
Q. Yes, you're referring to a compendium, whether written or electronic, that would bring together -- would I be right -- letters from subpostmasters, reports, via line managers or similar; am I right?
A. Yes, very much so.
Q. Any court judgments --
A. Yes.
Q. -- whether in favour or against the subpostmaster? 142
Q. Were the names Nichola Arch, Maureen McKelvey, Suzanne Palmer mentioned to you?
A. No, not at that stage.
Q. Did the Post Office draw to your attention right at the beginning any suites of documents held by the Post Office concerning the functioning of, or deficiencies in, the Horizon system, including release notes documenting bug fixes?
A. No.
Q. Major incident reports?
A. No.
Q. Service Management documents?
A. No.
Q. Did they, the Post Office, present you with documentation -- and I include in that phrase memoranda reports, emails, minutes of meetings -- concerning bugs of which the Post Office was already aware, in particular, the Callendar Square bug and the receipts and payments mismatch bug?
A. No. First we heard of that was from Simon Baker in, I think, May 2013.
Q. Did the Post Office provide you with Jason Coyne's report, prepared for the purposes of the case involving Julie Wolstenholme in 2004?
A. No. I wish they had.
Q. Did the Post Office provide you with the BDO Stoy Hayward report prepared for the purposes of the Lee Castleton case in 2006?
A. No.
Q. Did the Post Office provide you with any witness statements that had been prepared in past cases of the Post Office in criminal proceedings which set out categories of documents including PinICLs, PEAKs and KELs, that may be relevant to your investigation?
A. No.
Q. Same question in relation to civil proceedings brought by or against the Post Office?
A. No. The first we heard of civil proceedings was the Lee Castleton case, which came up quite a bit later.
Q. Did the Post Office provide you with any operational change proposal records which set out the existence of a facility for remote access and email correspondence in which the Post Office approved Fujitsu remotely inserting messages at a branch level?
A. No. First we heard of that was lan's discovery of the Gareth Jenkins document while he was sitting next to Susan Crichton and Jarnail Singh.
Q. Did you discuss with anyone within Post Office "Why haven't you got a general file, a compendium or a case management system"?
the Post Office Investigation Department -- John Scott's department. I'd like your views on more or less how sensible that would be for me to do that. What are your views on -- you know, can you write me a little report outside of the main piece of work that you're doing, on your observations about the Investigation Department?"
Q. When was this prepared, roughly?
A. Ooh, oh, now you've got me on that. I think it was -it must have been -- I would have thought it was like August 2012. But it -- I might be wrong on that. Is there no date on this?
Q. No.
A. Oops. Sorry.
Q. Well, it's a draft, in fairness to you.
A. And it remained a draft. It was just really almost a personal memo between myself and Susan, with caveats as to its reliability. But it was pretty well straight away. I remember she'd almost immediately been asked to take over the department, and she was in some -- almost trepidation might not be too strong a word about that.
Q. "DRAFT Observations on the Investigations Function.
"What have we found out about [the Post Office's] Investigation Function in reviewing the Case Files during the Horizon Investigation?
"In reviewing [the Post Office's] documentation 147
A. Absolutely, with Susan Crichton.
Q. What was the answer?
A. Well, she was as exasperated as I was. She knew full well how efficient companies would not even need to ask about that sort of thing, just be there. So I was pushing on an open door, as far as that was concerned.
Q. Can you help us a bit more with what she explained to you?
A. Yes. I mean, I said, literally, "Susan, okay, where's the general file on this that will help to give lan and myself an efficient briefing on what has been going on?", and she said, "There isn't one". I mean, I think I probably used an expletive. And she was, you know, I can't fault Susan. She just knew there wasn't anything there.
Q. Can we look, please, at POL00344051.
A. Ah.
Q. You recognise this document?
A. Oh, yes.
Q. Is this a document that you drafted or Mr Henderson?
A. I did.
Q. What was its purpose?
A. Well, Susan had said to me, as best I recall, and I recall things pretty well, she said something along the lines of "I've been asked to take over the POID -146
relating to the 29 MP -referred cases, and the 20 cases referred by the JFSA, Second Sight has gained an insight into the workings of [the Post Office's] Investigation Team."

That might help you to date it --
A. Yeah, on reflection, this was a little later than end of 2012. This was sometime early in 2013.
Q. Thank you.
"The following observations are based solely on what we have seen in those case files. We have not interviewed any of the members of the Investigation Team, nor its senior management. We have not reviewed its mandate, manpower or workload. We have also not researched the legal basis on which [Post Office] conducts either investigations or prosecutions. With that proviso, we make the following interim observations:
"1. [Post Office] Investigators and investigations are overwhelmingly focused on obtaining an admission of False Accounting from the interviewed [subpostmaster]."

Did you form that view based on reading the file and in particular the interviews?
A. Yes.
Q. "2. [Post Office] Investigators often appear to have paid scant attention to the interviewee's assertions of 148
innocence or his/her reference to specific transaction anomalies. They seem to have shown little or no willingness to establish the underlying root cause of any given shortfall.
"This disinterest seems to be driven by the desire to 'get the money back' from the [subpostmaster], knowing that a False Accounting conviction will provide a relatively inexpensive pathway to that goal. In the event that [a subpostmaster] has not committed any criminal offence, then clause 12 of the standard contract provides an equivalent pathway to asset recover using civil law.
"In either event ... since [Post Office] doesn't
need to show where the money has gone, investigators see no business benefit in trying to establish the underlying root cause(s) of the loss.
"Under the contract ... the burden of proof (that
they are not responsible for the loss) falls on the
shoulders of each [subpostmaster] even though none of
them (in the cases reviewed) had any investigative
skills and their requests for assistance and provision of underlying data were routinely denied, mostly on cost grounds. This meant that the accused had neither the expertise, the external support, nor the data to establish the true reason for the loss and thereby 149
truth' (See comments on the consequences of 'Tunnel
Vision' at the foot of this report)."
I am not going to read the rest of the report. It
will be there for anyone else to read. You then go on
to make some recommendations and why those five problems that you have identified are indeed problems.
A. Yes.
Q. This report is headed up as "Draft"; was it ever finalised?
A. No, I'm afraid not. I think that -- it served its purpose. Susan, I think, was foisted off -- I think she had to take over the department in the end, and so -and it was just done as a kind of an aside. So I'm afraid I never did see the need to finalise it. But I stand by everything in it.
Q. Can we look at what some other documents tell us as to what happened with the report. POL00245685. This is an email of much later from Amanda Peacock (sic) of the CCRC --
A. Pearce.
Q. -- to Rodric Williams, you're not copied in. She says:
"I've managed to find a bit more information about the report which Ron ... apparently wrote."

That's the document we've just looked at.
"Ron tells me that", and then there is a quote 151
either prove their own innocence or realise that they really were responsible for the loss."

Was that on a reading of the 49 case files?
A. Yes.
Q. Your third provisional view or conclusion was:
"In none of the cases examined so far did any Investigator record anything that indicated that there might be any widespread systemic problem worthy of investigation, despite similar allegations being made by different, unconnected, postmasters [subpostmasters]."

Then if we go on to 4:
"We saw a repeated failure to reach consensus or closure with the interviewees. Where the [subpostmaster] was wrong in his or her assertions, one would expect that to be convincingly articulated and proved by the Investigator. Time and again, however, the Investigator and the [subpostmaster] got close to consensus but failed to arrive at it."

Then 5:
"The overwhelming impression gained from reviewing the transcripts of investigative interviews is that the [subpostmaster] was viewed as an enemy of the business. The culture within the Investigation Team appears to be one of a 'presumption of guilt' when conducting an investigation, rather than the aim of 'seeking the 150
attributed to you.
Did you engage in email correspondence with the CCRC or is that a quote from you saying something over the phone?
A. I suspect this is a quote from the meeting that I had in Birmingham with the CCRC, at their request.
Q. I see. So you are said to have said:
"I wrote the report on The Investigations Function in 2013 at the specific verbal request of ... Susan Crichton ..."
A. Yes.
Q. That's accurate, yes?
A. Yes.
Q. "... who later shared with me her concerns about [the Post Office's] Investigations Department ('POID')."
A. Yes.
Q. Is that accurate?
A. Yes, when I said "shared her concerns", she said,
"I think you've nailed it", or words to that effect.
Q. "Later, in the latter part of January 2014 as I recall, my colleague lan Henderson sent a copy of the report (still marked as 'Draft' as far as I recall) to Chris Aujard, who at that time was Post Office's General Counsel, copying Belinda Crowe at [Post Office]." Is that accurate --

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A. Yes.
Q. -- ie both that you said that and that the facts themselves are true?
A. Yes.
Q. "[Mr] Aujard had asked to see a copy of the report after its existence was mentioned at a meeting of the Mediation Working Group. [Post Office] ought to be able to locate a copy of that email -- to which the report was attached. As mentioned, it was sent by lan to those two [Post Office] employees, copying also myself."

Is that accurate that that's what you said but also the underlying facts, that Mr Aujard had asked to see a copy of the report and it was sent over to him?
A. Yeah, I think it was lan, Mr Henderson, that relayed to me that Mr Aujard had asked him in. So I don't think Mr Aujard asked me. I think he asked lan. But I'm a little bit hazy on that. But I know the request came from Mr Aujard and that's why an old copy of the thing was dusted off and produced.
Q. Okay. He accepted when he gave evidence that he received the report from Second Sight?
A. Yes.
Q. Do you know why it was being sent to him?
A. Well, as it says here, it had been mentioned and -I recall it being mentioned in the Working Group 153

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can.
MR BEER: Thank you.
Good afternoon, Mr Warmington. Can we turn up please, page 21 of your witness statement.
A. Yeah.
Q. Paragraph 46, which is in the bottom half of the page. You say:
"After discussions with lan Henderson as to the seriousness of his findings of probable prosecutorial misconduct from his review of the small number of legal files to which he had been given unrestricted access (only seven as [you] recall it), [you] decided to speak directly with Susan Crichton about that very important matter. I believe this discussion took place in August or September 2012. During a meeting with her I said that, whereas I was confident that Second Sight had the ability to assess the adequacy of evidence in cases of suspected fraud and financial theft, we were forensic accountants, not lawyers experienced in criminal prosecutions or defence, so it was essential that our findings be quickly, thoroughly and independently either ratified or refuted by a competent barrister experienced in criminal cases. Susan who, like practically every other General Counsel that I had ever met, claimed no expertise herself in matters of criminal prosecution, 155
meeting, and us being -- lan and I being surprised that, yet again, a key document had not been handed over from one General Counsel to the next and, therefore, it was obviously something that, although I'd produced it for Susan, l'd produced it for her in her capacity as a General Counsel and, therefore, he was entitled to see it.
Q. Was anything done about what you found in your five points or your recommendations second time around, ie when it was produced to Mr Aujard?
A. Not to my knowledge.

MR BEER: Thank you.
Sir, it's just gone 2.05 (sic). I wonder whether we might take the afternoon break now until say 2.20 (sic) -- 3, rather, 3.20.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I was beginning to wonder if there was something wrong with my clock!
MR BEER: Time slows down when you're standing here, sir! SIR WYN WILLIAMS: In any event, we will take the break for the period you mentioned.

MR BEER: 3.20, sir.
( 3.08 pm )

## (A short break)

( 3.21 pm )
MR BEER: Good afternoon, sir, can you see and hear us? 154
said that she would take the matter to Cartwright King." So, firstly, this was a face-to-face meeting, was it?
A. Yes.
Q. Was it just you and Susan Crichton present?
A. Yes.
Q. You drew to her attention matters of prosecutorial misconduct that your colleague, Mr Henderson, had uncovered in a small number of files to which he had had access?
A. Yes.
Q. Can you recall, in general terms, what the type or species of that prosecutorial misconduct was?
A. Yes. In every case, inattention to the underlying root causes of the shortfalls that were being pursued civilly or criminally but, also, as lan has mentioned, the failure to disclose, as far as he could detect -because I was relying on his input on this and it was entirely credible to me -- not disclosing exculpatory evidence, evidence of innocence, if you like, or evidence that would undermine the prosecution or civil case.

So this -- I had, and still have, less experience than does lan on matters of prosecutorial conduct but it was pretty compelling to me and so I thought that 156

I needed to share those views with Susan.
Q. Did any of the five things that you were subsequently to mention in the first part of 2013, in that draft document that we looked at before the break, form part of your briefing to Susan Crichton?
A. Yes, and I think all of them but, as is my nature, I probably put it in rather coarse language.
Q. What did you envisage needed to happen as a result of the provision of this information?
A. Oh, it was very clear. I said, "Don't rely on us, you need to deal with this urgently and go and either rubbish what we've said, or confirm it, and if, God forbid, an expert in criminal law says that Mr Henderson and I -- more Mr Henderson -- is right, you're going to have to review a whole load more cases, not just the ones that we've looked at. But, if it turns out that we're wrong, have the decency to come back to us and tell us 'you're talking nonsense' and we will recalibrate". And that's about the sum of it.
Q. Now, none of is ultimately finds its way into the Interim Report of July 2013?
A. No.
Q. Is that because you saw this as going down a different route or I should ask the broader open question: why?
A. Ooh, I think it's what we were referring to earlier, 157

Then you tell us over the page that you:
"... laughed out loud at that ... simply
preposterous suggestion and responded by saying that
Cartwright King would [be] entirely unsuitable ...
because they could not ever be viewed as independent and they would ... then be 'marking their own homework'."
A. Yes.
Q. You suggested going to a higher ranking firm and suggested some names. You were astonished at her reply, which was along the lines of:
"... 'that won't work, the Board won't approve that sort of expense'. I responded with words along the lines of 'Well then, you're all", and then there's an expletive, I suspect.
A. I'm afraid so.
Q. Which has been caught by --
A. Sadly.
Q. -- our data protection machine:
"... this is an extraordinarily important issue, why is cost in any way relevant?"

This was a very serious issue, wasn't it?
A. Oh, yes, at that point it was the most serious issue that we'd come across and it kind of remained so for years afterwards.
Q. Because the MPs had said that they were interested on 159

Mr Beer: this Interim Report was produced in order to just come out with something that evidenced the work that was going on, and had gone on, and it wasn't intended to cover all of the issues that were still open. My view on this was: Toddle off, get the independent view and have the decency to share it with us.

So, yes, with the benefit of hindsight, some of these embryonic or as yet unconcluded thoughts could have been dumped out in the Interim Report but we didn't.
Q. Because you've explained to us already that the primary concern of the MPs on behalf of their constituents was possible prosecutorial misconduct and here you were potentially uncovering some?
A. Yes, but, to be fair to Post Office and to Mr Henderson, I had to consider the possibility that we were wrong. I didn't think we were, I don't think that lan was, and lan never has been, but we had to give the benefit of the doubt and say, "Go off and get a second opinion on this", but not the second opinion that they eventually sought.
Q. Moving to that, you say at the foot of that paragraph, she said, Susan Crichton, she would take the matter to Cartwright King.

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behalf of their constituents in the cases that had gone to prosecution?
A. Well, let's face it, the -- Lord Arbuthnot was -- he had, I think, three constituents, one of which was Jo, and this was central to the reason he was pushing for the investigation to be carried out. So it was central in his mind and, if it was central in his mind, you can bet that it was central in the minds of his group of MPs.
Q. Did you find out what, in fact, happened at this time, or shortly thereafter, namely in August or September 2012, whether or not your suggestion of referring this to a competent barrister experienced in criminal cases or, as Susan Crichton said she was going to do, refer it to Cartwright King, in fact happened?
A. No, we didn't find out until much later what actually happened.
Q. Is it your understanding that what actually happened was a result of your suggestion in August or September 2012, or was prompted by something entirely different, namely the Simon Clarke Advice of July 2013?
A. Simply to say, I don't know. My ego would like to think that we precipitated the action that was taken but I doubt it. Whether the Clarke Advice was sought because of what we'd raised or just because they thought 160
it was a good idea anyway, I don't know.
Q. Okay, that wasn't fed back, that wasn't a communication that you were a party to, ie the motivating cause for going off to Cartwright King?
A. No, I regret not sort of chasing the point more vigorously. I mean, I probably should have gone back and said, "Where the devil have you got to on this point?" But I think that coincided with -- I can't for the moment remember why -- I'm afraid, why I didn't go back and kick Susan's door down on this. I'm not sure -- she left at some point, so I think --
Q. September 2013, I think.
A. Yes, so quite a bit later than this, yeah.
Q. Can we look at an exchange that I showed Mr Henderson this morning of May 2013 between you and Simon Baker.
A. $\mathrm{Mm}-\mathrm{hm}$.
Q. POL00144687, and look at page 2, please, and scroll down. There's an email to you from Simon Baker of May 2013, so a couple of months before publication of the Interim Report.
A. Yeah.
Q. It looks like it's in readiness for a meeting that you're to have with Paula Vennells. He, Mr Baker, says:
"Just to ensure we are on the same page, Paula would
like to say we have agreed the following with Second 161
qualified to answer a legal question about what may or may not be an unsafe conviction or suspension."

Just three points on that, firstly. You had, in the earlier August or September, been told quite a lot by Mr Henderson about prosecutorial misconduct and you had yourself told Susan Crichton about prosecutorial conduct. We don't see that reflected here.
A. Mm .
Q. "This was going to be dealt with by a different route, this was going to be at my suggestion taken up by an experienced criminal law barrister to see whether we're right or wrong"?
A. $\mathrm{Mm}-\mathrm{hm}$.
Q. Instead, you essentially bat it back and say, "This isn't within our sphere of expertise"; why is that?
A. You know, when I looked at this earlier today, I couldn't quite work out why I worded it this way. I'm sort of hovering around the thought that I was actually being facetious. I was being -- I was -- I was so irritated by the daft question that l've answered it in a rather daft way. What I meant was, I think by that point, we had made it abundantly clear -- I say "we" -lan and I had made it clear -- that we weren't going to use the term "systemic defects". It follows that, if we weren't going to define -- say there had been any

Sight, can you confirm you agree ..."
Then 2:
"By using the 2-3 cases you will answer the question: have systemic defects in the Horizon system resulted in the wrongful conviction or suspension of subpostmasters?"

Now, can you see that that question is mixing two things: defects in the Horizon system, which are systemic; and the conviction, wrongfully, of subpostmasters?
A. It may well be combining two things but I think it's very carefully crafted to be -- ask us to agree to something that is ludicrous.
Q. Then at 4:
"... if question 2 was posting to you today, you would answer it 'no'."

Then can we see your reply on page 1. You say at the top of the page:
"I'm surprised at the questions you have raised as these include matters that are outside our scope of work."

Then scroll down to 2 , you reprint his question and say:
"Our role is to establish the facts relating to specific MP or JFSA nominated cases. We are not 162
systemic defects, how on earth could there be systemic defects that had resulted in a wrongful conviction or suspension of the tiny volume of subpostmasters whose cases we'd looked at, at that point? It was just patently absurd, the -- and I probably should have said that and not answered it as narrowly as I did.

I wish now I'd actually sort of given them both barrels in terms of the suspicion that there was wrongful prosecutions but I don't -- I can't recall exactly why I worded it that way, I'm afraid, Mr Beer.
Q. Okay. le "Hold on, we told your General Counsel about this back in August or September 2012, we found, on a preliminary basis, some probable prosecutorial misconduct. We explained then that we didn't have the experience and we suggested a way forward for the Post Office. It hasn't taken that up"?
A. Yes, that's in abeyance: where's the blasted answer to that? But, certainly in terms of this narrow question, of course, we'd be stark raving mad if we had agreed to that. You know, it just wouldn't be a reliable statement if we had made it.
Q. Again, I think you may have answered this already: do you think, on reflection, this episode, ie picking up probable misconduct of prosecutions as early as August and September 2012, raising that with the Post Office 164
suggested in a solution, them not taking it up, seemingly, but then asking you to use a two or three-case sample size to (a) answer the question whether there are systemic defects and (b) to say that has not resulted in the wrongful conviction of any subpostmasters is absurd, should have been included in the Interim Report?
A. Yes, we were somewhat inured to receiving absurd responses from Post Office already at that point. It would have been nice if we had been less constrained and less professional in expanding on that, perhaps, in the Interim Report. You know, we didn't, and I suppose -I'm not inventing this but I think that, at that point, I still was naive enough to be thinking that my suggestion to Susan was underway and that there would be an educational input to us, which would have said, "Hang on, boys, thank you for alerting us to this but you're completely wrong on that. Here is the words of, you know, a Mr Atkinson or whoever", somebody of that stature, that would have said "You're barking up the wrong tree, you two", and I was ready to receive that input but it never came.
Q. Thank you. That can come down.

You tell us in your witness statement that you need to correct something that you heard in Ms Crichton's 165
A. I find it difficult to think that we could have been as crisp or --
Q. Prescient?
A. Yes, prescient as it turned out to be. But having said that, lan is and has served as an expert witness -I have never chosen to do that work -- and I know, in that sense, what an expert witness looks like and how they conduct themselves, and the form and format of expert witness reports, l've seen enough of them. And I didn't think -- I recognised as early as that, without the benefit of second sight -- haha -- that we would later learn what we have later learned in regard to his briefing and the modifications of his witness statements, and so on.

He was just an expert in the Horizon system and lan and I knew enough about it to say, "Well, how on earth could the courts accept that this was -- this person who had, if you like, never" -- we didn't know at the time he'd never before acted as a expert witness but he just, he didn't come across as an expert witness. He came 167
evidence and the thing that --
A. Yes.
Q. -- you need to correct is she said that you were impressed by Mr Jenkins as an expert witness. You say that, to the best of your knowledge, neither you nor Mr Henderson said that you were impressed by Mr Jenkins as an expert witness but, instead, impressed by him as a computer or systems expert; is that right?
A. Yes, exactly.
Q. Was it you or Mr Henderson that said that to Susan Crichton?
A. Probably both but it would have come more credibly from Mr Henderson, who had more contact with Gareth Jenkins than I did.
Q. In your witness statement, we ought to turn it up, at page 49 , paragraph 106 -- page 49 at the top, second line in, you say:
"What we did say, as I remember it, is that we were impressed by him as a systems/computer 'expert'. The distinction was clear to us, we did not think (from what we had seen) that he could have been aware of the duties that an expert witness would owe to the court and so was partisan in his views concerning Horizon. It is possible that we failed to make that distinction clear to Susan, such that she misunderstood on that point." 166
across as an expert. So I don't think we -- we weren't prescient but I know that we would not have described him as -- to Susan, as "a very good expert witness". That would have been silly of us to do that. We didn't do something like that.
Q. Were you made aware of the existence of the Simon Clarke Advice of 15 July 2013 in either 2013, ' 14 or ' 15 ?
A. No.
Q. Therefore, you weren't shown a copy of it at that time?
A. That's correct.
Q. When did you first become aware of the existence of the document?
A. Well, actually, it was -- it came out with a fanfare of trumpets, didn't it, at the Court of Appeal, when the Clarke Advice was first -- in the Hamilton --
Q. Okay, so in November 2020?
A. Yes. I had not seen it, neither, as far as I'm aware, had Mr Henderson, seen it before that date.
Q. Had you been made aware by the Post Office of the substance of the conclusions reached in relation to Mr Jenkins?
A. No.
Q. There's evidence that the Inquiry has that, in autumn 2013, specifically September, the Post Office lawyers knew that there was at least a serious issue as to 168
whether it, the Post Office, had properly instructed Mr Jenkins as to his expert duties. Did anyone within the Post Office ever reveal that to you?
A. No.
Q. Did you know that Mr Jenkins had given evidence, on one view, as an expert in court proceedings?
A. Yes, I think the first I knew of that, to be precise, would have been when I looked at the Seema Misra, Lee Castleton and other cases, where he'd submitted written witness statements, and I think only in one case did he give -- did he follow that up with oral evidence.
Q. Had the Post Office confirmed to you that it had relied on Mr Jenkins as an expert witness in a series of criminal cases -- I think 15 in total -- but that it had not instructed him as an expert witness properly or had failed to explain the duties owed by an expert? Would that have added to your concerns about the conduct of criminal prosecutions by Post Office?
A. Well, the first part of the question is no they didn't tell us. And would it have added? It most certainly would have.
Q. But would it have made you question still further the competency and ethics of the Post Office prosecutors?
A. Yes.
Q. If you had had revealed to you the substance of the 169
Q. Thank you.

Can I turn to your concluding thoughts, which you set out from paragraph 107 onwards in your witness statement. In answering our question, "Would you have done anything differently", you say this: firstly, you wish you'd refused to allow your firm to be contracted with the subject of the investigation. That's a very big hindsight point, isn't it?
A. Yes.
Q. But more particularly, you say:
"I wish I had demanded, rather than asked, to more frequently see Paula Vennells, but also, when I was doubting whether the truth was penetrating through to her and the Board, I should have demanded to address [the Post Office's] full Board ..."

Did you ever receive an invitation to address the Board?
A. No, other than as has been mentioned earlier today, the post-firing December 2015 invitation to speak to Mr Parker.
Q. Did you ever ask to see the Board?
A. No, I'm afraid not. I think it's fair to say I didn't and I wish I had.
Q. You say in (c) that you wish you had flatly refused to communicate with the Post Office's CEO and its Board 171

Simon Clarke Advice of 15 July 2013, what effect would that have had upon you as to the propriety of certain criminal proceedings conducted by the Post Office?
A. Well, it would have heightened our suspicions that it had been a complete and utter mess.
Q. You said that one of the cases you were considering was Seema Misra.
A. Yes.
Q. Did you read a Seema Misra file?
A. I think lan had looked at the file. We had the scanned, searchable images of those files on what we call CD1, and I reviewed those. So I came to that stuff after Ian had already looked at the paper documents.
Q. To the best of your memory, the Seema Misra file, was that the disclosed documents, ie the documents that would have been disclosed to the defence or was it the prosecution case file?
A. I'm not sure I know the answer to that. It comprised a lot of documents. I did not, I think, establish which among those documents had been disclosed to the defence and which hadn't. That would be more the sort of work that lan was doing. I was -- I looked at every document that was produced to us and so I had reviewed those documents electronically, and -- but to me, at that point, it was just another case.
through the conduit of Chris Aujard, Belinda Crowe, Patrick Bourke and Angela van den Bogerd. Were they the four principal actors who performed the function of conduit?
A. Yes, there might have been others. I think Rodric Williams was in that sort of central team but those are the main ones -- and, of course, later, after Chris Aujard left, Jane MacLeod, the absent witness.
Q. Why do you, on reflection, wish that you hadn't used them as conduits?
A. Well, as is immediately obvious to anybody reviewing the transcripts or, better still, listening to any of the tapes, it was awful, just dealing with people who were not just seemingly failing to understand just about everything we said, but were, we now know -- but it was apparent at the time, we suspected at the time -- were in a sort of cabal that was colluding to or conspiring to thwart every move that we made, and to -- forgive the language or not, as you see fit, Mr Beer -- but I felt that I was -- if you like, I accepted that I should be talking to the monkeys instead of the organ grinder. And I felt -- I now -- with retrospective, with hindsight, I feel ashamed that I allowed myself to fall into that trap.
Q. You tell us in paragraph 108, in answer to the question 172
"Any other matters that you wish to bring to Sir Wyn's attention?", if you had to select one document, it would be an email that you sent on 3 March 2015, which, in fact, I looked at with Mr Henderson this morning.

Can we look, please, rather than repeat that exercise, we've got that on the transcript, look at SSL0000109. Thank you. This is in relation to the case of case M018, Alun Jones. Was he a subpostmaster?
A. Yes.
Q. I don't think we've got a date on this one, but is this a transcript of a call that you recorded?
A. Yes.
Q. Can we go to page 8, please. You say to him in the third paragraph:
"... I know. It's absolutely -- well, I tell you what. I've been an investigator for -- off and on for about 40 years. I've done other jobs at some point but, you know, l've been Global Head of Fraud Investigation for two of the world's largest companies, and so l've investigated frauds in 110 countries around the world, thousands of fraud cases."

Skipping a paragraph:
"I have never come across anything as bad as this.
This is the worst corporate behaviour I've ever come across."

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will be able to find that, but I suspect it was -- I'm kind of making an educated guess here, I'd say sort of August 2014.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: That's fine. It was in the context, then, was it, of you gathering information in terms of your role in the Mediation Scheme?
A. Yes, I mean, I mentioned in my witness statement, sir, that there was, in a sense, two sorts of recordings: there were the recordings that any investigator would routinely make when dealing with a -- when interviewing a subject. I wouldn't call them a suspect, a subject, ie one of the subpostmasters. I would routinely record those, seeking their permission to do so, with a view to later going back and checking what they'd -- exactly what they'd said because it wouldn't always mean immediately what I would later learn that it did mean.

It was one of those conversations, that one. It wasn't one of the sort of covertly recorded calls that I felt pressed to make later on in the -- when dealing with Post Office Management.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right, thank you. I may have another question but l'll wait to see if any of the counsel on behalf of the CPs ask it.
THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.
MR BEER: Sir, just on the issue of dates, where we can see 175

He says:
"But they're bullies ..."
You say: "Yes."
Then the conversation continues.
Is what you said to Mr Jones there an accurate view of your engagement with the Post Office or does it contain hyperbole because you were speaking to a subpostmaster?
A. That's a very good way of expressing the question because one does encourage and develop rapport with whoever one is speaking to, it doesn't mean you become chameleon like. But, no, it's exactly what I felt then and I still feel it now.

MR BEER: Mr Warmington, they are the questions I ask you. I know that there are some questions on behalf of one subpostmaster group -- in fact, two subpostmaster groups, I think it's --
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Before the questions are asked, the date of that conversation with Mr Jones, can you give me any idea of the year we are talking about?
A. I'm not sure, sir, I suspect it was 2014, probably towards the end of 2014, because my view was quite negative at that point, it became more negative as time went by. It wouldn't have been 2015. I would guess -and the recording will have a date on it, so the Inquiry 174
a date, either because of the recording description that's given as RJW261015, we've put that on there. Where we can't see a date, the transcribers have not put a date on there.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Anyway, I simply wanted to be clear in my mind that it was a conversation while Mr Warmington was still investigating, so to speak.
A. Yes, it was. Yeah.

MR BEER: Thank you, sir. I think Mr Stein.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes.

## Questioned by MR STEIN

MR STEIN: Mr Warmington, a few areas to just deal with briefly, or three, I think, to deal with briefly and one slightly more lengthy about suspense accounts, okay?
A. $\mathrm{Mm}-\mathrm{hm}$.
Q. All right. You've answered some questions from Mr Beer regarding the possibility of the Post Office keeping a general file.
A. Mm .
Q. Did you find out from Ms Crichton whether there was anything similar to a general file that might have been kept by Fujitsu?
A. Ooh, no, and I didn't -- I don't remember asking that. It would have been a good question to ask but I don't remember doing that.
Q. Moving, then, on to just a couple of other small areas. There was an NDA, non-disclosure agreement, that was signed by Second Sight.
A. Yeah.
Q. We've heard today the evidence of Mr Henderson about how he viewed the fact that he wished that there'd been an agreement -- essentially a whistleblowing agreement part of the contract?
A. Mm .
Q. I note that you refer in your first statement at paragraph 102 to the fact that both you and Mr Henderson, you offered your assistance to Freeths to provide assistance and support for subpostmasters, presumably in the GLO process; is that right?
A. Yes, that's correct, yeah.
Q. But the severe restraints of your contract and its confidentiality undertakings ensured that did not happen?
A. Yes, with the exception of two meetings. One with Patrick Green, very briefly, when we were essentially told "There's not much you can tell us", or, you know, "I don't want you to tell, thank you very much, we'll find out things ourselves", and, more importantly, I think, in a much longer meeting with Jason Coyne and Dr Worden, when we were helping them to arrive at their 177
on us -- I'd go so -- without bragging, I'd go so far as to say very, very few other firms would have withstood that.

If it hadn't been for the courage of Mr Henderson and maybe my, you know, not telling my wife what all the risks were, I would have pulled stumps on the whole thing.
Q. Talking of courage and dedication, Ms Linnell, Kay Linnell, is someone who has provided, over now many, many years, superb support to Sir Alan; do you agree?
A. I hold Kay in the very highest regard. She flew at me like a tigress in the original meeting, which wasn't amusing until about ten minutes later. I mean, she obviously suspected that we were incompetent or those that were going to be -- produced a whitewash, or both. But, as the case evolved, for very little recompense -and I know what she was paid -- she was required to keep an eye on us to make sure that we weren't producing a whitewash and that we were conducting ourselves properly, and she did a super job.
Q. Over the many years, she has also provided, with a business partner, Mrs Jeremiah, hours and hours, days, weeks, months of support annually to subpostmasters with their business affairs so badly affected by the Post Office; do you agree?
witness statement. I think they produced a combined witness statement in the end.
Q. If you hadn't had the restriction of the NDA, do you feel that would have enabled you and Mr Henderson to come forward with more information at perhaps an earlier stage?
A. Oh, yes.
Q. Learning lessons for the future, in relation to anyone else that engages in work with a corporation such as POL, or any other company, do you think there should be a different way of handling those questions, an NDA that allows for an exception in relation to whistleblowing? How would you regard that process for learning lessons?
A. Thank you, Mr Stein. I think it stems -- one goes back to the underlying problem. To try and patch the situation by having an escape clause in the NDA circumvents the -- or ignores the original problem, which we've referred to. If you make the investigator a vassal of the subject of the investigation, nobody should be surprised that there's tears before bedtime. You know, this was a daft way of carrying on an investigation and I only hope that one of the recommendations from this Inquiry is that that is not a particularly clever way to go about conducting an independent investigation because the pressure it put 178
A. I not only agree but I think she's one of the few people that hasn't been sitting in the dining car of the Horizon gravy train. I mean, she has contributed to my knowledge massively to this case without being paid.
Q. Thank you.

Now, let's turn to suspense accounts.
A. Yeah.
Q. All right. Your statement, second statement, WITN01050200, we can go to that, please, and go to the subheading, paragraph 3 , "Suspense Accounts". I wonder whether that paragraph can go up on the screen, please, WITN01050200, paragraph 3, which is at page 2. Grateful.

Now, here you've made the point that you've:
"... heard the Inquiry many times seeking clarification in respect of concerns that were first expressed by Second Sight [and] repeated by others."
A. Mm .
Q. So, obviously, we know this was dealt with in relation to the Working Group, Sir Anthony Hooper was raising this. This was a matter of clear discussion; is that correct?
A. Yes.
Q. Now, at paragraph 5 you set out there -- and I'm just going to ask you to explain, please, what you're saying 180
here -- paragraph 5 , you describe the different types of suspense accounts. The first one was affected by, essentially, the closure off of the original suspense accounts by the IMPACT Programme, that the Inquiry heard from, I think, if I remember right, from Ms Harding, who described her work in relation to that. So the first type of suspense accounts, what were they?
A. Well, they were simply accounts within Horizon itself at branch level which allowed shortfalls, or also, theoretically, surpluses, to be parked while the subpostmaster and his or her staff was investigating it to find the root cause. They -- because the balances that had been posted by the subpostmasters, those accounts started to clock up quite seriously, and cause concern in Post Office itself. The fantastic solution that was evolved to do that was just to remove the functionality, and it was replaced with the settle centrally and dispute function, which was meant to be a sort of an adequate replacement but it wasn't.
Q. You conclude in the final part of paragraph 5 , in relation to subpostmasters, the removal of the suspense account at that time, leaving many of them with no realistic alternative, which when faced with shortfalls, that they could neither understand nor make good, but to falsify branch books, in order to buy time. 181
there was -- the onus was on the subpostmaster to carry the burden of proof and work things out. There was always this point that "Don't worry, it'll sort itself out; an incoming TC, a credit TC, in that case, will sort out your problem", but never the promise as to how long it would take for that to zero out the amount that was in suspense account.
Q. I think you recognise -- well, l'll ask it as a question: do you recognise that there was a very real issue for subpostmasters trying to, in fact, find what's gone wrong, see if they can look at the material that they had, with huge limitations of access into the Horizon system?
A. Well, that was the very point of course that Sir Alan himself raised first. There was a person that understood the Point of Sale systems and there he found himself looking at this 8 centimetre wide piece of paper that was across the room to try to find the reason for a shortfall, simply not remotely feasible if you're looking at -- at a whole month's transactions to try and find out why you've got a shortfall of, you know, $£ 19,000$, or whatever.

It was just not -- to say it wasn't user-friendly is a raging understatement. It just wasn't a reasonable expectation to expect the subpostmasters and mistresses
A. Yes.
Q. Is that how you see it?
A. One of the -- I mean, I mentioned one of the incomplete replacement -- functional replacement, one of the restrictions of the settle centrally and dispute function was that there was a value limit on how much could be placed there. I think it was essentially based on the subpostmaster's salary. So if you had a subpostmaster on $£ 18,000$ a year and you tried to post a shortfall of $£ 19,000$ a year, it wasn't going to work. If it was 10,000 , it wouldn't work, he couldn't do it. If it was 5,000 , he couldn't do it.

There was a limit to how much could be put in there and that meant that all the big shortfalls that we were seeing just couldn't be parked anywhere. They had to be dealt with immediately on the final -- on the day that that shortfall manifested itself in the books.
Q. Do you recall that, during the IMPACT Programme, the double-whammy effect was the removal of the suspense accounts and also the pressure, essentially, recognised within the IMPACT Programme, on the subpostmasters? In other words, they threw back upon subpostmasters the need to prove that it wasn't their fault?
A. Yes, I think there was always an expectation that, even something in the original pre-2006 suspense accounts, 182
to be able to find the underlying root cause of a problem using the material that they had in the branch.
Q. Moving on, then, from the time of the pre-IMPACT project suspense accounts, help us understand a little better the suspense accounts that continued to exist after that time?
A. Ah, right. Well, now we're talking of course -- I mean, there's a lot been said about this, a whole -- l'll be very brief, unless you want me to be otherwise -- and that is that when I first -- in fact, it was Sir Anthony Hooper that said -- asked the question, under the umbrella heading of "Where the devil did the money go" he said, "Is it possible that a shortfall in one branch could be accounted for by a surplus in another?", you know, what's happening here? And "Second Sight, find out", and so I said something like "there'll be amounts in suspense accounts", and the reach that I got was "What are you talking about? Don't know what you're talking about, we don't have any suspense accounts".
"Yes, you will, you'll have suspense accounts".
So we started to pursue that and, again, it was like swimming up a waterfall, in terms of explaining what we were talking about and why we were interested in that and, eventually, we explained that you -- wherever there 184
is a difference between what one of your clients, like Royal Mail, or National Savings and Investments, or Camelot, or whatever, says is due to or from them, if that is different from what your own books in Post Office shows is due from or to them, there will be entries in both parties' suspense accounts, and those would expect -- as Mr Henderson has mentioned, ordinary businesses would expect to clear those very quickly indeed, otherwise they get out of hand.
Q. What does "very quickly" mean?
A. Well, in Citibank, they had to be cleared by 7.30 the following morning and you'd expect them to be, because, if Citibank does a $\$ 500$ million foreign exchange deal with Bank of America and one processes it at 500 million and the other at 50 million, you'd better get to the bottom of that damn quick.
Q. Does it make any difference that Post Office is dealing with, say, 11,000 branches and the size of the system in operation?
A. Oh, yes.
Q. Does that have any relation to the getting it done PDQ?
A. Yes, I'd be a cruel person to fail to acknowledge that. It was a complicated process.
Q. Meaning what? Meaning that it should take longer than, say, 24 hours? It should take any particular time? 185
A. Yes.
Q. You are an accountant?
A. Yes.
Q. Materiality seems, if we understand it correctly, to vary, depending upon, perhaps, the size of the business, so if we look at something the size of, say, Lloyds Bank, I use as an example, what they relate to a banking business in relation to materiality, in concerning its turnover and operations, $£ 10,000$ may not be material; is that a fair way to look at it?
A. Yes.
Q. Regarding the question of materiality, where you've got this complex mixture, so materiality to a subpostmaster or mistress may be $£ 5,000, £ 10,000$ maybe a few hundred, but to the overall Post Office business, it may be -may not be the same. Is that a fair description of the problem?
A. Yes, it is, the only thing I'd add to that, Mr Stein, is if we're dealing with -- there was a sort of uniqueness about the Post Office business model, where the coalface workers, the agents, the subpostmasters, were separate businesses and they were held accountable for the debts. We know all that stuff, don't we? There's nothing new in what l've just said. That's radically different from, shall we say, a big bank. If a shortfall, whether 187

What would be your estimate as to how --
A. If it was auditing it, Mr Stein, I would be fairly forgiving if it was taking a month or maybe even two to clear some of those items but I would understand the impact of the time delay in clearing those on the people impacted by it, whether it was a customer -- not so much the clients, they can live with that sort of time delay, but if it was a customer or a subpostmaster that was having to wait two months, three months, six months, to sort out a problem that he or she had had to cover financially during that interim period, you can bet your life we would have given a lot of credibility or a lot of emphasis to that point.
Q. So the driver from the auditor perspective would be to get this sorted: it impacts real people, real families, small businesses?
A. Yes, that's part and parcel of the reference earlier that I made to materiality and, of course, Post Office dined out on this sort of phraseology, that contextually, the size and frequency of occurrence of these tiny little amounts was so small and so insignificant in their books as to be immaterial. But to the people on the other end of the transaction you'd bet it was material.
Q. Materiality is a term of art used within accountancy. 186

ATM related or else, occurs in a bank branch of Lloyds Bank and it's $£ 12,000$, it's immaterial, in their books and it's actually immaterial in the branch's books because nobody is being expected to pay it out of their own pocket.

So the materiality issue is different in Post Office's case because of the uniqueness of the business model. I hope I haven't made that confusing.
Q. Should that have been considered by the accountants as being a different way to look at materiality within the Post Office?
A. Well, it would have, if I'd been doing the audit, yeah.
Q. Now, paragraph 11 of your second statement, you refer then to the suspense accounts issue and the amounts that remain sitting. If you can go to paragraph 11, top of page 7, please -- thank you:
"It follows that any amount that remains sitting, as a component of the balances in any of POL's client suspense accounts, will always, in truth, properly be owned by, and therefore be properly returnable to, one of only four potential owners. Those four are:

## "POL itself.

"One of POL's customers.
"One of POL's clients ...
"[Or a subpostmaster]."
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Then at paragraph 12, you then set out that you and your colleagues:
"... formed a hypothesis that [you] wished to test (and hopefully to disprove) that some of the UNRECONCILED net credits that POL had every year (after three years) credited to its own [profit and loss] account might that have included amounts that, had POL been able to establish to whom they truly belonged, ought to have been returned to [subpostmasters/ mistresses and the branches]."
You go on to say this:
"We later learned from POL, when it wrote to us about its Suspense Accounts, that it had released, during the year 2010/2011, gross unresolved credits that aggregated to $£ 612,000$."
Help us understand what that means and also help us understand whether you had any other amounts for other years going on through?
A. Yes, and I hope I haven't been too journalistic in picking the largest amount that we told about because they varied from 100,000, 212, and so on, and the last figures that we had related to 2010/2011 and I believe later there was perhaps a KPMG report that looked into later years, and the figures went up even further. What we were interested in was specifically point 4 there. 189
these issues in relation to the suspense accounts, what has happened to the money, being paid into balance shortfalls that may have been due to a Horizon system error, where has it gone? Have you got an answer to that question?
A. Simple answer is no. The slightly longer answer is I have read, in material that has been supplied to me by the Inquiry, reports by KPMG and others that took place as late as 2020, that seemingly give some reassurance that everything currently is okay.

What they didn't do was go back and pick up the specific items that we drew to Post Office's attention that had come to the surface out of the 136 cases that we looked at, where specific examples of subpostmasters not being reimbursed with amounts that they'd had to cough out, in relation to one-sided entries, and so on, the specific cases that we brought to the attention of the Chief Financial Officer were not, as far as I can see, ever even looked at by the subsequent auditors that -- and accountants that allegedly gave a clean bill of health on suspense accounts.
MR STEIN: Thank you, Mr Warmington.
THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.
MS PAGE: Sir, thank you.
I should be able to finish by 4.30 .

We knew that it was likely that some customers had been shortchanged. But, callously, we didn't give two hoots about that. We weren't concerned about that. Similarly, we weren't concerned if Royal Mail or Camelot or National Savings and Investments had been shortchanged in some way. Why should we worry? And we weren't worried if Post Office had trousered, as it were, amounts that it should have had trousered.

We were concerned solely with those items that were -- that remained -- not uninvestigated. I suspect they were investigated but unresolved, that were then -that then found their way into the profit and loss account.

It was deeply concerning that there existed the possibility, I would go so far as, in my mind, to a certainty, that some of that aggregate, 612,000 , would have been, had there been deeper and more thorough investigation carried out, that would have included amounts that would -- should rightly have been returned to subpostmasters and there are enormous consequences from that.
Q. Let me ask you the same last question I asked to Mr Henderson: has the situation changed to date? In other words, to the date of your evidence being given now before this Inquiry, have you had a resolution to 190

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Okay.
Questioned by MS PAGE
MS PAGE: Mr Warmington, picking up on the last point you have been asked about, I actually would like to take you to that KPMG report, so we'll bring up POL00030909, please. Is this the document that you were referring to when you were answering Mr Stein's questions?
A. It certainly is.
Q. We can see there that that's from 2020 and I believe we'll be able to hear who commissioned that. Have you had a chance to look at it properly?
A. I've looked at it pretty thoroughly, yes.
Q. So if we go to the first page, there's a sort of set of what we might call caveats?
A. Yeah.
Q. Is there anything that you'd like to draw the Inquiry's attention to about those?
A. Ooh, wait a minute. Um, let me see. Ooh, hang on. I mean, it's a pretty draconian sort of set of caveats. Hang on a second. Well, obviously, the second paragraph, l've gone through it all but coming back to the second paragraph, the sort of the terms of reference to me is always a sort of danger signal. What exactly did they get asked to look at and did they -- were they let off the leash to follow investigative instincts or 192
were they set on a set of tramlines and the clockwork wound up to just go where the client wanted them to go?
Q. Do you understand from that second paragraph, or indeed from anywhere else, that they were let off the leash?
A. I got the sense that they weren't let off the leash and -- because I mentioned in my second witness statement that the obvious lines of inquiry that lan and I would have pursued, along with our fellow investigators, just didn't appear here. They didn't even mention the sort of things, which was to look at the history of what had been cleared and find out where -- what Post Office had learned about who really did have to be repaid when they actually bothered to or actually found out who the true owners of items in suspense were. Were any of the amounts that they did bottom out returned to subpostmasters and, if it was none, then we were wrong in our hypothesis. So I didn't see any evidence --
Q. None of that is answered here, is it?
A. No, I don't think it is, no.
Q. What we get in the third paragraph is:
"The report should not therefore be regarded as suitable to be used or relied upon by any person or any purpose including any court or other investigatory proceedings."

Post Office was absorbing sums into their profit and loss, which rightfully should have been returned to subpostmasters, who within Post Office would or should have known that that was happening?
A. You want names? Well, it would have been the Chief Financial Officer, Mr Cameron, who I think has been on gardening leave, so he probably might not know that now, and Mr Ismay, who was the functionary in Chesterfield, whose department handled this stuff, and he was in the meeting between myself, Mr Henderson and Mr Cameron, just about two weeks before we were chopped.
Q. Do you think that there's any directors on the Board, apart from Mr Cameron, who would or should have known about this?
A. Well, they all should have had known about it but there wasn't a lot of attention to detail, as far as we could detect.
Q. Can I then also just ask you this about your investigations: did you find that Horizon conducted true double-entry bookkeeping?
A. Ooh, haha! I didn't ask you to raise that question but I'm glad you did! I harbour a suspicion, and I've mentioned it, I think, in my second witness statement, that the assertion that Horizon is a double-entry bookkeeping system is not safe. I think it is at
A. Yes. Like us here!
Q. Quite. Then we've got the paragraph on the right-hand side, second down:
"KPMG does not provide any assurance on the appropriateness or accuracy of sources of information relied upon and KPMG does not accept any responsibility for the underlying data used in this report."
A. Yes, this is the sort of wording, Ms Page, that you put in when you're going to do what I think has elsewhere been described as a "desk-based audit" that says, "We're just going to ask some questions and we're going to believe everything we're told and we're not going to actually dig into the forensically dig into the detail".
Q. Yeah.
A. But I'm -- I hesitate to criticise a fine firm like KPMG.
Q. But it's not the sort of job that --
A. They're bigger than us and they'll beat me up!
Q. -- you would have done?
A. No, not the sort of thing that we would have done, no.
Q. All right, thank you very much.

Can I just ask you about -- we can take that document down now. Can I ask you a little bit more, though, about this, this subject of suspense accounts. If it turns out, if it can ever be found out, that the 194
a branch level for some products. If you sell $£ 100$ worth of stamps -- Jo -- for cash, the double entry is simple: less stock, more cash. $£ 100$, both sides. Not a problem.

But if you're, as in Jo's case, if you have a $£ 2,000$ shortfall that, in a moment in time, becomes a $£ 4,000$ shortfall, that extra $£ 2,000$ has got to come from somewhere and go to somewhere. There's no such thing as an invented amount of money in a double-entry bookkeeping system. It would have to go somewhere.

And when Jo pressed that button and her shortfall doubled -- and she's not the only person that asserted that -- if that truly happened, then the system invented a one sided entry, and what it effectively did was said to Jo, "You need to have $£ 2,000$ more in the till or in the safe than you've actually got". But why?

So, in that context, it doesn't satisfy the test of a double-entry bookkeeping system and also raised the points about entries that were processed by other bolted-on front-end systems, like the Forde Moneychanger.
Q. I was just about to ask you that as my final question, which is: was that exacerbated by those systems -- so, obviously, we've got the Electronic Point of Sale System --
A. Yeah.
Q. -- which managed Post Office products like stamps, and so forth, but then we've got these bolt-ons that fed figures into Horizon, whether it be from Bank of Ireland cashpoints, Lottery terminals, and I think you mentioned Foreign Exchange, there may have been others. Did the double-entry problem that you've described with the 2,000/4,000, was that made any worse from your investigations when looking at those bolt-ons?
A. Well, the principle of double-entry bookkeeping -- I go back to my training in 1966, a bit of a long time ago but I can remember back that far -- is based on transactional double entry. You don't enter batches of transactions, as you do with Lottery, the following morning, or ATMs, processed at 4.30 in the afternoon, or Foreign Exchange transactions processed on a Wednesday once a week.

You can't assert that to be Horizon double entry. These are block entries that are passed. So to claim the benefits of double-entry bookkeeping in relation to those front-end, bolt-on systems, I think is unsafe.
Q. Do I understand this rightly: that, if they had been being processed in realtime, they would have stood a much better chance of being true double entry but, because there was this once-every-period batch entry of, 197

Mediation Scheme was a scheme which was operated by all concerned in good faith.

You were very much part of the core of people engaged in the operation of that scheme. Two questions, really: first of all, is it right that the idea of the
Scheme came from the Post Office?
A. Yes. Yes. I think from Susan Crichton, my understanding.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Contemporaneously with your operation of the Scheme, ie at the time, did you gain any or did you have any idea about whether or not you were engaged in a scheme which was being operated by all concerned in good faith or whether Post Office were engaged in a scam?
A. Well, call me naive, sir, but, I mean, we would not have -- I would not have wasted the time of my team, my own and my team's time, pursuing something that we'd recognised from the outset was a waste of time. We actually -- I now regard as pretty naive about this, I kick myself, but it looked like a legitimate process until, eventually, we realised that it wasn't. It was just -- I mean, it was much later that we learned about the phraseology of "only the expectation that token payments would be made".

I think it was Sir Alan Bates that twigged that, in 199
say, Lottery transactions, that caused problems?
A. Well, yes, in theory. But, I mean, the issue on, for example, foreign exchange transactions is -- when I asked Post Office for a copy of the Forde Moneychanger user manual to be able to work out how the accounting was working, they said they hadn't got one. I had to re-reverse engineer the foreign exchange accounting from the 2,500 pages of documents supplied to me by one of the subpostmasters' professional advisers, as opposed to the three documents that Post Office had supplied in that case.

MS PAGE: Well, thank you. Those are my questions, Mr Warmington.

Thank you, sir.

## Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS

THE WITNESS: Thank you.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Mr Warmington, I think I should ask you
a few questions along the following lines, so please bear with me.

Some of the senior executives and, I believe, Ms Perkins, in particular, as Chair, were asked the question -- or the suggestion was put to them, I think is a better way of putting it -- that the Mediation Scheme was a scam, all right? They denied that and, in effect, told me that, so far as they were concerned, the 198
the vernacular, and realised that it was a sham well before I did. I apologise for my stupidity.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, I wasn't asking you the question, really, to, in any sense, be critical of you but rather to gain an insight into how you viewed things at the time. All right? So is the answer to my question that, for much of the time, during which you were involved in the Mediation Scheme, you did think that it was being operated in good faith but there came a point in time when you began to doubt that; is that a fair summary of what you're telling me?
A. Yes, it is, and when we realised -- as soon as we realised the POIRs were taking an awful long time to get to us and, when they arrived, none of them gave an inch in regard to any improper conduct or poor behaviour or mistakes made by Post Office itself, we sort of twigged, we realised, that this was going through a filtering process that was filtering out any admission by Post Office. I think, at that point, we realised that we were -- that it was a waste of time.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Just so that I can try and put things into sequence, how, or rather when did you form that view, say, in comparison with when the schemes ceased to operate at all?
A. Well, by the time we got to round about October 2014, it 200
was just open warfare, so it was well before that. Go back to sort of January/February 2013, it was running quite well. On the departure of Susan, it took a marked turn for the worse. So I would say by early -certainly by January -- by year-end 2013, we were realising that it had become dysfunctional in the extreme, so badly that I was prepared to pull stumps and pull the team out but --
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I've heard about two issues, which were clearly thorny issues to be grappled with. One was the expectation gap, as it's been called, namely that, on the one side, subpostmasters who suffered significant losses expected to have proper compensation, whereas, on the Post Office side, the expectation was that the compensation would be much lower. So that was thorny issue number 1.

Thorny issue number 2, as I see it -- so tell me if I've got it wrong -- was the very significant debate which took place as to whether or not convicted people should be mediated with at all. Were those the two major difficulties?
A. Well, they certainly were two major difficulties. Yes. The second one, and dealing with that first, it was just obvious -- it was obvious to everybody that the principal driving force for the -- for calling us in and 201
A. Oh, yes.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Last question: what were the other major difficulties which caused it, in the end, to founder?
A. It was the lawyering up, and the worst problem was the lawyering up. This fact that I harboured the suspicion, I think Mr Henderson probably shares this, that the two teams of -- I'll call them investigators, they weren't really -- the people that were preparing the POIRs on a reporting line to Angela van den Bogerd, I met some of those people: lovely people and they were empathetic towards the postmasters' cases.

I strongly suspect that the reports they were producing contained quite a few acknowledgements of failings by Post Office and yet none of them that got through to us had any such concessions and we would have to be pretty thick not to notice that. We did, and my suspicion -- and I think this is probably the case -- is that it just went through a filtering process to remove anything that was in any way an admission of failure, let alone guilt, by Post Office.

So the work, the good work, that those people were doing, I think, was filtered through Cartwright King and Bond Pearce, and the offices of Rodric Williams and Belinda, Aujard and others, into such an anodyne response as to completely dismiss any assertions that 203
carrying out an investigation, was -- had resulted from a meeting between Lord Arbuthnot and Alice Perkins before -- I think before she became Chairman and there was this agreement to proceed, and it's absurd to think that Lord Arbuthnot would have said, "Oh, and it's perfectly okay if you leave Jo Hamilton and anybody else out of this".

I mean, he'd made it completely clear that people with convictions of any sort should be entitled to benefit from the Mediation Scheme. But the corruption of the Mediation Scheme, this expectation gap -- the first point that you asked, sir -- when we started to see the CQRs, the case questionnaire responses, the work done by the professional advisers, including Howe+Co and others, when we started to see those coming in with pretty big numbers attached, it didn't surprise Mr Henderson and myself at all. Some of the numbers were quite big but it didn't surprise us but we, of course, hadn't been told at that point that Post Office was harbouring the view that they were only expecting to make token payments. They never said that to us. If they had, we'd have said, "Well, what are you smoking?"
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So I've identified two major
difficulties. You say they were two of the major difficulties.

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the professional advisers were making, or that we ourselves were making. Sorry, that's a very long answer to a short question.
SIR WYN WILLIAMS: No, that's very helpful, thank you.
That's it, Mr Warmington, I assume, since I usually have the last word, if anybody is going to have the last word.

So thank you very much for making two witness statements. Thank you for giving oral evidence this afternoon, I'm very grateful to you and I'm sorry I prolonged your stay by about ten minutes, unusually for me, by asking a number of questions.

So I think we'll adjourn now until tomorrow and start again at 9.45 , Mr Beer?
MR BEER: Yes.
THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.
MR BEER: Thank you very much.
THE WITNESS: Thank you, Mr Beer.
( 4.40 pm )
(The hearing adjourned until 9.45 am the following day)
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