Thursday, 18 April 2024 1 2 (9.45 am) 3 MR BEER: Good morning, sir. Can you see and hear us? 4 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you very much. MR BEER: Thank you, may I call Rodric Williams, please. 5 6 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, of course. 7 RODRIC DAVID ALUN WILLIAMS (sworn) 8 Questioned by MR BEER 9 MR BEER: Good morning, Mr Williams. As you know, my name 10 is Jason Beer and I ask questions on behalf of the Inquiry. Can you give us your full name, please? 11 Rodric David Alun Williams. 12 Α. 13 Q. Thank you very much for coming to give evidence to the 14 Inquiry today and for previously providing us with 15 a very detailed witness statement. Can we look at that 16 witness statement, please. It's WITN08420100. There's 17 a hard copy in front of you. It's 131 pages long, 18 excluding the exhibit sheet, and it's dated 11 March 19 20 If you can turn, please, to the last page, 131, is 21 that your signature? 22 A. Yes, it is. 23 Q. Thank you. I think there are some corrections, four, 24 that you wish to make. Can we deal with those in turn, 25 please? 1 "environment"? 2 A. Yes, please. 3 Q. Then, lastly, page 97 and paragraph 195, which is at the 4 top half of the page, five lines in, the line beginning 5 "Their client for the purpose of giving or receiving 6 legal advice", do you wish to insert the word "dominant" 7 before the word "purpose"? 8 A. Yes, it's line 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. So "dominant" --9 Q. So can you read the whole sentence you wish to change? "The same applies to communications between a lawyer and 10 A. 11 their client or a third party for the [insert 12 'dominant'] purpose." 13 Q. Okay, so it's that "purpose", not the earlier one that 14 I'd identified? A. Yes, thank you. 15 Q. So insert the word "dominant" before the word "purpose"? 16 17 A. Thank you. Q. With those four corrections in mind -- there are some 18 19 minor typographical errors that I'm not going to go through and correct, there are quite a few of those but 20 21 I'm not going to correct them -- with those substantive 22 corrections in mind are the contents of the witness

1 A. Thank you. 2 Q. Page 18, paragraph 36. At the top of page 18, the 3 sentence, "When I forwarded the email to John Scott and 4 Rob King on 22 May 2014", should that read "2013"? 5 Yes, that's correct. 6 Q. So cross out "14" and write "13"? 7 A. Correct, thank you. 8 Q. Secondly, paragraph 41 on page 21. In the second line, 9 you say, "I have no recollection of this email or the 10 matter to which it relates but indicates that the basis 11 for seeking recovery was that the amount alleged to have 12 been gained was the proceeds of"; do you want to cross 13 out the word "have been gained was the proceeds of 14 crime" and instead insert the words "be owing was 15 connected to a criminal conviction"? 16 A. Yes, please. 17 Q. So cross out the words "have been gained was the 18 proceeds of crime" and insert "be owing was connected to 19 a criminal activity"? 20 A. Thank you. 21 Q. Page 54, please. In paragraph 106 at the top of 22 page 54, and the second line "amount to an audit of the 23 audit processes used rather than a review of the 24 assurance work itself", would you wish to cross out the 25 words "work itself" and instead insert the word 1 down. As I've said, the witness statement is very 2 detailed and you've obviously devoted a substantial 3 period of time to the making of it by setting out the 4 relevant events in largely chronological order and adding your recollections where you have them. I'm 5 6 accordingly not going to ask you detailed questions 7 about every aspect of the witness statement but, 8 instead, take you to some of the more significant events 9 over the past 12/13 years or so. 10 Can I start with your background, please. You 11 joined the Post Office in August 2012; is that right? 12 Α. Yes, late August. 13 You remain an employee of the Post Office? 14 Α. Yes 15 Q. Specifically, you are the Head of Legal in the Post 16 Office's Remediation Unit? 17 A. I'm a Head of Legal in the Remediation Unit, yes. 18 Q. There's more than one Head of Legal? A. Yes. 19 20 Q. Okay. How many Heads of Legal are there in the 21 Remediation Unit? 22 A. At the moment, I think there may be another two,

possibly three. I'm not sure, I'm sorry.

Remediation Unit; is that right?

Okay, so you're one of the Heads of Legal within the

Thank you very much. That witness statement can come

23

24 **Q**.

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statement true to the best of your knowledge and belief?

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- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 Q. I think you've held that role in the Remediation Unit
- 3 since August 2020?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. The Post Office's website suggests that the Remediation
- 6 Unit has three main functions: compensation and redress
- 7 for subpostmasters; administering matters related to the
- 8 appeals of historic criminal convictions; and the
- 9 provision of full assistance to this Inquiry?
- 10 A. I--
- 11 Q. Is that a fair summary of what it does?
- 12 A. I had thought the Inquiry was separate but it seems
- 13 correct, yes.
- 14 Q. If you felt that it was separate, I mean, you work in
- 15 it, is it separate or not?
- 16 A. I don't deal with the Inquiry Team so I thought it was
- 17 separate.
- 18 Q. Right. So do you deal with compensation and redress?
- 19 A. I have done previously, yes.
- 20 Q. Do you deal with matters relating to the appeals of
- 21 historic convictions?
- 22 A. I have assisted the company with that, yes.
- 23 Q. I'm sorry, I missed you there?
- 24 A. I'm sorry, I have assisted the company with that, yes.
- 25 Q. Does it follow that, notwithstanding your personal role
 - 5
- 1 **A.** Yes.
- 2 Q. Do you accept that, since joining the Post Office, you
- 3 remained bound at all times by the SRA's code of
- 4 conduct?
- 5 **A.** I do.
- 6 Q. If we turn up, please, on the screen, page 11 of your
- 7 witness statement, paragraph 22, you say in the first
- 8 sentence you'd:
- 9 "... often been asked to distil or synthesise
- 10 information provided from various parts of the business
- 11 for other audiences within the business, particularly if
- 12 the information concerns legal issues with which I have
- 13 some familiarity."
- 14 Then at the end of the paragraph, you say:
- 15 "I generally rely on others for the accuracy of the
- 16 content, especially if it concerns areas outside my
- 17 expertise, with my role being to 'sense check' it."
- 18 Yes
- 19 **A.** Yes.
- 20 Q. That might be interpreted as meaning that your role was
- 21 limited to one of gathering pieces of paper written by
- 22 other people together, like a cataloguer of information;
- 23 is that what you were trying to say?
- 24 A. Yes
- 25 $\,$ **Q.** It might be interpreted as meaning that your role was

- 1 in the events which have happened since August 2012, you
- 2 hold a senior position in the unit concerned with the
- 3 provision of redress to subpostmasters --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- and with the administration of issues relating to the
- 6 appeals against their convictions?
- 7 A. Yes
- 8 Q. In terms of your qualifications, I think you were
- 9 admitted as a solicitor and a barrister in New Zealand
- 10 in 1995?
- 11 A. Correct.
- 12 Q. You worked in that country on civil matters until 1998?
- 13 **A**. Yes
- 14 Q. From 1999, you worked in civil litigation practice in
- 15 the United Kingdom and you were then admitted as
- a solicitor of England and Wales in 2002; is that right?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. You worked in New York between 2003 and 2006, when you
- 19 then returned to the UK again to work in civil
- 20 litigation matters?
- 21 A. Yes, I came back from New York at the end of 2005.
- 22 Q. Overall, do you accept, therefore, that you had
- 23 considerable and wide-ranging experience as a civil
- 24 litigator in private practice, prior to joining the Post
- 25 Office?

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- 1 limited to summarising the legal advice of others; is
- 2 that what you were trying to say?
- 3 A. No, not necessarily. It would depend on the task at
- 4 hand.
- 5 Q. So, over the decade period that we're talking about,
- 6 sometimes you provided legal advice of your own?
- 7 **A.** Yeah, I would think that was right, yes.
- 8 Q. You didn't simply distil or synthesise the legal advice
- 9 of others?
- 10 A. Not exclusively but I would have said predominantly,
- 11 with the matters we're concerned with here.
- 12 Q. You mainly summarised other people's legal advice in
- 13 that 10-year period; is that right?
- 14 A. No, I think that's an oversimplification.
- 15 Q. You tell us, then?
- 16 A. I'm sorry, what would you -- I'm struggling to
- 17 understand, I'm sorry.
- 18 Q. Yes, it's entirely my fault. What was your role,
- 19 looking at it as a whole, in the provision of legal
- 20 advice to the Post Office concerning the Horizon system
- and matters that concerned it? Did you mainly summarise
- 22 other people's legal advice and sense check it --
- 23 A. No, I would --
- 24 Q. -- or did you provide legal advice of your own?
- 25 A. It would literally depend. It's a very broad subject

- 1 over a long period of time. My primary role was to
- 2 ensure that the company was receiving the advice it
- 3 needed that might have come from a variety of sources,
- 4 it may have been something I could contribute to. But
- 5 the concern was the delivery to Post Office so that it
- 6 could act as it saw fit or as it saw it needed to.
- 7 Q. So it's neither one thing nor the other, it's both,
- 8 depending on the context?
- 9 A. Quite possibly and possibly at the same time. It may be
- 10 that I could contribute in addition to formal advice
- 11 received but ...
- 12 Q. In terms of the period before you moved to the
- 13 Remediation Unit, so from the time when you joined the
- 14 Post Office in August 2012 until, I think, August 2020,
- that 10-year period, what was your job title?
- 16 A. I think it changed halfway through. I was -- I was
- 17 hired as, quote, "Litigation Lawyer", I think that was
- 18 the title, and then I became Head of Legal, (Dispute
- 19 Resolution & Brand).
- 20 Q. When was that, please?
- 21 A. I think that was in 2017, it's in my statement.
- 22 Q. That can come down, the statement that's on the screen,
- thank you. Before you became Head of Legal in 2017, to
- 24 whom did you report?
- 25 A. I reported initially -- that's before I became Head of
 - 9
- 1 a prosecuting authority?
- 2 A. I don't know that -- I became aware shortly after joined
- 3 that it there was prosecution activity, yes. I don't
- 4 know about Post Office being a prosecuting authority,
- 5 though. I'm not sure about that.
- 6 Q. I think you're probably now aware that, between 2000 and
- 7 2015, the Post Office brought some 850 prosecutions,
- 8 resulting in over 700 convictions?
- 9 A. I'm aware of that, yes.
- 10 Q. Are you now aware that, between April 2013 and June
- 11 2018, over 600 subpostmasters were suspended?
- 12 A. No, I wasn't aware of that figure.
- 13 Q. Did you have any role in that period -- that's '13 to
- 14 '18 -- in giving advice over the suspension of
- 15 subpostmasters?
- 16 A. I think it's likely that I did, yes.
- 17 Q. So you were aware that although in late 2013/early 2014,
- 18 prosecutorial activity ceased, the Post Office carried
- 19 on suspending subpostmasters?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. What was your role in the suspension of subpostmasters?
- 22 $\,$ **A.** I would -- so the part of the business that would be
- 23 responsible for that was a group of people called
- 24 Contract Advisers and that team would contact me, as

25 a member of the Post Office Legal team, from time to

- 1 Legal? Yes, I reported to a Head of Legal.
- 2 Q. Who was that?
- 3 A. For a period -- sorry, I don't -- I can't remember the
- 4 dates, it was to Hugh Flemington for a period and then
- 5 a colleague called Jessica Madron.
- 6 Q. After you became Head of Legal, to whom did you report?
- 7 A. I reported to the Legal Director, who was Ben Foat.
- 8 Q. Was that and has that been for the entirety of the
 - period from '17 until today?
- 10 A. Not until today, no. It was until I moved to the
- 11 Remediation Unit.
- 12 Q. Okay. Between August 2012 and moving to the Remediation
- 13 Unit, did you become aware of the very high number of
- prosecutions that had been and, when you joined, were
- 15 still being brought against subpostmasters by the Post
- 16 Office?

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- 17 A. I'm sorry, what was the date range again, please?
- 18 **Q.** August 2012?
- 19 A. Until?
- 20 Q. Until you moved to the Remediation Unit?
- 21 A. I became aware, yes.
- 22 Q. When did you become aware of the numbers of
- 23 prosecutions?
- 24 A. I couldn't tell you.
- 25 Q. When you joined, were you aware that the Post Office was
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- 1 time, and ask me for my advice, my support, my input
 - into a case they may be looking at.
- 3 Q. So was that whether there were sufficient grounds to
- 4 suspend?

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- 5 A. For the most part, that was their decision but they
- 6 might discuss a particular case to see what I thought --
- yes -- I think yes is the answer. I'm sorry. Yes.
- 8 Q. So when you were giving this advice, although the
- 9 prosecution activity had stopped but the suspension
- 10 activity continued, looking at the matter generally, did
- 11 you bring into account any knowledge you had -- and
- 12 I think we're going to hear in due course it was
- an unfolding knowledge, a developing knowledge -- of
- 14 bugs, errors and defects in Horizon?
- 15 A. Not that I specifically recall, no.
- 16 **Q**. Do you know whether corporately the Post Office brought
- 17 any developing knowledge that it had into account in
- 18 that period --
- 19 **A.** Um --
- 20 Q. -- ie "We've stopped prosecuting people, we're carrying
- 21 on suspending people, we may be relying on Horizon data
- in order to suspended people, should we be doing so?"
 - 23 A. I'm not aware of that, no.
 - 24 Q. You make a point in your witness statement on a number
 - 25 of occasions that you were not and are not experienced

- 1 in matters of criminal law; is that right?
- 2 A. I would describe myself as "not a criminal lawyer".
- 3 Q. When you were giving advice to senior executives and
- 4 others in the Post Office, did you make that explicitly
- 5 clear to them?
- 6 A. I may not have done.
- 7 Q. Why would that be?
- 8 A. Certainly when I joined there was a specialist criminal
- 9 lawyer. I had been --
- 10 Q. Was that Jarnail Singh?
- 11 A. Yes, that's correct. I had been hired to attend to
- 12 civil matters and I -- certainly to most of my
- 13 colleagues, it would be well known that I wasn't
- 14 a criminal lawyer and had no background or experience in
- 15 criminal law matters.
- 16 Q. When you say "colleagues", do you mean legal colleagues?
- 17 A. As my first -- yes, yes, I did mean that.
- 18 Q. I'm thinking about your "clients", in inverted commas,
- 19 even though you're an in-house lawyer. To what extent
- 20 did you make clear to -- let's restrict it at the moment
- 21 to senior executives, to whom you were giving advice,
- that you were not a criminal lawyer or you were not,
- 23 using my formulation, experienced in relation to matters
- 24 of criminal law?
- 25 $\,$ A. I don't recall expressly putting that disclaimer on
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- 1 have been in what he wrote and in what he said in the
- 2 office.

- 3 A. No, I don't recall that, no.
- 4 Q. So if, thinking back, you formed an impression of him,
- 5 you would have thought he would have treated postmasters
- 6 fairly, would you?
- 7 A. Yeah, it's not something that had crossed my mind so I'm
 - sort of -- I'm hesitating. If I could phrase it as
- 9 a negative, I wouldn't have thought he'd treated them
- 10 unfairly. I'm sorry, I'm literally trying to think --
- 11 trying to cast my mind back to our interaction in the
- 12 office there and it's -- what you're describing isn't
- something I observed, so it's hard for me to make
- 14 a positive statement, I'm sorry.
- 15 Q. How about this then: a conclusion that may be open to
- the Chairman at the end of the Inquiry when he has heard
- 17 all of the evidence is that Mr Singh had a defective
- understanding of the Code for Crown Prosecutors,
- 19 a defective understanding of his disclosure obligations
- 20 and the Post Office's obligations and the duties of
- 21 candour that a prosecutor owes in criminal proceedings.
- Over your years of dealing with him, did you have any
- 23 concerns about Mr Singh's competence and suitability for

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- 24 the role of Head of Criminal Law at the Post Office?
- 25 A. Sorry, it's quite a long question. But -- most of --

- 1 things.
- 2 Q. You mentioned Mr Singh. So, by the time you joined in
- 3 August 2012, I think he was the Head of Criminal Law in
- 4 the Post Office; is that right?
- 5 A. I think he was our only in-house criminal lawyer.
- 6 Q. Yes, and I think he was described as the Head of
- 7 Criminal Law, even though he was the only one?
- 8 A. I don't recall him being described that but ...
- 9 Q. Did you share offices with him?
- 10 A. Yeah, we had an open plan office, so, yes, we shared
- 11 that space.
- 12 Q. He has given evidence before the Inquiry and is due to
- 13 come back. He has made a number of statements in emails
- and in correspondence which might reasonably be
- described as demonstrating disdain for subpostmasters.
- Was that an attitude of mind which you observed in him
- 17 at the time?
- 18 A. No, I wouldn't have said that, no.
- 19 Q. Did you instead form the view that he treated
- 20 subpostmasters and the issues that they were raising
- 21 with fairness and equanimity?
- 22 A. I don't believe I can comment on that. I wasn't close
- 23 enough to his work and I certainly didn't observe much
- interaction between him and postmasters at all.
- 25 Q. Yes, I'm not talking about direct interaction; it would
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- 1 Q. I'll break it down.
- 2 A. Yeah -- all right, I think I understand it. I'm sorry.
- 3 I don't think I'm competent to describe -- as I say, I'm
- 4 not a criminal lawyer, I don't know the extent to which
- 5 he was acting compliantly with the Prosecutors Code of
- 6 Conduct, for instance. I'm just not able to do that.
- 7 Q. So your lack of experience in criminal law wouldn't have
 - allowed you to form a view over his competence and
- 9 suitability to perform the function he was performing;
- 10 is that right?

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- 11 A. I do not believe I'm competent to do that, no.
- 12 Q. More generally, what can you tell the chairman about
- 13 attitudes within the Post Office's Legal Team to
- 14 subpostmasters who sought to defend themselves against
- 15 allegations that they'd stolen money or were guilty of
- 16 false accounting but who themselves alleged that the
- 17 shortfalls were due to Horizon? What was the general
- 18 feeling, if there was one?
- 19 A. I don't think there was a general feeling. I think
- 20 it's -- I'm sorry, I'm really struggling with this
- 21 because it's -- I'm trying to picture the work
- 22 environment which is where I feel you're taking me, and
- 23 it's -- and correct me if I'm wrong on that. I don't
- 24 think --
- 25 Q. I am asking you about the working environment, I'm

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- 1 asking you about a 10-year period and I'm asking was
- 2 there any attitude of mind towards subpostmasters?
- 3 A. I wouldn't have thought so, no. There was a lot of
- 4 discussion at the corporate communication level about
- 5 postmasters being the, you know, the heart of the
- 6 company, you know, and, clearly, the central component
- 7 of the business, the client/the customer-facing part of
- 8 it.
- 9 Q. Did that trickle down into the Legal Team?
- 10 $\,$ A. It certainly trickled down to me. I can't speak for the
- 11 entire Legal Team.
- 12 Q. They're a commodity that needed to be cherished?
- 13 A. I wouldn't have described them as a commodity but the
- 14 cherished bit, I think, is important, yes.
- 15 Q. Okay, they're individuals, men and women who needed to
- 16 be cherished --
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. -- and treated with fairness at all times?
- 19 A. Yes, they're an important part of the business, yes.
- 20 Q. Would that be the esprit de corps of the Legal Team?
- 21 A. I wouldn't have necessarily said that because the Legal
- Team were doing lots of things in different spaces,
- 23 there were parts of the Legal Team that had very minimal
- 24 contact with the postmaster community, for instance.
- 25 Q. Again, I'm not talking about direct contact with them.
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- 1 asking, over 100 pages, you don't say anywhere that you
- 2 did anything wrong?
- 3 A. I think I have said I did something wrong.
- 4 Q. What was the thing you did wrong?
- 5 A. Well, I'm sure I've done others as well. Over 10 years,
- 6 I don't think I could bat it perfectly and I wouldn't
- 7 want anyone to have the impression that I think that;
- 8 things have gone wrong and that's why I'm here.
- 9 Q. What's the thing that you think in the witness
- 10 statement --
- 11 A. It's in the witness statement, I missed a reference to
- 12 the possibility for remote access.
- 13 Q. In the Deloitte report?
- 14 A. In an early Deloitte report, yes.
- 15 Q. So you inadvertently missed a sentence or a paragraph
- 16 within a Deloitte report --
- 17 A. Correct.
- 18 Q. -- which spoke about remote access in 2014?
- 19 **A.** Yes.
- 20 Q. I think that's the only thing -- I didn't read that as
- 21 you saying you did anything wrong because it was
- 22 an inadvertent slip?
- 23 A. I'm sorry, "wrong" is a very broad word. I may have --
- 24 I'm sorry, I --
- 25 **Q**. Okay --

- 1 I'm talking about in the way that we deal, as a Legal
- 2 Team, with the complaints and concerns that they are
- 3 raising, the subpostmaster community, how, as a Legal
 - Team, do we respond to them; give us an insight, please,
- 5 into the feeling within the office?
- 6 A. I would have thought neutrally. What we should be doing
 - is that no presumption either way. What is the case?
- 8 What is happening here? What is going on in this
- 9 particular branch? I would have said that -- I would
- 10 hope that was the attitude.
- 11 Q. So no predetermined mindset, a position of strict
- neutrality between the subpostmasters, on the one hand,
- 13 and the Post Office, on the other?
- 14 A. I think I can only speak for myself with that but that's
- 15 something I would hope I had done.
- 16 Q. Before we get into the dozen or so topics that I need to
- 17 address with you, can we take a step back and look at
- some of the written evidence you've given to the Inquiry
- and then some of your conduct at the time. In terms of
- the written evidence you've given to the Inquiry, would
- this be a fair summary: in your witness statement,
- 22 firstly, you do not accept that you did anything wrong?
- 23 A. Have I said that?
- 24 Q. No, no, a summary means you don't read out each word or
- don't read out the specific words: you summarise. I'm
 - 1
- 1 A. Could you be a bit more specific? I'm sorry, I'm sure
- 2 I've done things wrong but it would be helpful to have
- an understanding of when or what it might have been.
- 4 Q. Let's look at in this way: in your witness statement,
- 5 you either state or give the impression that you acted
- 6 appropriately or in accordance with your duties at all
- 7 times, right?
- 8 A. That was certainly my intent and my endeavour.
- 9 $\,$ Q. I don't think you identify that any other person did
- 10 anything wrong?
- 11 A. I don't believe that's my role to judge.
- 12 Q. Well, it's not necessarily judging, is it? It's maybe
- 13 talking about the conduct of others, without passing
- 14 judgement on them?
- 15 **A.** Um --
- 16 Q. But it's right, isn't it, in your 137 pages, you don't
- 17 identify that anyone else did anything wrong, other than
- 18 inadvertently missing the sentence in the Deloitte
- 19 report?
- 20 A. Well, no, I don't believe I have done that in my witness
- 21 statement, no. I don't believe I --
- 22 Q. You don't offer any apology to subpostmasters in your
- 23 witness statement, do you?
- 24 A. I certainly tried to in the first paragraph.
- 25 Q. Well, let's look --

- A. Sorry, third paragraph. 1
- 2 Q. Let's look at the attempt then. Is it paragraph 3 on
- 3 page 2?
- 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. Let's just read that to ourselves. (Pause)
- 6 Was that the attempt at the apology you're referring
- 7 to?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. You offer deep regret at harm caused by events, rather
- than harm being caused to subpostmasters by people or 10
- harm being caused to subpostmasters by people in the 11
- 12 Post Office, or even harm being caused to them by the
- 13 Post Office. You offer regret that events caused people
- 14 harm, don't you, not people caused them harm?
- **A.** Um --15
- 16 Q. Is that as far as you were prepared to go?
- 17 A. No, that was my attempt to summarise what is quite
- 18 a large undertaking in --
- 19 Q. Yeah, you probably thought about this carefully, this
- 20 paragraph, didn't you?
- 21 A. Well, I hope so, yes. I thought carefully about most
- 22 of -- I hope I thought carefully about all of my
- 23 statement but, yes, this is important. I believe it's
- 24 why we're here.
- 25 Q. That's as far as you're prepared to go: express regret
- 1 gone on a long time and, certainly, I can only speak for 2
 - me but I would never have wanted this to have lasted
- 3 this long for anybody involved. I think, at the
- 4 beginning, sorry, back at paragraph 3, I sort of -- I do 5
 - say I hope this process helps people find closure and
- 6 I say I hope for myself, personally, too.
 - Q. Well, thank you for that.

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Can we take that down from the screen and examine a miscellany of issues before we look at the substance of some points to try to see whether they assist us in determining the nature of your role in all of this. Can I start, please, with your role in the development, pursuit and management of a narrative in the media by the Post Office.

Can we look, please, at paragraph 169 of your witness statement on page 84. Foot of the page, paragraph 169, under a heading "Engagement with the media". You say:

"[The Post Office's Communications Team] was responsible for [its] engagement with the media. I was typically the contact for Comms within [Post Office's] in-house Legal Team if they felt they needed legal support, which could range from ad hoc reviews of statements they were proposing to make to legal advice in respect of proposed broadcasts. I would arrange

- 1 that events caused people harm?
- 2 A. I mean, I will go so far as to as say, if I have caused
- 3 somebody harm, I'm deeply sorry. That's not why I --
- 4 Q. Again, you haven't identified, in your statement, that
- 5 you have caused anyone harm or done anything wrong, do
- 6 you?
- 7 A. No --
- Q. You don't identify any reflections or things that ought 8 9 to have been done differently, do you?
- 10 A. I tried to respond to the Rule 9 Request I had. I'm sorry, I wasn't --11
- We asked people whether they have any other reflections 12 Q.
- 13 they wish to give?
- 14 A. I conclude with the reflection.
- 15 Q. Let's look at that. Paragraph 255 on page 131. This is
- 16 part of the statement where people address the Inquiry's
- 17 question "Have you any other reflections or things you
- 18 wish to say?", an open question. You say:

19 "[You] regret the various processes intended to 20 resolve [postmasters'] civil law based ... complaints 21 have not achieved that resolution", and you hope it

22 happens soon.

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Is that your only reflection?

24 I think it's an important one, because -- sorry, it's 25

not the only one, I think there is another. This has

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- 1 external legal support where that was required, usually
- 2 from ... Cameron McKenna whom I had been introduced to
- 3 shortly after joining [the Post Office]. My role as
- 4 an in-house lawyer was one of legal risk manager, and
 - this was my focus in [the Post Office's] engagement with
- 6 the media."

That can come down. Would I be right, essentially, to describe you as the point man for media relations in the Post Office's Legal Team?

- 10 A. I think that's fair, yes.
- 11 Q. There was extensive involvement by you and other lawyers
- 12 in the Post Office's media relations, wasn't there?
- 13 On some of these matters, yes.
- 14 Q. Can we turn to paragraph 175 on page 88. You set out 15 your understanding of the Post Office's:
- 16 "... general attitude and strategy at that time 17 towards the media, and its aims in dealing with them, 18 was that the media could and would report on [the Post
- 19 Office]. It was therefore important to maintain an open dialogue with journalists so as to get an insight into 20
- 21 what they might say and try to ensure they reflected
- 22 [the Post Office's] position, with matters only being
- 23 escalated to formal legal intervention if it was felt
- 24 essential to ensure a balanced presentation of [the Post
- 25 Office's] position in the finished publication."

- 1 Would you agree that that paints a benign or neutral 2 picture of the Post Office strategy in relation to media
- 3 relations?
- 4 A. I can't comment on what it portrays. I would not have
- 5 described Post Office as necessarily benign with its
- 6 media-facing public image.
- $7 \quad {f Q}. \quad {\hbox{How would you paint or describe Post Office's media}$
- 8 strategy, so far as concerns Horizon?
- 9 A. I wasn't responsible for setting strategy, so I would
- 10 have taken instructions from the Communications
- 11 Director.
- 12 Q. Your understanding of it?
- 13 A. I think it's -- particularly with the Horizon matters,
- 14 Post Office felt it had its side of the story to tell
- and I think there's a feeling that people weren't
- interested in hearing it or engaging with it, probably,
- is a better example, a better word.
- 18 Q. So what was its strategy?
- 19 A. I don't know. That would have come from the
- 20 Communications Director.
- 21 Q. You were engaged in that strategy yourself and you had
- 22 no understanding of what it was; is that right?
- 23 A. I supported it. Strategy comes from the internal
- 24 clients and the Legal team would help give effect to it.
- 25 Q. Did they tell you what the strategy was?
 - 25
- 1 Q. If you didn't have an understanding of what Post
- 2 Office's general attitude and strategy towards the media
- 3 was, so far as concerned Horizon, can we look at some
- 4 examples of how you approached the media in practice.
- 5 I stress these are only examples; time doesn't permit me
- 6 to go through all material. Can we start, please,
- 7 with --
- 8 A. Just before we -- I'm sorry -- I'm struggling with these
- 9 questions a little bit. Can I understand what you mean
- 10 by "strategy"? Because I'm worried we have a disconnect
- and I do want to answer the questions properly.
- 12 Q. I haven't got my dictionary with me at the moment,
- 13 Mr Williams, but I would understand and I intend by my
- 14 questions the word "strategy" to mean as follows:
- 15 a predesigned plan that has aims and objectives -- I'm
- 16 making this up on the hoof -- that has aims and
- 17 objectives. That's a strategy in my mind. Does that
- 18 help you?
- 19 A. It does, thank you, and I'm sorry --
- 20 Q. It's just you used the word here, you see?
- 21 A. I appreciate, I'm sorry -- I'm sorry if that's my poor
- 22 use. I just want to understand -- I'm sorry, I'm
- 23 interrupting your question. Please.
- 24 $\,$ **Q**. Should paragraph 175 read "I did not have
- 25 an understanding of the Post Office's strategy towards

- 1 A. I'm not aware of -- like, if you're thinking that we
- 2 have strategy documents and clear objectives on some
- 3 matters, I don't think I saw something quite like that
- 4 for these matters. So --
- 5 Q. Never mind a written document: an understanding of what
- 6 Post Office's media strategy was. If you were giving
- 7 effect to it, how would you know what it was --
- 8 A. Well --
- 9 Q. -- if you haven't been told.
- 10 A. -- I was giving effect to the instructions on
- 11 a particular matter. I wasn't responsible for setting
- 12 media strategy --
- 13 Q. I haven't asked you whether you were responsible for
- setting a media strategy. That's a different question.
- 15 A. I'm sorry --
- 16 Q. I'm asking of what your understanding was of the Post
- 17 Office's media strategy was, so far as concerned
- 18 Horizon?
- 19 A. I can't tell you because I'm not aware of one. What
- 20 I did do is help Post Office respond to certain media
- 21 Inquiry activities. The most, I guess, prominent of
- 22 that being the Panorama programme. I helped assist
- 23 that. Where that sat in Post Office's strategy, which
- may have issues of brand positioning, et cetera, behind
- 25 it, I'm not sure. I can't speak to that, I'm sorry.
 - 2
- 1 the media"?
- 2 A. Following this discussion, I think it may have read
- 3 better, "My understanding of Post Office's general
- 4 approach at that time to the media would have been" --
- 5 and I apologise if I'm getting into sophistry or
- 6 anything like that but the predesigned plan, I would
- 7 have accepted if we'd something like that to have had
- 8 that articulated or presented to me or made clear to me,
- 9 and I don't recall having that and that's why I've been
- 10 struggling. I'm sorry.
- 11 Q. Let's look at some examples, then, rather than of engage
- 12 in sophistry, POL00101923 --
- 13 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: While that's coming up Mr Williams, can
- 14 I just be clear, was this point man -- to use the
- 15 expression -- role something you assumed more or less as
 - soon as you joined the Post Office or was it later in
- 17 time than that?

16

- 18 A. I -- thank you, sir. It was pretty much at the
- 19 beginning, I --
- 20 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right --
- 21 **A.** I helped with something unrelated, probably, within --
- certainly within the first six months of my time.
- 23 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine. So, if I can put it in this way,
- 24 that part of your work was something that began shortly
- 25 after you started and continued right through the period

1		that Mr Beer has identified?	1		new questions."
2	A. That's correct, sir. 2 Yes?				Yes?
3	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Fine, thanks.	3	A.	Yes.
4	MR	BEER: Can we start, please, by looking at page 3 of this	4	Q.	Then if we go to the foot of page 2, we can see you
5		document.	5		replied 16 December 2016, "Rodric Williams wrote", and
6	A.	I'm sorry, I recognise this and it's quite a long email	6		then if we go to the top of page 3, you say:
7		train. Could I have the bundle reference, please?	7		"Without having read them closely, only that this is
8	Q.	E51.	8		getting ridiculous we're being asked to address
9	A.	E51. Thank you.	9		an ever expanding range of serious issues, on
10	Q.	If we look at the foot of page 3, we can see an email	10		a piecemeal basis, with constantly shifting [goals] in
11		from Nick Wallis, the journalist, dated 16 December	11		an attempt to get Mik Wallis a story which is 'news'.
12		2014, to Mark Davies. He was essentially in charge of	12		"On the upside, they suggest we're starting to land
13		Post Office's media and communications; is that right?	13		our points this line of enquiry is focused on the
14	A.	Yes.	14		'user-friendliness' of the Horizon, not the accuracy of
15	Q.	Mr Wallis says:	15		what it records or what we do with that information.
16		"Hi Mark	16		"I'll revert on the substance shortly."
17		"I wonder if your colleagues could help me with	17		If we go, please, to page 1. At the foot of the
18		a few queries."	18		page, your further reply to the same group of people,
19		He starts setting them out, yes? This was, I think	19		again on 16 December, at just after 4.00, so it's about
20		you'll recall, in the run-up to The One Show broadcast.	20		an hour and a half after your immediate reaction and yo
21	A.	Yes.	21		reply to your colleagues in detail on what's said, if we
22	Q.	Thank you. If we go up the page, you'll see Mr Davies	22		scroll down. You say:
23		passes it to a wider group of people, including you:	23		"Hi my substantive responses [to Nick Wallis']
24		"Hi	24		latest questions are embedded in red."
25		"Another email from the BBC, now raising a series of 29	25		You essentially go through Mr Wallis' email and 30
1		write red paragraphs or text in red against what he has	1		"That feedback is then implemented through regula
2		said, okay?	2		reviews and upgrades
3	Α.	Correct.	3		"Ultimately though, any feedback has to be
4	Q.	If we go back to his email there, they don't show up in	4		considered in the context of the entire user base we
5		red but I can tell you which ones they are because I've	5		wouldn't roll out a (likely costly) system change
6		compared the text next to the originals of Mr Wallis'	6		because a few agents asked for it. No business would."
7		email. If we scroll back to page 3, please, at the foot	7		Then you wrote this:
8		of the page, so what Mr Wallis wrote was:	8		"We don't need to do research on Horizon it's the
9		"Hi Mark	9		system we provide to our agents and require them to
10		"I wonder if you or your colleagues could help me	10		use. If agents don't like it, they can choose not to
11		with a few queries.	11		provide services for us. The vast majority of our
12		"When was the last time the Post Office did any	12		agents and other users work with it just fine, and we're
13		research into how satisfied or otherwise	13		not required to bespoke our Point of Sale accounting
14		[subpostmasters] are with the Horizon system? It would	14		system to the whims of each individual agent."
15		be very helpful to know the scope of that research and	15		In relation to your reply, "We don't need to do
16		its results."	16		research on Horizon it's the system we provide to our
17		Then you wrote:	17		agents and require them to use. If [they] don't
18		"Post Office constantly receives feedback on Horizon	18		like it, they can choose not to provide services for
19		from its tens of thousands of users through a variety of	19		us", was that your view: subpostmasters could either use
20		sources."	20		Horizon or leave?
21		Then over the page:	21	Α.	Yes, because
22		"The primary sources are NBSC, Horizon Service Desk,	22	Q.	'
23		Branch User Forum and NFSP. Feedback is also delivered	23	Α.	No, not necessarily but it is the system that was used
24 25		through a variety of [business as usual] processes" Next paragraph:	24 25		across many thousands of branches and I think tens of thousands of terminals. That is the system that Post

1		Office provided.	1		it's impossible, I would think, to bespoke it to each
2	Q.	Well, it's obvious that it's the system that the Post	2		individual's preferences
3		Office provided. That's just stating a fact. What	3	Q.	Well, it's not their preferences. You call them the
4		you've done is gone further. You've said, "We don't	4		whims. Is that what you thought the subpostmasters were
5		need to research Horizon. They can either use it or go	5		complaining about or that was the basis of their oral
6		away".	6		and written complaints: whims? A "whim" meaning
7	A.	But I was commenting immediately above, it makes it	7		an eccentric flight of fancy?
8		quite clear that we do actually receive feedback.	8	A.	That is the word I used at the time.
9		I think by this it's market research on users that	9	Q.	You understand it to mean that?
10		it's just saying we don't need to, I don't believe	10	Α.	Um
11		there's an obligation and I'm speaking as a lawyer	11	Q.	A whim?
12		I don't believe there's an obligation on Post Office to	12	Α.	Yes. That's the word I used.
13		do that.			Did you think subpostmasters were on eccentric flights
14	Q.	Was this part of your thinking in your time in this	14		of fantasy?
15	٠.	decade, if agents, if subpostmasters don't like Horizon,		Α.	-
16		they can just down tools and leave. That's their		Q.	Why did you use the word "whim"?
17		remedy.		Α.	Because it struck me as being possibly very bespoke,
18	Α.	I don't think that's capturing what I've said here.	18	۸.	very individualised requests for person preference. But
19	Λ.	I have to say, I can't exactly remember what my mindset	19		I used the word "whim" and I think, in doing that, I was
		was in	20		_
20	^		21		trying to trivialise the specific complaints being
21	Q.	You agree that		_	raised.
22	_	in 2014 but sorry		Q.	Is this an example of what we read about in your witness
23	Q.	That's what it tends to suggest, doesn't it?	23		statement, where you said that the Post Office's
24	Α.	No, sorry, what I'd say the vast majority of the network	24		approach and strategy was to maintain an open dialogue
25		was using the system fine. On a network that scale, 33	25		in the media. You thought saying something like this 34
1		back would help, did you?	1		[subpostmasters] not having any problems with Horizon
2	A.	Well, that was no, this was a comment, internally, to	2		based on customer feedback or purely on the volume of
3		colleagues. I wasn't saying this is what the	3		successful transactions?"
4		response	4		Then we see your comments:
5	Q.	What's the purpose of saying it to colleagues, then?	5		"Our customers don't use Horizon.
6		It's to help in the formulation of the response?	6		"If by 'customers' [Nick Wallis] means
7	A.	Correct.	7		agents/Horizon users, we could point to the churn rate
8	Q.	Is this part of the strategy and approach that you	8		of agents ie if agents aren't happy with Horizon,
9		described in your witness statement of at all times	9		they can leave the Network."
10		maintaining a willingness to maintain an open dialogue	10		That's the same point you made above:
11		with the media?	11		"I think this would only show general churn, ie it
12	A.	I don't think they're connected yet because the way it	12		wouldn't distinguish those that left because of Horizon
13		works is the way I'd recall it working for us is	13		as opposed to any other reason (eg retirement). Still,
14		things are circulated for input, views are heard and	14		if the Network is fairly stable, a low churn would
15		then a position taken, at which point that feeds into	15		suggest that it's only a minority of agents that are
16		what is taken back to the media.	16		unhappy with the system, which is consistent with what
17	Q.	Let's move on. We can skip the next paragraph where you	17		we have seen through the Scheme.
18		draw an analogy. We go back to some text that Mr Wallis	18		"I get the sense from speaking to a number of
19		wrote. So his question was:	19		[subpostmasters] that they don't like the system, they
20		"Is your statement about the vast majority of	20		don't trust it and they live in fear in what the Post
21		[subpostmasters]"	21		Office might do if they get something wrong with it."
22		The point there, the statement he is referring to,	22		This is Mr Wallis speaking.
23		is a statement that the Post Office put out in	23		"It may be because I only come into contact with
24		an earlier reply:	24		[subpostmasters] who are having problems that I keep

25

"Is your statement about the vast majority of

35

hearing this, so it would be useful to know the other

2		You say:
3		"Same points as above.
4		"On the 'they lived in fear' point, it is wrong
5		for an agent to deliberately cover up branch losses and
6		falsify the figures the agent enters into the system."
7		So in these paragraphs, in your response to your
8		colleagues, you're making the same point, aren't you,
9		that the measure of Horizon's reliability or success can
10		be seen through the number of subpostmasters that are
11		leaving the business
12	Α.	I think it's rather the other way. It can be seen by
13	Α.	those who are staying within the business.
14	Q.	ie it must be a good system because, otherwise, more
	Q.	would leave?
15		
16	Α.	Well, at least an acceptable system.
17	Q.	Was that your best evidence base, when you were writing
18		this two and a half years into your role, for the
19		reliability of Horizon, the number of subpostmasters
20		that were leaving the Post Office?
21	A.	No, I'm looking for I was looking for things that
22		could contribute to the discussion. What was and
23		maybe this is getting it's not quite a strategy
24		I'm sorry. There was my recollection is that there
25		was a feeling that the complaints being raised about
		37
1		so I think that may have been
2	Q.	I'm sorry?
3	Α.	I think they that may have been a very poorly worded
4		email.
5	Q.	Which word did you intend to use instead of "puerile"?
6	Α.	I'm sorry it's on two screens.
7	Q.	Yeah, we can look at the bottom of the third page and
8	Œ.	the top of the that's it. Question at the bottom of
9		page 4
10	Α.	I think I know why I'm saying it now, sorry. You know,
11	Λ.	"SPMRs love using Horizon and trust it implicitly".
12		It's a very high bar. I don't know too many people who
13		really love their computer systems, I'm sure there are
		•
14		people. But I think that's what the expression is going
15		to. Do we have data that says people love using
16	_	Horizon? I I
17	Q.	He's asking, isn't he, for data that backs up
18		a statement that the Post Office made that the vast
19		majority of subpostmasters are not having any problems
20		with Horizon?
21	Α.	Well, no, he is there asking for he is asking for
22		evidence that postmasters love using Horizon and trust
23		it implicitly, and I think I read that as setting
24		an impossibly high standard for us to have evidence
25		information that would show that. I don't that's

1

side of the coin."

1 Horizon were being raised by a small number, a small 2 proportion of the network and that it was being used 3 successful by the vast majority of the network every day, aggregating up to -- and I think I can still 4 remember, hopefully, the numbers -- 6 million 5 6 transactions a year, to -- sorry, 6 million transactions 7 a week, 2 billion a year, across the 11,500 plus or 8 minus branches, and we were seeing a very small number 9 of complaints. That --10 Q. He is asking for the data, isn't he, in this last 11 paragraph: "If you have any data which shows the vast majority 12 13 of [subpostmasters] love using Horizon and trust it 14 implicitly, it would be useful to have that 15 information." 16 So he is asking the very question that you have just 17 referred to. Let's see what your response is over the 18 page, please: 19 "This is puerile." 20 Why did you think that Mr Wallis' question, "If 21 you've got data that shows that if subpostmasters like 22 using Horizon and trust it, it would be useful to have

what I think I'm saying there.

2 Q. You carry on:

"The best I can think of is to show that agents aren't voting against Horizon with their feet ..."

that information", why you think that was puerile;

"puerile" meaning childish, immature or petty?

A. I'd say, looking at it today, it doesn't feel puerile,

That's the third time you've referred to that.

6 A. Yes.

23

24

25

3

4

5

19

7 Q. Was that the best evidence?

8 **A.** I don't know. Certainly, when I wrote it, it was the

9 best I could think.

10 Q. Overall, would you agree that, without focusing on the11 individual paragraphs, in this part of Mr Wallis'

request he's asking for some data, some material, that

13 backs up a statement that the Post Office had made that

the vast majority of subpostmasters are not having any

15 problems with Horizon?

16 A. I'm sorry, could you repeat that? Sorry, I was reading.

17 Q. In this part of his request, he is asking, generally,

18 for some evidence, some data, some material, that backs

up a statement that the Post Office had made that the

20 vast majority of subpostmasters are not having any

21 problems with Horizon. Overall, the best you can come

up with is that they're not leaving the business?

A. That's the best I can come up with. I think earlier on
 we saw there was references to the NBSC, call log data,

et cetera. I think that would be better management

- 1 information than churn rate, which was another strand of 2 management information that may support, I guess, user 3 acceptance, if not happiness. Q. Can we move on to some of your other contributions to 4 5 Post Office's media responses. POL00150306. Can we 6 look at page 2, please. 7 A. Sorry, I think this is another one that may have been --8 it wasn't in the core bundle either, can I have the 9 bundle reference? 10 Q. E86, if you want to look at it in hard copy. 11 A. Thank you. MR BEER: Sir, I should just explain to you that the little 12 13 delays that are occurring are because Mr Williams has 14 said that he wants to be given the tab numbers in the 15 bundles and read the documents in hard copy, rather than 16 looking at them on the screen. 17 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I have understood that from the exchanges, Mr Beer. Thank you. 18 19 THE WITNESS: I'm grateful, sir. 20 MR BEER: E86. Look at page 2, please. If we scroll down, please. We see again the Mr Wallis email, yes. 21
- 22 A. Mm-hm.
- 23 Q. Can you see that, the 16 December one? This has got no writing on it, okay? So it's the same originating 24 25 email?

- 1 something else?" 2 You agree that he is there expressing the same 3 sentiments as you, albeit you hadn't written them yet --4 A. Err --Q. -- ie put up with the system or leave?
- 5
- 6 A. It's an option.
- 7 Q. He says:

8

9

15

- "I like this email that Mel [that's Melanie Corfield] sent me earlier, from a [subpostmaster] ..."
- 10 Then he sets it out.
- Then, in conclusion, at the foot of his email he 11 12 says:
- 13 "... I'm not sure it merits more than a cursory 14 response."
 - Then, if we scroll up, please, you say to him:
- 16 "I swear, you are the only person I've met more 17 cynical than me, and then by some considerable margin 18
- 19 He then replies to you:
- 20 "Thank you, sir, I take that as a serious badge of
- 21 honour [smiley face]."
- 22 Then you say:
- 23 "As intended!"
- 24 Did you treat this as a joke?
- 25 A. No, far from it.

A. Okay.

- But this chain goes off in a different direction, okay? 2 Q.
- Thank you. I appreciate that. 3
- 4 Q. If we scroll up, please. We see Mark Davies' "sending
- 5 it on email", we saw earlier. Then scroll up, please,
- 6 we see a reply from Patrick Bourke, who was he?
- 7 A. He was -- is a colleague, I don't know what his title
- 8 was at that time. He had worked -- I think he had come
- 9 into Post Office to work on the Mediation Scheme and
- 10 I think is now -- he's certainly in the Communications
- 11 Team, I think maybe the Public Affairs Director, but I'm
- 12 not certain of that.
- 13 Q. At the time, I think his title was Government Affairs 14 and Policy Director; would that sound right?
- 15 That does sound right, thank you.
- 16 Q. Let's look at what Mr Bourke thought at about Mr Wallis' 17 email.

18 "Apart from its breathtakingly facetious tone, this 19 looks to me to be clutching at straws a little ...

20 "That some subpostmasters don't like the system is 21 inevitable; I don't particularly like working in Old 22 Street with its rodent problem. 'Living in fear' is 23 going too far in my view. They chose to sign a contract 24 to provide services in an honest and diligent way.

25 Rather than living in fear, would it not be better do

- 1 Q. Was this attitude bravado by you, a competition between 2 you and Mr Bourke, the Government Affairs and Policy
- 3 Director, on who could be more cynical about
- 4 subpostmasters?
- 5 A. No.

8

- 6 Q. Why did you exchange these emails, then?
- 7 A. When you're working under pressure, sometimes you write
 - an email that, when you look back at it 11 years
- later -- sorry, I can't do the maths -- nine years 9
- 10 later -- you regret the expression. But I think emails
- exchanged just between two colleagues like that from 11
- 12 time to time occur.
- 13 Q. So are we to put this in the "banter" category: "top
- 14 bants" between mates?
- 15 A. I'd say yes.
- Q. The truth of it is that you adopted the same attitude of 16
- 17 mind, didn't you? "We're deeply cynical about all of
- these subpostmasters. The best thing they can do is, if 18
- 19 they've got any complaints about our system, they can
- 20 leave". That was your and his attitude of mind, wasn't
- 21
- 22 A. No, I think you're reading too much into an email 23 exchange there, with respect.
- 24 Q. Why didn't we see in these emails, some self-reflection?
- 25 "Have we got any surveys of whether subpostmasters have

- difficulties? What do the statistics show on the number of calls made to various helpdesks that we offered? Is there an analysis of those? Are there any levels of satisfaction with those? What proportion of complaints about Horizon are successfully remediated?"
- 6 A. I'm --
- 7 Q. That's what he was asking for. That kind of thing,8 wasn't it?
- 9 **A.** Well, I -- I'm sorry, that's a list I think you've read.
- 10 That's not in there. But I imagine it is along the
- 11 lines of -- well, I don't know what Nick Wallis was
- 12 asking for there. He asked for, what I saw, data of
- 13 people loving the system and trusting it implicitly.
- 14 Q. So you focused on the "love" bit and thought narrowly --
- 15 A. In the entirety of the email --
- 16 Q. -- "Have we got any surveys or that that shows that
 17 Horizon is loved by subpostmasters? No, and that's
- 18 a puerile question. End of story".
- 19 $\,$ A. No, when you look back at the exchange, you can see
- 20 other people have contributed to it and there is
- 21 reference to NBSC call log datas, and the like, that
- 22 provide sources which could be explored further if
- 23 that's the direction that would be taken in response to
- 24 this.
- 25 **Q.** Can we look, please, at POL00101968, B202. If we go to
- 1 So this is 12 days in advance.
- 2 Then if you just scroll through it, rather than
- 3 reading it in detail, she sets at a summary of the
- 4 issues to be covered in the programme. Can you see
- 5 that?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. If we scroll on still further, there is a relatively
- 8 detailed summary and then a series of questions. If we
- go to page 8, please, and scroll down, please, we'll see
- 10 that this gets forwarded to you.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 **Q.** We can see your reply on 7 January. You say:
- 13 "I haven't yet looked at the detail of the email,
- 14 but see that the BBC want to film ...
- 15 "There is a lot happening next week [next
- 16 paragraph]."
- 17 Then:
- 18 "Not really a legal issue I know, but given the
- 19 BBC's approach to date, the close engagement it has with
- 20 JFSA, and the timing of the piece, I smell a rat ..."
 - What was the rat that you smelled?
- 22 A. The timing seemed --
- 23 Q. Smelling a rat means that somebody is trying to deceive
- you or harm you by artifice?
- 25 **A.** No.

- 1 page 10 at the bottom, please. Thank you. Sorry,
- 2 behind with the bundles.
- 3 A. I'm sorry, what is the tab?
- 4 Q. Do you wish, Mr Williams, to look at this in a bundle?
- 5 A. Yes, I'm sorry. My bundle broke open so I'm trying to
- 6 put the paper back. Which tab is it, please?
- 7 **Q.** B202.
- 8 A. Thank you. I'm sorry, I've only seen these this morning
- 9 so I'm still familiarising myself. Thank you. Thank
- 10 you, sir.
- 11 Q. Page 10 at the foot of the page and over to page 11.
- 12 A. Yes
- 13 **Q.** This is a document you exhibited to your witness
- 14 statement.
- 15 A. Yes, thank you.
- 16 Q. You'll see that Jane French, who was then, I think, the
- 17 BBC's Current Affairs Editor, sending an email on
- 7 January to Mr Davies, copying Mr Wallis in. So this
- 19 is after The One Show programme had been aired and is
- 20 instead about a forthcoming Inside Out programme.
- 21 If you just scroll through, she says to Mr Davies:
- 22 "Thank you ... I am now writing to invite you to
- 23 give us a filmed interview for our regional current
- 24 affairs programmes Inside Out which will be reporting
- 25 the subject on 19 January on BBC One."
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 - Q. What did you mean by you smelt a rat?
- 2 A. It looks like it's organised. I think something is up.
- 3 Q. What was up?
- 4 A. The timing of this seemed to be well aligned to put
- 5 pressure on the Post Office.
- 6 Q. Why was there a problem with the BBC reporting issues
- 7 with the Horizon system and with the Post Office being
- 8 given an opportunity to respond?
- 9 A. There's nothing wrong with that.
- 10 Q. What was the rat, then? What was the deception being
- 11 practised?
- 12 A. I've said I don't think any deception was being
- 13 practised. That's not what I've said.
- 14 Q. What were you intending to say by, "given the approach
- 15 to date, the close engagement the BBC has with the JFSA
- and the timing, I smell a rat"? What did you think was
- 17 going to happen?
- 18 A. I'm sorry, I thought I'd answered that. The timing
- 19 seemed convenient and --
- 20 Q. Convenient to who?
- 21 A. Postmaster complainants.
- 22 Q. Right and, therefore?
- 23 A. I'm sorry, you've lost me. You keep saying -- I don't
- 24 think there's any deceptive -- I'm not using that in
- this respect. That's your interpretation. I'm sorry

1		if	1	Q.	If we scroll up,
2	Q.	What did you mean by "smelling a rat"?	2		is addressed to
3	A.		3		"Now that
4		it's the timing.	4		interviewee 'ex
5	Q.	Well, try a third time, then. What did you mean by	5		expert defence
6		"smelling a rat"?	6		should use this
7	A.	That the timing	7		We can se
8	Q.	What did	8		this was the be
9	A.	seemed calculating	9		should be take
10	Q.	think the BBC was up to?	10		remember, in r
11	A.	They were going to put a piece that was timed with	11		Panorama? Y
12		events that may have taken place at a working group	12	A.	That's not som
13		face-to-face meeting. It looked like there was building	13	Q.	In any event, s
14		up to a media broadcast or something along those lines	14		contribution by
15		that would have advanced the postmasters' complaints.	15	A.	Yes.
16	Q.	Can we turn to POL00105856. That's tab E57. Can we	16	Q.	Then if we go
17		start, please, by looking at page 4.	17		see what the ti
18	A.	Sorry E5?	18		the dice at Cer
19	Q.	57.	19		"All I wa
20	A.	Thank you. I'm sorry, I'll go straight to the bundle in	20		I'm not inclined
21		future. I'm sorry. Thank you.	21		the CCRC (soi
22	Q.	If we just scroll down, you'll see it's an email from	22		programme sir
23		Melanie Corfield who was in the Comms Team; is that	23		Then over
24		right?	24		"Instead, v
25	A.	Correct.	25		in and around
		49			
1		(which McLachlan patently is), especially if they have	1		a summary?
2		an axe to grind"	2	A.	That's probabl
3		Then you set out a proposed reply to the BBC.	3	Q.	Thank you. Ca
4		In what respect did you think Professor McLachlan	4		I think that's E
5		had an axe to grind?	5	A.	Thank you.
6	A.	So the expression "axe to grind" was one I gained from	6	Q.	Go to page 2.
7		the Post Office's media lawyers and it's a term of art.	7	A.	Sorry, did you
8		I became aware of a type of contributor who may have	8		E91.
9		a vested interest in the piece.	9	A.	I'm sorry, that
10	Q.	So it was a term of art, "axe to grind"?	10		seems to be d
11	A.	That's my understanding and that, I think, was my use of	11	Q.	Yeah, POL001
12		it there.	12	A.	I have a I'm
13	Q.	Does that mean that anyone who had a vested interest,	13	Q.	They're double
14		including, for example, subpostmasters or, indeed, the	14	A.	I'm sorry.
15		Post Office, couldn't make a contribution?	15	Q.	On 3 July 2015
16	A.	No. What I think it lent itself to and I'm sorry,	16		if any use":
17		it's been a while since I've looked at this sort of	17		"Was just
18		material on that it just meant, I'm thinking of the	18		below from Co
19		BBC Guidelines that their contributions needed to be	19		You'll see
20		treated with greater care. I'm paraphrasing and	20		paragraph fror
21		apologies to the BBC if I am misconstruing that or	21		" in 2013
22		misstating it, but that's my recollection.	22		confirms they
23	Q.	So it was to point out to the BBC that they shouldn't	23		cases they had

regard Professor McLachlan as impartial and to remind

them of their guidelines in that respect; is that

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please, she says -- we can see who this o when we look at the "reply all" later: they have finally revealed the names of cperts', including Charles McLachlan, e witness in the Misra case, I think we s [to] go back to Ceri ..." ee from the context of the email as a whole, eginning of a debate on the approach that en to Ceri Thomas, who I think you may mid-2015, would have been the editor of es? nething I recall, but no. she, Mel, is talking about a proposed Professor Charles McLachlan, yes? to page 2, please, at the bottom, we can itle of the email was, "Another throw of ri Thomas?" You say: ant to think about this overnight, but d to offer anything directly because of rry, but we've learned a lot more about the nce I sent my last email on this!)." r the page to the top of page 3: we could use as a hook the BBC Guidelines relying on people who are not impartial ly fair, yes. an we move on, please, to POL00152725 91. say -doesn't seem -- I have POL 152725, this ifferent.

152725 of E91.

sorry, I beg your pardon, I do have a --

e-sided pages?

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5, Melanie Corfield wrote to you, "Not sure

checking on something and came across the omber Rich solicitors ..."

that she cuts in something in that n that firm of solicitors website:

3 when interim report came out. It just are looking at appeals then regarding the d (think *Hamilton* and *Misra* but can't remember!) on the basis of information from the investigation so thought it might be of use to you at

some point. It also makes clear case-by-case basis, a point I am still trying to make journos and politicians understand!!! How can anything be decided in any other way?!"

Then back to the first page, please, foot of the page, you say:

"Thanks Mel.

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"You might recall that the (first?) One Show piece at the end of last year interviewed a criminal ... solicitor (who may be from that firm) ... It is telling they have not been involved in any appeal.

"[And] yes, each case has to be looked at on its own facts."

Then scroll up, please. She replies to you:

"Oh yes -- ... that was Issy Hogg who is from this firm, I think. I believe she gave the incredible quote that 'They don't look like criminals'. From a media point of view I am astounded that no one ever seems to ask the defence lawyers why their clients pleaded guilty and why they have not tried to appeal. Seems it is only the Post Office who get asked the questions! Oh well -sunny weekend ahead hopefully and Panorama story still not showing in the schedules ..."

Was it a commonly held view within the Post Office to think it was only the Post Office who got asked the

Mark is. You'll see that he is a writer at the Shropshire Star, or at least he was in mid-2015. If we scroll up to the text of his email, he says:

"Further to our conversation a few minutes ago, I am following up the story that Second Sight has written to the Government saying that its findings of its report on the Horizon system have been misrepresented. The story is on page 10 of yesterday's Telegraph, and I have spoken to Ron Warmington of Second Sight who has confirmed his concerns have been misrepresented after [the minister] said: 'Second Sight produced two independent reports -- one in 2013 and the other earlier this year -- both of which found there was no evidence of systemic flaws in the system'.

Mr Warmington has said that the term 'systemic' can only be used when referring to a constant fault, and that is why the report said there were no systemic faults.

"However, he says the report clearly said there were circumstances where a combination of factors could lead to a fault in the system which could account for some of the discrepancies which have resulted in civil and criminal proceedings against [the postmasters].

"[Could I have] a response ..."

Then if we scroll up, please. That gets forwarded 55

1 questions?

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- A. I can't speak for Post Office. I'm --
- Q. 3 The people with whom you dealt within the Post Office?
- 4 A. I don't recall that, no. I mean we were being asked
- questions and I'm sure other people were as well. 5
- 6 **Q.** Was it a common view within the Post Office that focus 7 should instead be asking the defence lawyers why their
- 8 clients pleaded guilty and why they've not tried to
- 9 appeal?
- 10 A. I'm sorry, could you repeat that?
- 11 Q. Was it a common view within the Post Office that the
- 12 focus should instead be on asking defence lawyers why
- 13 their clients pleaded guilty and why they had not tried
- 14 to appeal?

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- 15 A. Again, I don't think I'd -- I don't know who else was in
- 16 Post Office but that's not something I was turning my
- 17 mind to, I don't think.
- Q. Was there a view, an attitude of mind, that the Post 18
- 19 Office was being got at by subpostmasters and the media?
- 20 A. Maybe not by postmasters but I think it is probably fair
- 21 to say we were feeling a little bit "got at" by the
- 22 media. I think that's fair.
- 23 Q. Can we move on to POL00152777, please, the next tab,
- 24 E92. Look at the second page, at the foot of the page
- 25 and, if we just scroll down a little bit, we can see who

by Melanie Corfield to some people not including you,

2 and then gets forwarded by Mark Underwood of the

Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme to you and, if we

scroll up, please -- keep scrolling -- if we go to the

top of the page, you say:

"... I'm uncomfortable with the final sentence."

We'll look at what that is in a moment:

"I know we've used it in a draft [Panorama] statement, but I want to think on it overnight to make sure the line both the Shropshire Star and [Panorama] properly covers the [two] bugs we identified for [Second Sight], which did affect ... balances."

So if we scroll down, please. You see in the bold text there the proposed reply that Ms Corfield was going to give back to the Shropshire Star, and you had said you were uncomfortable with the final sentence, despite it being used previously. The final sentence is "This work" -- that's over three years there have been exhaustive investigations into a very small number of complaints:

the computer system was not responsible for the missing money in these Post Office branches."

Why were you uncomfortable with using the sentence, "This work has provided overwhelming evidence that the

2		money"?	2	
3	A.	I think the use of "overwhelming" is a very, very high	3	
4		bar and it's not an exact one but a very high one, and	4	Α
5		we should be trying to make sure that we don't make	5	
6		statements that can't be substantiated, corroborated or	6	C
7		defended.	7	Α
8	Q.	Would a simpler explanation for you being uncomfortable	8	C
9		with that final sentence be that it wasn't true?	9	Α
10	A.	No, I don't know that it wasn't true. As I say, it was	10	C
11		just a very high bar and capable of different	11	
12		interpretations. This is a media line, I think, and I'm	12	
13		naturally sorry, I'm cautious, it's you're being	13	
14		hostage to fortune when you set your stall out that	14	
15		high.	15	
16	Q.	So it was the strength with which the sentence was	16	
17		expressed rather than the substance of what was being	17	
18		said that you were uncomfortable with?	18	
19	A.	Also, I guess, the conclusion, you know. I'm not sure	19	
20		that that would necessarily have led to that. I'm not	20	
21		sure it didn't. I just think it is it was too	21	
22		uncertain. I think well or potentially	22	
23		indefensible.	23	
24	Q.	Was it because, by August 2015, this is a matter we'll	24	
25		look at later today and maybe tomorrow morning, that you 57	25	
1		Trust."	1	('
2		What were the numerous opportunities that the Post	2	N
3		Office had offered to the BBC that would have	3	
4		facilitated a fairer programme?	4	S
5	A.	Do you know who the author of this is? I only received	5	N
6		it quite late.	6	
7	Q.	It's unattributed.	7	
8	A.	Okay, thank you. I think there are two offers that	8	A
9		I can remember, one was initially for a talking-head	9	C
10		interview, so live-to-camera interview, and another was	10	A
11		to share some material from a file relating to	11	C
12		a particular contributor to the programme.	12	
13	Q.	Was it those two points that led to the view that the	13	
14		Panorama programme was unbalanced and misleading or was	14	
15		it about the content too?	15	
16	A.	No, it was definitely the content too.	16	
17	Q.	It was the content too?	17	
18	A.	Yes.	18	
19	MR	BEER: Thank you.	19	
20		Sir, that's an appropriate moment to break, please.	20	
21		Can we break until 11.30, please?	21	
22		WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, of course, thank you very much.	22	
23		BEER: Thank you.	23	
24	(11	.16 am)	24	
25		(Δ short hreak)	25	

computer system was not responsible for any missing

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knew that the work of Second Sight hadn't provided 1 evidence, let alone overwhelming evidence, that the computer system wasn't responsible for missing money? Sitting now, I can't say that that's a connection but it may have been. Okay, I'll move on. POL00113008. This is tab E65. E65? Yes. Thank you. This a chronologically of the Complaint Review and Mediation Scheme, I think produced by the Post Office itself. Can we go, please, to page 13. Four boxes from the top, there is a reference to a meeting on 4 September 2015, between you, Mark Davies and the BBC's most senior executive, James Harding, and the chronology records that: "At that meeting Post Office acknowledged the legitimate public interest in scrutiny of the Post Office, including the BBC. Nevertheless Post Office made the point that the Panorama programme was unbalanced and misleading in its presentation of the facts, and that the BBC failed to take up the many opportunities the Post Office had offered which would have facilitated a fairer programme [and it] reserves [the] right to make a formal complaint to the ... 11.30 am) IR BEER: Good morning, sir. Can you continue to see and hear us? SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I can, thank you. IR BEER: Thank you very much. Mr Williams, just one last document, please on this topic of media relations. Thank you. Q. POL00232517, and that's at E104. 104, thank you.

Q. If we just look at the top of page 3 to get the context, there's an email from Mark Davies to you and others referring to that meeting that we looked at before the

break:

"Rod and I met James Harding, BBC Director of News and Current Affairs, and Ceri Thomas, Editor of Panorama today as you know. The BBC's Head of Complaints also attended.

"It was useful to have the opportunity to land our points about the BBC approach and the reality of the cases featured. I am really grateful to [you] for attending and his excellent support, and Mel for her pack.

"[Mr] Harding listened and responded positively without making any commitments, as we would expect. But

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we have landed key points." 1 2

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If we go to page 2, please. If we scroll down to later on 4 September, Mark Davies says:

"I would like to review the complaint again ..."

This is the complaint against the BBC that was being formulated:

"... actually to make it even more comprehensive. I think we need to formally note the views and involvement of Nick Wallis."

Then over the page to page 1, at the foot of the page -- that's it. Mr Davies says on an email sent to Susan Barty and copied to you:

"... I think we should build out a section [this is in the complaints letter] on Nick Wallis' involvement in. In a nutshell I would be looking to say that (a) Mr Wallis has clear views which threaten BBC impartiality (b) this point is underlined by the BBC previously requesting that he remove a blog post on this issue (c) we were not informed that he was involved in Panorama, which seems a breach of good faith and (d) we know he was involved because he had boasted about it on his Facebook page. In adding this point I think we should provide examples (Mel has them) outlining where he has gone, on his blog, beyond journalism and into campaigning against [the Post Office].

- 1 A. Yes, I probably was, yes.
- 2 Q. Can we turn to a different topic, please, and that's 3 your relationship with external legal advisers. That 4 can come down for the screen.

5 By 2016, you had been legally qualified for 6 21 years; is that right?

- 7 A. I think so, yes.
- 8 **Q.** You'd been admitted as a solicitor in this jurisdiction 9 for 14 of those years?
- A. 2016, that would be correct, yes, plus or minus. 10
- 11 Q. You were, by that time, specialised and expert in civil 12 litigation?
- 13 A. I certainly had experience and, obviously, 16 years of 14 it in civil litigation. There's always a somebody more 15 expert than me in this field, I've found.
- Q. Can we look, please, at POL00038852, that's B260, if you 16 17 want to look at it. This is, if we just scroll down to 18 the foot of the page, an email from Amy Prime, who was 19 a solicitor at Bond Dickinson and, if we go to the top of the page, please, we can see it's her email to you of 20 21 10 May 2016, copied, amongst other people, to Andrew 22 Parsons, the partner at Bond Dickinson?
- 23 A. Can I just check something. I don't think that date is 24 correct. I think they is -- we struggled to find this, 25 and I think -- I'm happy to be corrected by somebody --

"I would also use this letter to formally question why when approaching contributors, the BBC has never featured the views of the NFSP. Even if the NFSP has declined approaches, there is on the record footage of George Thomson talking about the issue."

6 At this stage, did you agree Mr Wallis held views 7 that threatened the impartiality of the BBC?

- 8 A. That's -- those aren't my words, no.
- 9 Q. That's why I was asking you whether you agreed that 10 Mr Wallis held views that threatened the impartiality of 11 the BBC?
- A. I didn't hold that view. I didn't turn my mind to 12 13 whether they did or didn't.
- 14 Q. Did you turn your mind to whether or not the BBC had 15 acted or not acted in good faith?
- 16 A. Not on good faith, no. I didn't turn my mind to those 17
- 18 Q. Was there a kind of bunker mentality amongst the senior 19 leadership in the Post Office in relation to Horizon and 20 the media's treatment of it?
- 21 A. I don't know that I can speak for senior management but 22 I do think, certainly from where I was sitting, it did 23 feel a bit bunker mentality, yes. I can't speak for the
- 24 senior executives.

Q. Were you in the bunker?

- 1 I think that it's using the American date referencing so 2
 - I think it's 5 October.
- 3 Q. Okay, fine.

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- 4 A. That becomes -- sorry, I beg your pardon, I just wanted 5 to -- and, if I'm wrong about that, I apologise but 6 that's my understanding.
- 7 Q. In any event, in 2016, either in the summer or autumn, 8 Amy Prime, a solicitor at Bond Dickinson, was emailing 9 you with a request for instructions on a request for 10 disclosure in relation to Post Office's Investigation
- Guidelines, yes? 11
- 12 **A**.

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Q. Can we look at the email, please. She says in the 13 14 email -- and I should say that Ms Prime, who was then 15 recently qualified, had sent a draft of this email to 16 the partner Andrew Parsons first and he contributed to 17 the drafting of it. Documents that the Inquiry has make 18 that clear and that's a matter we will take up with 19 others later in the phase.

In any event, Ms Prime says:

"Freeths have requested that we provide them with Post Office's Investigation Guidelines since 1998 (including any revisions to date). In the earlier round of disclosure we did not provide the guidelines since we wished to confirm whether the documents were covered by 64

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privilege. Brian Altman has confirmed that they will not be covered by privilege and as such the guidelines will, at some point, have to be disclosed.

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"We have reviewed both the most recent version of the guidelines (which were adopted in January 2016) and the prior version (which were adopted in August 2013). Of note, the 2013 version (attached, password ..."

Then, if you scroll up, please, you can see that there is, indeed, "Conduct of Criminal Investigation Policy v2 300813", as an attachment. Scroll back down:

"Of note, the 2013 version (attached ...) provides 'Should the recent Second Sight review be brought up by a subject or his representative during a PACE interview the Security Manager should state: "I will listen to any personal concerns or issues you may have had with the Horizon system during the course of this interview".'

"Freeths will more than likely use this statement as an opportunity to confirm that the Post Office has responded to postmasters using stock answers (a point which has already been raised in relation to the helpline) and further could be spun to show that Post Office was not taking issues with Horizon seriously and were trying to ignore any issues which were raised.

"Although we may face some criticism later on, we are proposing to try and suppress the guidelines for as

1 Q. Secondly, that suppression should be done in a way that 2 looked legitimate to the outside world, agree?

A. Yeah, that's what it says, yes.

4 Q. And, third, that you were to say if you disagreed that 5 disclosure should be suppressed but, at the same time, 6 be made to look legitimate to the outside world?

7 A. Quite -- I don't think it quite says that but that's 8 certainly the gist, yes.

9 Q. There's no record of you saying that you did disagree, saying, "Don't do that, it's wrong", is there? 10

A. There's no record -- as I say, I think say this in my 11 12 statement, I did not recall -- I have no recollection of

13 this email, which is regrettable, because I was --

14 Q. Are you used to getting emails from other lawyers 15 saying, "We should suppress documents"?

A. I'm used to getting a lot of emails. As I say, I don't 16 17 recall reading this at the time. It was clearly sent to 18 me, it was clearly addressed to me but I do not recall 19 and the reason why I mention the date is, when the 20 Inquiry provided this to me, I'll be frank and say it's 21

a concerning email. I --

22 Q. You searched your emails like frantic, no doubt, didn't 23 you?

24 A. I did and I couldn't find anything around it until the dates were swapped and I looked around October and 25 67

long as possible on the grounds that the most recent version is not relevant since it post-dates the investigations complained of and it would require a full disclosure exercise to piece together all historic revisions of the guidelines. We thought it would be best to bring this to your attention early.

"For now, we'll too what we can to avoid disclosure of these guidelines and try to do so in a way that looks legitimate. However, we are ultimately withholding a key document and this may attract some criticism from Freeths. If you disagree with this approach do let me know. Otherwise, we'll adopt this approach until such time as we sense the criticism is becoming serious.

14 "If you would like to discuss ... please don't 15 hesitate to call."

So, your solicitors had both the 2013 and the 2016 16 17 versions of the investigations guidelines, yes.

18 That's what it seems like, yes. A.

19 Indeed, they attach the 2013 version to the email, yes?

20 That's what it shows, yes.

21 Q. They made a proposal that was essentially summarising 22 threefold: firstly, that the Post Office should, through

23 its lawyers, suppress disclosure for as long as

24 possible; do you agree?

25 A. That's what it says, yes.

1 I did, indeed, receive it. It was in my inbox.

2 Q. And you didn't reply to it?

3 A. No, I --

4 Q. You didn't say, "no, don't do that"?

5 A. I did not reply to it but I do not recall reading it 6 carefully. I don't recall it in any size, shape or

7 colour.

8 **Q.** Your actions are the more important thing rather than 9 your present recollection?

10 A. That's true, mm-hm.

11 Q. What we can say is that you didn't reply --

12 A. Correct.

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13 Q. -- saying "No, lawyers shouldn't suppress relevant

documents, they shouldn't do so in a way that is made to

15 look legitimate, and they certainly shouldn't do so

16 because the content of the document is concerning and

17 might be used by our opponent to make a good argument

18 against us". You didn't do any of those things, did

19 you?

20 A. No, it's -- I certainly didn't reply in writing. I --

21 as I say, I don't recall. I don't recall calling,

22 either, which is the invitation there. I don't recall

23 any action on this so, no, I did not take any action in

24 response to this.

25 Q. Had the Post Office given Bond Dickinson instructions to

- 1 take an approach like this generally to disclosure,
- 2 ie a rigid hard line approach to disclosure?

- 3 A. No, we had not -- I do recall at many stages -
 - disclosure was a quite a big issue, as I think does
- 5 become clear through -- hopefully it comes through
- 6 through some of my evidence, and it was a challenge for
- Post Office because we held most of the documents and 7
- 8 we'd be doing the lion's share of the disclosure and,
- 9 like all large disclosure exercises, it's a challenge
- 10 for the claimant to have an idea of what you have but
- 11 don't know quite what it is because they don't have it.
- 12 Andy and I used to talk about, well, if we couldn't
- 13 do something what else could we offer that would 14
- approximate it? We'd say the "no, but" approach. 15 That's the recollection that I have of our approach to
- 16 the disclosure to it and, as I say, this is inconsistent
- 17 with that, I accept that, which is why I find it odd.
- 18 Why was the Post Office suppressing disclosure of Q. 19 documents, which it considered may harm its defence?
- 20 Well, the reasons being advanced are in the email.
- 21 I think this was made before formal disclosure orders so
- 22 this was in pre-action stage but --
- 23 Q. But they'd asked for this. They'd asked for, I think,
- 24 30-odd classes of material and one of them was
- 25 investigation guidelines. This had been identified, the
- 1 an excuse because that's what would have been desirable,
- 2 the first line is it says it's not urgent, to consider
- 3 as and when you get a chance, and, as I say, I do recall
- 4 I was dealing with something very urgent at the time
- 5 but, sitting here today, I'd like to say I did that, but
- 6 I didn't, sir --
- 7 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: But I'm right, aren't I: there should
 - have been a prompt reply and it should have been --
- 9 A. Yes.

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- SIR WYN WILLIAMS: -- "You can't possibly do that"? 10
- A. Yes, your Honour. 11
- 12 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine, thank you.
- 13 MR BEER: There's another view of it, the penultimate
- 14 paragraph that says, "If you disagree, you must get in
- 15 touch"?
- A. Yes. 16
- 17 Q. So it was like a negative resolution, "we're going to do
- 18 this, unless you pipe up"?
- A. Um --19
- 20 Q. And you didn't disagree?
- A. I did not disagree. 21
- 22 **Q.** Thank you. Can we move on.
- 23 POL00043169. That's E37. Again, I'm still on the
- 24 topic of dealing with external legal advisers. Just
- a bit of context before we dive in. We're now many 25

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- 2013 version, as containing a passage that might harm 1
- 2 the Post Office's defence. That's the only reason given
- 3 for not disclosing it.
- 4 A. That's what I've seen there, yes.
- 5 Q. Is that a legitimate reason for not disclosing
- 6 a document, that it might harm your defence?
- 7 A. Not to me, it's not, and I would hope that wasn't my
- 8 view then, either. I don't believe it was but, as
- 9 I say, I don't recall any reaction to this.
- 10 Q. Did you enjoy such a close relationship with your
- 11 solicitors in the Group Litigation that it was perfectly
- 12 acceptable openly to discuss the suppression of
- 13 disclosure and covering it up by making it seem
- 14 legitimate in emails of this kind?
- 15 A. I have to say, no, and this is inconsistent with most of
- 16 my dealings on this matter with our solicitors.
- 17 Q. But you didn't do anything to pull Bond Dickinson up on
- 18 this, did you?
- 19 Α. On this, no.
- 20 Q. Can we move on, please.
- SIR WYN WILLIAMS: In reality, Mr Williams, this email 21
- 22 should have had a prompt response from you to the effect
- 23 of "You can't possibly do that"; that's right, isn't it?
- 24 Α. That's what I'd like. When I looked at this, it is
- 25 quite possible -- and I offer this in no way as

- 1 years later in October 2019, and the Post Office had
- 2 managed to conduct the Horizon Issues Trial, which was
- 3 concerned with whether there were known errors in
- 4 Horizon, without disclosing to the claimants and to the
- 5 court many important Known Error Logs, okay?
- 6 A. All right, thank you.
- 7 Can we turn to page 4, at the bottom, please. We can
- 8 see your email of 19 October:
- 9 "Ben [this is to Mr Foat],
- 10 "Please find an updated Board update. Set out below 11 are the key notes to address the points from your email
- 12 on 'what would it take to get all of [the KEL review]
- done by next week', and 'what is the scope [of a Fujitsu 13
- 14 audit] that would diminish the risk [of creating
- 15 documents that would then need to be disclosed to the
- 16 claimants]'."
 - Then reading on:
- 18 "Generally ...

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- 19 I'm afraid there's some text in here, in the email 20 we've been provided that makes it harder to read but
- 21 I think we can get the sense to it. You say:
- 22 "... I have stressed (firmly) to the HSF and [Womble
- 23 Bond Dickinson] teams the importance of this workstream.
- 24 It's being escalated to Alan Watts at HSF and Tom Beezer 25
 - at [Womble Bond Dickinson] to make sure our Board's

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requirements are met", and they were both cc'd.

"The key legal risk here is the ongoing duty in the GLO litigation to disclose adverse documents, which may not exist (or which we may not have been aware of) but for taking the action now contemplated, especially in the context of material, we had not previously seen."

Then under the headed in "New KELs", you say:

"[Womble Bond Dickinson] are assessing the risk over the weekend of the 94 newly disclosed high risk KELs. By the middle of [the] week, Counsel will have reviewed these KELs in detail and given a view on whether they are likely to cause the Horizon trial to be recommenced/the judgment delayed (the Counsel team being best placed to identify the impact they may have on the trial they conducted)."

So trial over 94 high-risk KELs that had been newly disclosed after the evidence had finished and counsel were looking at "Are we going to have to recommence the trial, ie here's some more evidence, or ask the judge to delay giving judgment?"

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"In relation to the other KELs not used at the trial (ie the majority of the around 14,000 new KELs), the key risk of reviewing these is that claimants have not yet asked for the documents, so by reviewing them now we are

- 1 A. No -- sorry, I -- I want to make sure I'm saying no to
 - the right thing. We -- that was not my understanding of
- 3 our approach to disclosure in the litigation.
- 4 Q. Was it your approach to disclosure of the Known Error 5
- Logs, the around 14,000 of them, at this stage?
- 6 A. No, it -- well, it depends. Are you talking -- which --
- 7 are you talking about the new KELs or the --
- 8 Q. I'm talking about the 14,000 that were not the 94
- 9 high-risk ones that had been disclosed?
- A. I'm sorry, I'm confusing myself. Sorry, could you ask 10
- 11 the question again, please?
- 12 Q. Yes. Was it then your approach that, in relation to
- 13 those 14,000 Known Error Logs, a relevant consideration
- 14 was whether the claimants had asked for them or not?
- A. In trying to work out what Post Office was to do with 15
- 16 these, clearly thought it was a relevant consideration.
- 17 Q. Why is that a relevant consideration?
- A. Is it something that the business wants to do? 18
- Q. In law, why is it a relevant consideration? 19
- 20 A. Sorry, I'm losing you. What is it that the -- the
- 21 claimants do it or not? We'd had -- we'd operated -- so
- 22 we have a duty to disclose adverse documents. That's my
- 23 understanding.
- 24 Q. Can you discharge that duty without looking at the
- 25 documents?

doing the claimants' work for them.

"The legal advice therefore is we should not review the 14,000 other KELs unless the claimants ask for them or counsel's review of the 94 high-risk KELs warrants a wider review."

Then if you just read the next couple of bullet points to yourself.

Then under "Audit", at the end:

"The best way to mitigate the risk of generating adverse/disclosable documents through an audit is to keep it focused on Fujitsu's Litigation Support provided to date, with any operational audit to follow once the litigation has been resolved and its associated disclosure duties [continued]."

You'll see that, in the course of the legal advice that you gave to Mr Foat there, you said that, in relation to the 14,000-odd new KELs, there was a risk, if Post Office reviewed them, that you were doing the claimants' work for them because the claimants hadn't yet asked for those documents, yes?

- 21 A. Yes, that's what that says.
- 22 Was that an approach that you took to disclosure 23 generally: unless the other side asks for a document,
- 24 there is no need to review your own material to see
- 25 whether it meets the test for disclosure?

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- 1 I suspect it would be difficult to.
- 2 Q. And that's what you were proposing not to do?
- 3 A. But I don't think that's necessarily -- because the
- 4 disclosure was focused to whatever had been ordered.
- We --5

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- 6 Q. None of this had been ordered --
- 7 A. But across the entire business not every corner was
 - turned. But you'll also see -- so doing the claimants'
- work for them, I'm trying to think why I said that --9
- Q. Let's have the document back up on the screen. 10
- A. I have it in front of me. 11
- 12 Q. POL00043169. Under "New KELs", second bullet point.
- 13 First bullet point you deal with the 94 that have
- 14 already been disclosed and counsel are assessing whether
- 15 this is going to cause some rather catastrophic
- 16 consequences for the trial that's already taken place.
- 17 A. Yes

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18 Q. Second bullet point:

19 "In relation to the other KELs [the 14,000-odd] the 20 key risk of reviewing [them] is that the claimants have 21 not yet asked for [them] by reviewing them ... we are 22 doing the claimants' work for them."

> My question is really simple. You were suggesting that there's no need to review your own material to see whether it met the test for disclosure, weren't you?

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- A. That's the -- I'm also saying that -- so that seems --1 2 on the next bullet point, that seems to be supported by 3 legal advice and I'd like to -- I don't remember that 4 advice but that's the sort of thing I'd like to refresh
 - myself on because it seems to underpin what the statement above it is and I'm afraid I don't recall it.

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- 7 Q. So you are saying that the next bullet point, the legal 8 advice, is not referring to the legal advice that you 9 are here giving in this email. It's referring to
- 10 somebody else's legal advice that you're regurgitating?
- Quite possibly. I'm struggling with the -- and I've 11 Α. 12 highlighted it, so I've clearly brought it to the 13 attention. I'm trying to work out now why I wrote that 14 in the way I did, and I'm -- I think I say sort of quite 15 often when I do it -- and in a circumstance like this 16 it's highly likely I'd have been doing it -- is that 17 this issue of the new late-found KELs was pretty 18 alarming and generated a lot of activity and requests

You can see we'd instructed it looks -- it sounds like counsel plus two law firms were engaged on it. I would have been -- and I think this is -- sort of looking at this email, I remember the time. I don't remember drafting this email but I remember the time.

for information to understand what was going on.

I would have been trying to find out what's happening,

so that our associated disclosure duties have concluded"?

3 A. Yes, I do say that.

- 4 Q. So what you're saying, whether yourself or in 5 synthesising the views of others, is, "Don't look at 6 14,000 new KELs, because they might contain material 7 that's adverse to our case and, in that respect, we 8 would it be doing the claimants' work for them. Instead 9 wait until the litigation is over and our disclosure
- 11 A. That is what it says. Although, looking at that, it 12 wouldn't have closed off any disclosure duties, as 13 I understood them, in any --
- 14 Q. Why does it say, "Wait until the litigation has been 15 resolved and its associate disclosure duties concluded", 16 then?

duties have passed, then conduct an operational audit".

- 17 A. I agree, that's what it says.
- Q. Can you help us with this at all, please? 18
- 19 A. I'm sorry, what's the question, please.
- 20 Q. It appears to suggest that the Post Office's suggested 21 approach from its lawyers, either from you or
- 22 communicated through you, is that we shouldn't look at
- 23 documents that might contain adverse material because we

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- 24 might have to disclose them; instead, let's wait until
- the litigation is over and our duties of disclosure have 25

what needs to happen and synthesise that into digestible bullet points for people to understand the position so that we either proceed with known risks, with knowledge of the known risks, or decide not to do things with knowledge of those risks, as well.

So on the -- when I say the legal advice, my guess is -- and I'm sorry, again, I can't remember the specifics -- but being told not to do it, I think, will have come from a collection of the lawyers involved, which includes me, as well as the external lawyers.

11 Q. I take it if this advice does originate from others, 12

it's not advice that you disagreed with?

13 A. I mean, quite clearly, if we were reviewing it, we would 14 be doing the claimants' work for them. As soon as we 15 reviewed, we would see something; if it was adverse, we 16 had duty to disclose it, so that's --

17 Q. Isn't that a reason to do something, rather than not to 18 do it, in the legal system?

19 A. I'm not sure. I'm not sure. It would depend on the 20 circumstance and I'm thinking, in this circumstance, it 21 seems to have been suggested that that was acceptable.

22 Q. When you take it together with the final bullet point 23 under "Audit" about mitigation of risk, you say, 24 essentially, "Before we look at these KELs, before we 25 audit them, we should wait for the litigation to be over

1 ceased to arise.

- That's what it says. I'm sorry, I'm missing your 2 A. 3 question. I'm sorry, I'm being thick.
- 4 Q. Do you think that's appropriate?
- 5 A. I'm saying it's a way to mitigate the risk.
- 6 Q. Risk of what: disclosing adverse documents?
- 7 My understanding -- and I'm happy to be corrected -- my 8 understanding of civil litigation is the duty of
- disclosure in the litigation ends with the litigation. 9
- 10 Once the litigation concluded, we didn't have a duty to 11 disclose to Freeths --
- 12 Q. That's why you have to discharge the duty in the 13
- litigation before it's concluded?
- 14 A. But that is what was -- that work was being 15 undertaken -- that work was being undertaken. It's
- 16 a question of how far you go with it.

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- Q. Thank you. That can come down. 18 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Before it does, Mr Beer, I just want
- 19 to -- I may be being wholly, unduly pedantic but there's 20 something itching away at me. Could you put it back up
- 21 again, please, that document. Just so I've understood
- 22 the timing of this, Mr Williams, the Horizon Issues
- 23 Trial had taken place but the judgment had not been
- 24 given, so within that time period; is that correct?
- 25 **A**. That's my understanding, sir.

1	SIR	R WYN WILLIAMS: Right now the word "disclosure" may have
2		more than one meaning in the context I'm talking about
3		but in civil litigation you give disclosure by producing
4		a list of documents. You don't actually begin by simply
5		sending the other side a bundle of documents, do you?
6		You actually produce a list to notify them of what you
7		had?
8	A.	That's correct, sir. That's my understanding.

9 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Now, in relation to these 14,000 10 KELs. which are described in this document as "new 11 KELs", had they ever been listed either in a formal list 12 or referred to in a letter to the claimants' lawyers to 13 notify them that they existed.

A. My understanding is that had had happened, sir, that had 14 happened fairly promptly upon been notified of these. 15

16 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. So that I'm not misunderstanding 17 what's gone on, you are telling me that the existence of 18 these documents had not been hidden from the claimant 19 but nobody had looked at them to gauge their relevance; 20

21 A. Almost it, sir. Looking at this, that is correct that 22 they are notified. It's my understanding, that --23 I only received this document, which is -- it wasn't 24 referred to my Rule 9 Request, so I haven't looked 25 around this as I have some of the other issues, so this

by Simon Baker to find out whether Horizon bugs had been 2 referred to in any previous court actions, in 3 anticipation of the publication of the Second Sight Interim Report. This led me to put this question to 5 [Womble Bond Dickinson] and DAC Beachcroft, given that 6 to the best of my knowledge they were the [Post Office] external lawyers most likely to have supported [the Post Office] in any civil action.

> "This activity made clear to me that Horizon bugs had been discussed in two court cases, namely the 2007 civil case of Post Office v Castleton and the prosecution of Seema Misra. In the context that I was looking at them in mid-2013 however, there was no reason for me to look into this further. That was because the cases had concluded quite sometime earlier and there were no indications from those I was supplying the information to that anything further was required."

So, essentially, you're saying in mid-2013 you had cause to enquire about past cases and that enquiry had led you to two cases in which Horizon bugs had been discussed: Lee Castleton and Seema Misra?

22 A. Correct.

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23 Q. Can we look, please, at POL00117614 -- that's E68 -- and 24 turn to pages 3 and 4, please. If we just look at the 25 end of 4, we can see it's signed off "Tim", and if we go

1 is my understanding with that caveat. It's my 2 understanding is --

3 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right, so that the Inquiry can satisfy 4 itself if it wants to about this, what you are, in effect, telling me is that there will be a document in 5 6 existence which shows that the solicitors acting for the 7 claimants were notified of the existence of these 14,000 8

9 A. I sincerely hope so because that is my understanding, 10 sir. and then --

11 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right, that's fine. Thank you very 12 much. That's your understanding and we'll see in due 13 course where we go from there. Thank you.

14 MR BEER: Thank you, sir. I think that document can come 15 down now.

16 Can we turn, please, to your view of subpostmasters 17 and turn up paragraphs 44 and 45 of your witness 18 statement, please.

19 Α. 44 and 45 was that?

20 Q. Yes. You say:

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"I have been asked to comment on some 1 July 2013 emails concerning the 'Callendar Square bug' (sometimes called the 'Falkirk' bug). These events happened over 10 years ago, so I do not now have a firm recollection of how they unfolded. As far as I recall, I was asked

1 back to page 3, we can see it's an email from Tim 2 McCormack to Paula Vennells with the subject "It had to 3 happen sooner or later", and it was sent on 14 October 2015. 4 5 I should say this is one of a number of emails 6

Mr McCormack sent directly to Ms Vennells in October 2015 regarding errors in Horizon. He says: "This may be the last you hear from me directly.

"It is a last chance for you to accept what I have been telling you these last few years is true.

"I now have clear and unquestionable evidence of an intermittent bug in Horizon that can and does cause thousands of pounds losses to subpostmasters.

"Tonight there is a branch in your network sitting on a loss of 5 figures. The money does not exist. It is as a result of several one sided transactions being entered erroneously by the system not of the operator.

"I have documentation from [Post Office] employees acknowledging the error and that is has happened before.

"I have the source documentation from the subpostmaster concerned.

"I have evidence of a similar event happening two years ago. It is also documented. I have a limited channel of contacts in the Industry. Two similar events (plus the admission by your employee that he is aware of

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other events) is a high percentage, and the error soon to be exposed will result in more coming to light. "Most importantly it is an error that would not be noticed by many subpostmasters and could well be the reason for many of the JFSA cases.

"I have three options.

"(a) this email is the first option -- appeal to your sense of decency and compassion to accept that many of the claimants in the JFSA [saga] are honest and decent citizens whose lives were destroyed by your organisation.

"(b) go to the press and see what happens.

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"(c) await the inevitable judicial review where you will personally be exposed and perhaps leave yourself open to criminal charges.

"We can stop this farce now. You can wake up and realise that the people you rely on to tell you the truth about what is happening don't have the ability to

"Option (b) happens on Friday. I have one former [subpostmaster] who is keen to proceed with a JR. Option (c) could happen sooner than you think.

"You have two options:

"(a) ignore this email and accept the consequences

Nick Wallis, Sandip Patel QC, Professor Button).

"I have sent those letters in the past and am happy to do so again. I'm also pretty sure I know about the JR he's referring to, and I have already sent a holding letter to that former [postmaster] acknowledging receipt of his complaint, so my name might be known to Tim already.

"If you agree, I'll circulate something shortly. I'll want to send it hard copy ...

"Generally, my view is that this guy is a bluffer, who keeps expecting us to March to his tune. I don't think we should do so, but instead respond with a straight bat."

Mr Davies agrees at the top saying:

"Thanks Rod -- wise advice with which I agree."

By this time, October 2015, you acknowledge, we saw in your witness statement, that you were aware of suggestions that there were bugs in Horizon arising from your knowledge of the Seema Misra case and the Lee Castleton case, yes?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. The Second Sight Report, the interim report and its 23 second report, had been published by now, hadn't they?

24 A.

25 Q. Why did you think Mr McCormack was a bluffer?

"(b) travel with me to the branch in question. See for yourself the evidence. Talk to the subpostmaster concerned and reach your own conclusion. I want nothing out of this and will meet my own costs."

If we look at the foot of page 2, one of the Executive Assistants to Paula Vennells sends the email on to Angela van den Bogerd and others:

"Please see email from Tim. Can you advise what action we need to take?"

Further up the page, Angela van den Bogerd sends it to Mr Davies and to you:

"Mark, Rod,

"My view is that we should ask Tim to share the information with us so that we can make an informed decision on how to proceed."

16 So actually taking up, essentially, part of option 17 (a), agreed?

18 A. Yes.

19 "I would suggest this is probably best coming from Paula 20 in the first instance."

Then over the page, your reply:

"Thanks Angela. I agree we should ask for the information, but recommend that we write to him in the same terms that we have every other person who has said they have evidence of flaws (Kay Linnell, Second Sight,

Sorry, I think the bluffing is in relation to the "you have options or else", the sort of threat. He'd been a serial correspondent. I don't know where this sits in the course of that time, but my understanding is -sorry, my recollection, and it is a recollection, again, this is one of the more recently disclosed -- is, certainly, we offered -- and I think it may have been Angela van den Bogerd met with him to try to understand the issue in the branch and so, you know, we had already started to take steps to understand.

But, if he had information which he was clearly saying he had, he should be able to share that with us so we could manage it; we could process it, understand it and respond as appropriate. He wasn't very specific with what the issue was or where it was, so there were very limited lines of inquiry that we had internally,

17 without something more from him.

Q. Why did you recommend that the Post Office should 18 19 respond with a straight bat, ie avoid answering the 20 direct questions or giving them the information they want and just bat it back to them?

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22 A. No, that's not what I'm saying there at all. I'm saying 23 a straight bat is, whatever I think about the 24 correspondent, we should respond to as his inbound in

25 enquiry seriously and appropriately. That's what

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I meant by a "straight bat". 1

- 2 Q. So you weren't referring to responding with a straight
- 3 bat there as meaning when a batsman holds their bat 4
- vertically and just knocks the ball back to the person
- 5 who sent it to them?
- 6 A. I don't know, it's the second time my -- a straight bat, 7 to me, means appropriately.
- 8 Q. Honestly, appropriately?
- A. Yes. 9
- 10 Q. That's the sense in which you are using the expression,
- 11 rather than, as I've used it, ie bat it straight back to
- 12 them?

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- 13 A. Yeah, no, no, sorry, straight bat is appropriately.
- Q. What investigation was, in fact, carried out? 14
- A. I recall writing a letter, as I think I indicated, to 15
- 16 Mr McCormack. I also recognised the letters that I'd
- 17 put in brackets where we'd invited other people to send.
- 18 I think his was slightly different. I seem to recall it
- 19 being a little bit different where I tried to address -
 - in his email he said there were concerns, you know --
- 21 what did he say? People not giving the right -- maybe
- 22 not here. Sorry, it's not in this one.

No, sorry, it's not in this. I can't see it anyway. I've lost my train of thought, sorry. I wrote a letter

to him inviting him to share it and I think I added some

Then if we can go, please, to page 1, the foot of the page, thank you, you say:

"I'm not inclined to reply -- and certainly we don't need to ... given the tone of this and his other communications, and we've already told him we're not going to comment."

Then further up the page, you provide a draft for Ms Vennells' Executive Assistant and say:

"Avene.

"On reflection I'd like to go back to Mr McCormack with a short response, for no other reason than to ensure he can't allege that we don't respond [to issues]

"Mr McCormack

"Post Office has asked me to respond to your email. Post Office would be happy to consider any information you may care to disclose ... However, and in line with my previous reply to you dated 4 July ... Post Office will not comment on the other matter you have raised."

Why were you writing these responses back to Mr McCormack or drafting responses back to Mr McCormack which all simply shut down what he was saying and didn't say we will investigate the concerns that he raised?

24 Have we got anywhere in the bundle my -- this has 25 referred to two bits of correspondence from me, one is

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1 extra comfort around that the material would -- to try

2 to give him confidence that the material would be

3 treated properly. I --

4 Q. Can we move on, then, in your dealings with Mr McCormack

5 POL00119584 that's E69. If we start by looking at

6 page 4 and 5. We're now in July of the following year

7 and Mr McCormack emails the Post Office, copying Paula

8 Vennells and Tim Parker in, in relation to

9 an investigation into the prosecution of Seema Misra.

10 Can you just scan that the first part of that

11 correspondence? Then, if we go to page 5, the third

paragraph, Mr McCormack says he finds it:

"... utterly appalling that Post Office seek to prolong the suffering of a woman [that's Seema Misra] who very clearly did not commit the crime she was accused and convicted of. You have the opportunity to contact the CCRC straight away on this matter and ensure Ms Misra suffers no longer than she has to. I urge you to do so today. At the moment I am prepared to consider incompetence as the rationale behind these contemptible failings of [the Post Office] to understand that Horizon is capable of producing intermittent errors that result in huge paper losses at subpostmaster branches. Any

subsequent delay will make me consider the far more

1 4 July 2016 and the other is 19 November, I assume,

2015. Do we have either of those?

serious matter of conspiracy."

3 Q. I can certainly try and find those over lunch, are you

4 saying that, in those, we will find --

5 A. I'm not sure. I'd like to see them because they are

6 referred to because I -- I think, consistent with the

7 previous email, we said we should ask him for what he's

8 got and, if we don't receive stuff, there's a limit to

9 how much correspondence you can engage with the person

10 who won't give you lines of inquiry or sufficient

11 information to take it forward. And I think in those

12 circumstances -- and I think this was happening at the

13 time -- it's appropriate to try to draw the

14 correspondence to an end or to a point where it can be

15 taken forward meaningfully.

Q. Did you think he was a mischief maker? 16

A. No, I -- I think he was a genuinely concerned 17

18 individual.

19 Q. You didn't think he was making mischief?

20 A. I don't quite know what you mean by that. I think he

21 was concerned. I mean, making mischief to me sounds

22 like this is a bit of a giggle, I don't think he --

23 nothing I saw on any of his correspondence made me think

24 he thought that, quite the opposite. I think he was

genuinely motivated to raise issues with us. The 25

- 1 challenge we had is we weren't quite sure what the issue 2 was.
- 3 Q. You couldn't tell from Mr McCormack, he wasn't4 explaining himself clearly to you?
- 5 A. He just wasn't giving us any information to take things
- forward. His references to an issue and a branch is not something --
- 8 **Q.** He was inviting the Chief Executive to come to the
- branch and not rely on people like you who weremisinforming her?
- 11 A. That's true, that's -- a lot of people ask lots of Chief12 Executives --
- 13 **Q.** Why not take that up with some other person and say,
- 14 "Okay, we'll come to the branch and we'll look at
- an error unfolding before our eyes, as you, Mr McCormack
- 16 say will happen"?
- 17 A. As I say, my recollection is that that had taken place
- 18 with Angela van den Bogerd but I'm not 100 per cent
- 19 confident of that recollection. That's what my
- 20 understanding is -- sorry, that's what my belief is.
- 21 **Q.** Last thing on this topic, can we look at POL00041382.
- 22 That's E28.

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- 23 A. I'm sorry if I'm not as clear as this, I did any see
- 24 these on Friday evening, so I'm not as familiar with the
- 25 documents around here as I am with others in my
 - for any discrepancies in branch. I really want to try to help this postmaster but clearly we cannot say that we will not address what they have confirmed to us ie that they have falsified their account.

"My preference would be to explain to this postmaster what the errors to which he refers are and that if these were affecting his branch we would be able to identify that.

"On the false accounting point could we say something along the lines of ..."

Then some text is inserted.

Then if we go to page 3, please, and if we look at your email -- that's it. 16 November, you reply.

"Hi Angela -- I do not think that this is a genuine request. It has all the hallmarks of Tim McCormack mischief ... these [Freedom of Information] requests were recently cited in a blog which thanked Mr McCormack 'for his work in relation to the Horizon system'."

Did you consider that Mr McCormack was making mischief?

mischief?
 A. Well, I think at this point, sort of anonymised requests from "AN Obody" might drift a little bit closer but, no,
 again, I think he was motivated -- to be clear, I don't know that this was from Mr McCormack. I'm saying it struck me it had the hallmarks I think from -- and

1 statement.

2 Q. E28.

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- 3 A. Thank you.
- Q. Can we start, please, on page 7. If we scroll down,
 please, thank you, there's an anonymous Freedom of
 Information request. Can you see that on the middle of
 page 7? If we scroll up, please, Angela van den Bogerd
 sends that on to a range of people and says:

"In the light of the Court Action I think Legal should draft the response on this, we have provided the 'anonymous' person options to resolve the alleged issue ... and cannot do much else in this public arena and advised what they should do if they want an internal review.

"I think the response should be based on the fact that this is not a request for recorded information and whatever context are felt to be required -- therefore I have attached the basic response to this for amendment."

Then if we go forward to page 5, please, in the middle of the page -- so if we can scroll. That's it. Ms van den Bogerd says to you:

> "This postmaster clearly thinks the answer to their problem is in this list of errors and in all likelihood is therefore not looking/or does not know how to look

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- 1 I think reading it -- from reading back, trying to --
- the style was similar to the way he wrote. But I don't
- 3 know that it was him.
- 4 Q. Did you think generally he was making mischief?
- 5 **A.** No, I think -- I thought I'd answered that. No, he was genuinely motivated to pursue, I think in particular,
- Seema Misra's case. I think that's clear from thefeeling you can see in his emails.
- 9 Q. Thank you. That can come down.
- Looking back, then, in your dealings with the media, with subpostmasters, whether directly or indirectly, who were making complaints about Horizon, do you say you acted appropriately at all times?
- 14 A. I certainly tried to. There's a possibility I didn't.
- 15 All times is quite a long time and I think we've already
- seen one email that, on the banter side of things,
- 17 was -- you know, maybe would have -- would not have sent
- 18 or expressed differently.
- 19 Q. Thank you.
- 20 A. I'd like to think I always that respect for them because21 they were dogged and determined.
- Q. Did you ever think, as well as being dogged anddetermined, they might be right?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 Q. Did you ever express that openly, "Hold on, we should

- 1 all just pause; they might actually have a point here"? 2 A. Well, I think we -- by our actions, we were doing that, 3 the scheme sought to do that by investigating the -- the 4 Mediation Scheme sought to do that by investigating the 5 individual cases.
- 6 **Q.** That was a genuine attempt to get to the truth, was it, 7 the Mediation Scheme?
- 8 A. As far as I was concerned, yes.
- 9 Q. The setting up of the Second Sight interim investigation 10 before it? That was a genuine attempt to get to the truth, was it? 11
- A. It was -- as far as I was aware, yes. I came after that 12 13 had started, so, you know, the genesis for it, the
- origins with it, I'm less familiar with but everything 14
- I saw suggested that's exactly what it was.
- 15
- 16 Q. Can we look, then, at your engagement with Second Sight 17 and the complaints that were made before it published its Interim Report in July 2013. So we're looking at 18 19 the period here August 2022 to July 2013. Can we start,
- 20 please, with your witness statement at page 15,
- 21 paragraph 32.
- 22 A. Sorry, page 50, paragraph 32? Paragraph 32. Thank you.
- 23 Sorry, 15. I beg your pardon.
- 24 Q. I should just read for context or ask you to look at 25 context -- just cast your eye over paragraphs 29, 30 and

1 Q. -- about Horizon immunity proposals and you outline 2 a proposal from the JFSA in the first three bullet 3 points. If we scroll down, you say, "Our draft 4 response", and then you set out three bullet points.

> So you're essentially noting the Post Office's options are: do nothing to this proposed immunity, ie a non-retribution against postmasters for engaging in the scheme; secondly, propose a no-blame inquiry to be carried out by Second Sight, which would determine whether Horizon was fit for purpose but would not rule on individual cases; or mediate with the JFSA? In relation to the latter option, you say:

"This may just at further time and cost with no guarantee of a successful outcome."

Yes?

A. 16 Yes.

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17 Q. If we scroll down. Thank you. You say:

"If we go down the Inquiry route:

"It would determine whether Horizon is 'fit for purpose', by reference to comparable systems;

"It would not 'rule' on individual cases because of the very wider range of concern which could be submitted (eg inadequate training, inadequate support, user error, third party intervention, Horizon itself).

"Cases will be chosen by Second Sight/JFSA/ 99

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2 With that background, you say in 32 --

- 3 A. Sorry, can I just finish? Thanks. Thank you.
- 4 With that background, you say in paragraph 32:

5 "While these tasks gave me some awareness of the 6 controversy around Horizon, I did not get into the 7 detail of Second Sight's work or the underlying 8 complaints, and I was not involved in considering the 9 merits of any of the concerns being examined by Second

10 Siaht."

11 I just want to examine the extent of your 12 involvement and the extent of your role at this time. 13 Can we look, please, at POL00143827; that's tab E80.

14 **A.** E80 or E18?

Q. E80. 15

16 Thank you. (Pause)

17 Q. Are you there?

18 A. I'm sorry?

19 Are you there?

20 A. Yes, I am, sorry. Sorry, I thought I'd said. I beg

21 your pardon.

22 Q. It's 1 November 2012.

23 Yes, I have that.

24 Q. An email from you to Mr Flemington --

25 Mm-hm.

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1 [subpostmasters], not [the Post Office] -- this helps 2 neutralise any suggestion that [the Post Office] 3 'cherrypicked' cases or that the process is 4

a 'whitewash'. [The Post Office] can still advance its 5 case on the investigation concerns."

6 Just looking at that first page, it seems, at this 7 time, November 2012, so within three or four months of 8 you joining the company, you were engaged in considering how subpostmasters' concerns would be addressed by or 9 10 interact with an investigation by Second Sight, weren't 11 you?

12 A. Yes, I was, I actually -- looking at my statement -- I'm 13 sorry -- what I think I'm saying in paragraph 32 is

14 I wasn't looking at the detail of the individual

15 complaints, so I'm sorry if that's given the wrong

16 impression.

17 **Q.** Why were you conscious of suggestions that the Post 18 Office would cherrypick cases or whitewash cases 19 considered by Second Sight?

20 A. Well, to get a conclusion, you need something -- so 21 it -- well, my understanding was they were trying to --

22 that Second Sight had been instructed to get to the

23 bottom to see whether issues with Horizon could have

24 been the source of unexplained shortfalls in branch

25 accounts. If Post Office leads with its own cases and

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- only its own cases, it's marking its own homework, it's open to challenge, being, you know, biased, selectively in favour of their own and, hence, the exercise was probably unlikely to satisfy the counterparty.
- Q. So it would be fair to say, looking at your involvement
 at this stage, you're addressing process or structural
 issues, rather than individual case?
- 8 A. I think so, yes.
- 9 Q. Yes?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. We can take that down.
- 12 Can we look, please, to POL00186090, that's tab 13 E100.
- 14 A. I have that, thank you.
- 15 Q. We're now in spring 2013, and can you see that, at the foot of the page, if we scroll down, Mr Swepson, who is
 17 a Programme Planner in the IT Separation Programme
 18 Office, if we scroll down a little further, sends you
 19 some spot reviews. Just summarise for us what a Spot
- 20 Review was?
- 21 A. My understanding was a Spot Review was Second Sight's
- 22 work had identified specific instances of, I guess,
- 23 branch issues, at the widest level, that had been put to
- them by the postmasters that they wanted to deep dive.
- Those issues were sort of crystallised into an issue
- A. Yes. I wonder if it was either "briefing" or "meeting"
 I'm not sure. It's a typo for sure.
- Q. You told us in your witness statement that you were notinterested in considering any of the merits of the cases
- 5 being examined by Second Sight and this seems to have
- 6 you going to a meeting to discuss a draft response?
- 7 A. I don't believe I attended that meeting. I don't recall8 doing it.
- Q. Why were you involved or why were you to be involved in
 the formulation of the Post Office's responses to spot
 reviews?
- 12 **A.** So part of my role, I was quite often the point man, the

conduit, between external advisors to a project team.

- 14 In this case, Bond Dickinson were supporting Post
- 15 Office's review of the spot reviews and I think the
- 16 programme lead for the Second Sight engagement --
- 17 I think we saw a footnote somewhere in my statement --
- the project lead was a guy called Simon Baker. I think
- 19 he had asked for two things. He'd thought -- one was to
- 20 strengthen the language, the form, the content of the
- 21 spot reviews to better advance Post Office's response to
- the issues.

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- 23 Q. To put it as robustly as was possible; is that right?
- 24 A. Quite possibly. I can't remember if that's the words
- 25 used but it was of that tenor, yes. And then he also

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with each issue being named a Spot Review. So I thinktwo are referenced in this.

So spot review was an attempt -- forgive me, I'm fluffing my lines. Spot review was an attempt to analyse in detail a specific allegation raised to Second Sight through this interim early phase, the first phase of their work.

- Q. Thank you. If we scroll up, that having been sent to
 you by Mr Swepson, if we just look at the email, you
 send it on to Gavin Matthews and Andrew Parsons, yes?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 **Q.** You say:

"I confirm our meeting this Wednesday [is at] OldStreet ...

"... I attach the 'Spot Reviews' we have received and our current draft responses.

"We will discuss the responses at the meeting, with a view to producing a standalone document which sets out our definitive position on the issue raised in the 'Spot Review' ... the final response [may] enter the public domain, so we need to ensure that it is robust, defensible and properly protects/advances Post Office Limited's case.

"I look forward to [I suspect that should mean briefing'] you on Wednesday."

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- 1 asked, I think, for support from some lawyers on that
- 2 because -- and then, thirdly, I think he also asked if
- I could arrange a meeting at their offices becausefinding a meeting room was always quite difficult.
- 5 I have to say, I don't particularly recall this but
- 6 I managed to refresh myself from my documents.

I think, ultimately, the meeting was held at 148 Old
 Street, which was Post Office's office, which is why
 I think I was able to meet Gavin and Andy when they came

but, as I say, I don't actually recall attending themeeting.

12 **O** Was a de

- 12 Q. Was a defensive approach taken to Post Office's responseto the spot reviews?
- 14 **A.** I suppose you could say defensive; you could also say it15 was an offensive one, it was a proactive one, they were
- trying to positively advance their response. You could
- 17 say it either way. Both are, I think, fair
- interpretation -- it was certainly trying to put their position, our position, as firmly as possible.
- 20 Q. To what extent did that undermine the purpose of the21 Second Sight investigations?
- A. I don't think it did because Second Sight would review
 it and consider it and comment as appropriate but --
- Q. It wasn't meant to be a litigious or adversarialprocess, was it?

- A. No, but also I don't think articulating things in a, you 1
- 2 know, clear and representative manner is necessarily
- 3 adversarial. You might not like what's been written but
- 4 it doesn't mean it's not there for consideration.
- 5 Q. Were instructions given to you to take an open and
- 6 transparent approach with Second Sight or to take
- 7 a robust one which properly advanced a case on behalf on
- 8 the Post Office?
- 9 A. I don't actually recall any instruction either way on
- 10 that. It was provide information to them that they
- asked for -- at this stage, certainly was that. 11
- Was there no overarching strategy in the Post Office's 12 Q.
- 13 response to the initial Second Sight investigation?
- A. I'm not aware of one or I don't recall one today, 14
- 15 certainly I don't recall being aware of one at the time
- 16 either.
- 17 Q. You don't remember instructions to the effect that,
- "This process has been set up as an alternative to 18
- 19 litigation, we should not adopt an adversarial approach
- 20 in it, a litigious approach, one in which we are
- 21 lawyered up. We should try and be as open as possible
- 22 to let the truth filter out"?
- 23 A. I'm sorry, there's a lot in there. What's the question,
- 24 sorry?
- 25 Q. You don't remember any instructions, for the purposes of
- 1 was a form in which an application to the Mediation
- 2 Scheme would articulate their concerns, what they wanted
- 3 investigated and why, I believe. Sort of get the
- 4 inbound complaint, as it were.
- 5 Q. Anyway, you attached amendments to a proposed reply to
- 6 the case questionnaire and, in the third paragraph, you 7
- 8

- "Taking a step back, [Mr] Castleton seems to be relitigating his High Court case (I'm going to look at
- 10 the judgment over my sandwich -- but a [very] quick
- 11 glance shows that even the £100.20 scratchcard issue was
- 12 considered). I appreciate that we can't just behind
- 13 that (he'll say he didn't have the resources to take on
- 14 the Big Boy), but I do think we can set out a stall
- 15 where we portray him as someone who wants £5.2 million
- 16 after providing inadequate services for all of
- 17 9 months."
- 18 So this was you amending/tweaking the Post Office's 19 response in the initial Second Sight review process?
- 20 A.
- 21 You told us in your witness statement that you weren't
- 22 involved in considering the merits of individual cases?
- 23 A. I think that's because -- where I said that first bit
- 24 was in relation to Second Sight's work up to the interim

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25 report, that this is produced through the Mediation

- 1 the initial Second Sight review, to you or to lawyers
- 2 involved in the Second Sight initial review, which said,
- 3 "We should adopt an open and transparent approach,
- 4 not" -- sorry, yes?
- 5 A. I'm sorry, I don't recall an instruction like that. On
- 6 the litigation point, I think I became aware that these
- 7 had recently been -- sorry, similar cases had recently
- 8 been the subject of litigation and there was a concern
- 9 that was always in the background. So I wouldn't want
- 10 to say that there wasn't a concern of litigation in
- 11 there, which is why -- and, in here, you can see I've
- 12 said "Look, they need to be defensible and properly
- 13 protect Post Office's position".
- 14 I don't know that that's inconsistent with putting 15 forwards information in an open or transparent manner
- 16 and I think it's just how it's presented.
- 17 Q. Can we move on. POL00074005. That's tab E43.
- 18 A. I have it, thank you.
- 19 We're now in November 2013 and we can see from this
- 20 page, you writing to Mr Parsons, saying you attach your
- 21 mark-up of the Post Office's response to the Castleton
- 22 CQ. Can you remind us of what a CQ was?
- 23 A. I think that's a case questionnaire.
- 24 Q. Can you remember the function or purpose of a CQ?
- 25 I hope so. It was the applicant to the schemes -- it
- 1 Scheme, where I did look at the detail of some cases but
- 2 certainly not all of them.
- 3 Q. So after July '13 you took a different role; is that
- 4 right?
- 5 A. After July '13 when the Mediation Scheme started I did
- 6 start looking at some cases in varying depths of detail.
- 7 Why was your reaction to Mr Castleton's CQ to set out
- 8 a stall rather than investigate the issues that were
- 9 raised?
- A. In this case, and it literally was, I think, this sole 10
- 11 case, I was aware that Mr Castleton's complaints about
- 12 branch accounting had been the subject of High Court
- 13 proceedings and, indeed, trial and judgment, which --
- 14 the judgment of which underpinned a lot of the Post
- 15 Office's operating practices, with respect to -- as far
- 16 as I can tell, with respect to postmasters up until the
- 17 Group Litigation.
- 18 Q. That's interesting. Tell us to what extent the Lee
- 19 Castleton judgment underpinned a lot of the Post
- 20 Office's operating practices until the next judgment
- 21 12 years later?
- 22 A. It was a High Court judgment that confirmed an agent's
- 23 liability to the principal for accounting and it also
- 24 made findings that Horizon had been working, quite
- 25 specifically, though, in that case, in that branch.

- 1 Q. How did that second point underpin the Post Office's
- approach to its operating practices for the following12 years?
- 4 A. Well, I think it was a strand, but certainly not the
- 5 only one, that gave them confidence in the reliability
- 6 of the system.
- ${f 7}$ ${f Q}$. Was it reviewed or referred to a lot within the Legal
- 8 Team, then?
- 9 A. Yes, yes, it would have been. It was the -- as far as
- 10 I was aware, at that time, and I think, certainly from
- 11 my time, it was the only High Court judgment on this
- 12 issue or, certainly, the most -- sorry, I'll rephrase
- that, it was the most recent one. I definitely know
- 14 that.
- 15 Q. Was its importance elevated or emphasised, then, within
- 16 Post Office's Legal team?
- 17 A. Certainly to me it was, yes.
- 18 Q. Who did that to you? Who said that to you or are you
- 19 saying that you read the judgment and formed that view
- 20 yourself?
- 21 A. I certainly think it's the latter but -- I would have
- said it was the latter, yes, I would have said it's
- 23 something I formed.
- 24 Q. So what did you take from it? I think you said two
- things there: firstly, it confirming the agent point,
 - 109
- 1 Q. After you became involved more extensively in the Second
- 2 Sight work, did you continue in your role as point man
- 3 for media relations within the Legal team?
- 4 A. Yes, I would think so.
- 5 Q. Can we look at POL00145120, please. That's E82. Can we
- 6 start by looking on the foot of page 1 and on to page 2,
- 7 please. We see an email from you of 3 July 2013, so
- 8 this is four or five days before the publication of the
- 9 Second Sight Interim Report. You are emailing Susan
- Barty, who is a partner, I think, at Cameron McKenna,
- 11 yes?
- 12 A. Correct.
- 13 Q. You say, in relation to the Second Sight Interim Report:
- "We expect to see Second Sight's Interim Report late
 Thursday/early Friday. I will forward it to you as soon
- as it is to hand so you can review it for factual
- 17 accuracy and (as requested by our Chairman) any possible
- defamation issues. We will want as quick a turnaround
- 19 as possible."
- 20 Why did the Post Office engage Cameron McKenna to

- 21 review the Second Sight Report for defamation issues?
- 22 A. I think there was a concern, I was working on sort of
- 23 direction from --
- 24 Q. From the Chairman?
- 25 A. Well, actually I was getting it sort of secondhand,

1 yes?

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- 2 A. Yes. I'm trying to think what else I'd take from it.
- 3 I haven't read the judgment for a while but -- sorry,
 - that was one of -- one of it was an agent's liability to
- 5 principal and the second point was that when they looked
- 6 at the complaints, and that's -- this is what I referred
- 7 to here, the specific complaints that had been raised
- 8 had been forensically interrogated in the High Court
- 9 proceedings to the point that a judge was able to say
- Horizon was working or the judge felt able to say that.
- 11 Q. You say here that you cannot hide behind the judgment.
- 12 A. Can you remind me where I say that, sorry?
- 13 Q. Third paragraph:
- 14 "Taking a step back, Castleton seems to be
- 15 relitigating his High Court case ... I appreciate we
- 16 can't just hide behind that ..."
- 17 A. No, I'm saying you can't just say he litigated and go
- 18 but I thought it was fair to make comments that some of
- 19 the issues he had raised had been raised and adjudicated
- 20 on before. I think what I'm saying there -- again, it's
- 21 a little while -- I think what I'm saying there is you
- 22 can't just be dismissive, you had your day in court, go,
- but also, I did think -- well, I think I think -- it's
- appropriate to recognise the judgment in the proceedings
- 25 that had taken place.

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- 1 I think, from the General Counsel.
- 2 Q. But you understood it came from the Chairman?
- 3 A. I certainly understood it came from the Chairman that
- 4 there was a concern that the -- or they wanted to know
- 5 that the reporting would be accurate -- sorry, the
- 6 report would be accurate.
- 7 Q. That's a bit different because you say:
 - "... you can review it for factual accuracy and ...
- 9 any possible defamation issues."
- 10 A. Yes.

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- 11 Q. Was the Post Office considering suing Second Sight for
- 12 defamation?
- 13 A. It depends -- I wasn't aware of that instruction.
- 14 Q. Right from the top?
- 15 A. I don't know exactly what "from the top" was. What
- 16 I recall was being asked to get a media lawyer to look
- 17 at it -- and I think, you know, defamation was used, so
- 18 clearly was used, but I wouldn't go as far as to say
- 19 because they were thinking of suing. I think that's --
- we're being asked to look to see what grounds there may
- or may not be for something like that.
- 22 Q. Why would the Post Office be looking at what grounds
- there would be to bring a defamation claim against
- 24 Second Sight?
- 25 A. So I think it's reputation management first and foremost

1		and are untruths going to be said that may damage Post
2		Office? I'm pretty sure because I did look around
3		this a little bit, I'm pretty sure we gave some advice
4		pretty quickly explaining the challenges that
5		a corporate entity has in pursuing defamation actions
6		and, in particular, the need to prove demonstrable loss.
7		But I think that the shorthand was are untruths going to
8		be said which will cause us harm?
9	Q.	Again, was that part of the open and transparent
10		approach that the Post Office was taking towards Second
11		Sight's work?

- 12 A. I don't think so no.
- 13 MR BEER: Sir, it's 1.00, nearly. Might we break now until2.00 pm please.
- 15 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, of course.
- 16 MR BEER: We're about to change topic.
- 17 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine, that's fine.
- 18 MR BEER: Thank you.
- 19 (12.58 pm)
- 20 (The Short Adjournment)
- 21 (2.00 pm)
- 22 MR BEER: Good afternoon, sir, can you see and hear us?
- 23 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you.
- 24 MR BEER: Good afternoon Mr Williams, can we go back to25 an issue that we addressed this morning which was your

Mr Williams, of material to Second Sight. Can we turn
 up page 14 of your witness statement, paragraph 30,
 please. Can you see in paragraph 30, you say:

"Second Sight had been appointed before [you] joined [the Post Office] and [you] did not have any direct knowledge of the process or how the scope of its original retainer was determined."

Then three or four lines on you say:

- "... I felt I needed to raise the risks around disclosing legally privileged documents to a third party without putting a clear framework in place to govern their use."
- 13 A. Yes.

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14 Q. Then, if we go to paragraph 34 on page 16, please, you
 15 say you remember reviewing a number of draft Spot
 16 Reviews to see what they looked like, sharing thoughts
 17 with Womble Bond Dickinson. Then a couple of lines on:

"I recall that [the Post Office] sought to organise the preparation and drafting of the Spot Reviews in a way that would maximise the potential for [the Post Office] to claim legal professional privilege over them and any exchanges with Fujitsu relating to them as they were being developed."

Was that essentially a strategy that would apply in ordinary litigation?

advice on communications with Tim McCormack, and you asked whether it would be possible to see a letter that you wrote. I think I've tracked that down. It's POL00118066.

Can you see this is a final version of a letter that

Can you see this is a final version of a letter that was sent to Mr McCormack. At the foot of the page we'll see that it was sent by you and, at the top of the page, we'll see it's 19 November 2015. If you quickly scan the paragraphs to see if it is the letter to which you were referring.

- 11 A. I think it is.
- 12 Q. It is the letter. So was the point you were making that
 13 in this letter, by this letter, you had asked
 14 Mr McCormack to provide you with evidence?
- 15 A. Yes.

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16 Q. Thank you very much.

17 Sir, in relation to some questions that you asked
18 Mr Williams earlier about the post-trial pre-judgment
19 exchange of correspondence over the 14,000 new KELs,
20 there is some material which touches upon that. I'll
21 address that, if I may, tomorrow morning with
22 Mr Williams, so that we've got the complete set of
23 correspondence on the system.

- 24 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you.
- 25 **MR BEER:** Can we turn to the provision, therefore,

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- A. I would think so. When it's contemplated, you're
 usually keen to understand what's in issue before, so
 that you can take informed advice on it before
 proceeding to take your actions.
- Q. Were you comfortable in cross-applying that approach tothe Second Sight initial investigation?
- 7 **A.** I'm -- I think there are two bits there. Part of it was
 8 also so that the company could obtain advice on what was
 9 being revealed through the investigations. So I think
- the privilege in issue wasn't just in connection with,
- say, contemplated litigation but also so that advice on
- 12 what it may mean for Post Office's legal position could
- 13 be obtained as material was identified or created.
- Q. Was any consideration given to the fact that you were
 not in litigation at this time but you were in a sort of
 quasi-mediation process?
- A. My recollection is that the prospect of litigation was sort of always sitting there. Looking at it today, I'm not sure whether it would be properly contemplated for the purposes of litigation privilege but, at the time,
- it felt like a claim was always around the corner.
- Q. Was any consideration given to the fact that yourcompany was Government owned and, in many of the
- functions it discharges, discharges them -- or they are
- 25 functions of a public nature?

- A. That was a consideration that came up a lot, was POL 1 2 a public body?
- Q. 3 You called it a public body there. Was that a factor
- 4 that was brought consciously into account in the course
- 5 of either the first part of Second Sight's activities or
- 6 when you entered the Mediation Scheme proper?
- A. I don't recall it. I'm thinking it's more -- sorry, let 7
- 8 me -- sorry, could you have another go at, sorry, the
- 9 question. I think I know where you're at but I'd like
- 10 to make sure I understand the question.
- Q. Was any consideration given to the fact that your 11
- 12 company was Government owned and many of its functions
- 13 were those of a public nature -- you called it public
- 14 body -- in either the initial activities of Second Sight
- 15 or when you ended the mediation proper?
- 16 A. Yes, it was. I'm sorry, and thank you for --
- 17 I appreciate that. I think they're a little bit --
- 18 I remember it being an issue, largely because of
- 19 questions around whether -- from where, in so far as my
- 20 role was concerned, whether, you know, Post Office's
- 21 actions may be amenable to judicial review, was
- 22 certainly part of that consideration. I think there was
- 23 also consideration that Post Office is amenable --
- 24 sorry, is open to Freedom of Information Act requests
- 25 as, effectively, a designated body for that Act.
- 1 Team, so far as you're aware?
- 2 A. I don't recall that, no.
- 3 Q. Was it ever discussed between you as the lawyers and
- 4 executives as the client?
- 5 A. I don't recall that.

- 6 Q. "Hold on, we're a public body here. Some might say that
- 7 we've got different duties and standards to adhere to
 - and apply. We're not just another big corporation who's
- 9 free to litigate in any manner we choose"?
- A. Not in those terms but there was the sense that, you 10
- know, Post Office -- I do think there was a sense the 11
- 12 Post Office -- because we were in communities length and
- 13 breadth of the nation, that it was important to be doing
- 14 the right thing. I think that's probably the way to
- 15 describe it. I think there was a concern for that to be
- 16 done. I don't recall it in the sort of construct of
- 17 a public body that you've been describing.
- Q. I think it's fair to say, in the 130-odd pages of your 18
- 19 witness statement, we don't see the considerations that
- 20 I've just raised reflected; that's right, isn't it?
- A. That's correct, yes. 21
- 22 Q. In any of the documents, I don't think we see those
- 23 considerations reflected, do we, certainly the ones
- 24 you've seen?
- 25 A. No, we don't. I don't think so, no.
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- Q. Both of those answers, Mr Williams, are essentially 1 2
 - technical legal answers as to the status of the Post
- 3 Office and the application of either public law or the 4
 - Freedom of Information Act to it.
- 5 My question was: in the context of either the
- 6 initial work by Second Sight or in the mediation proper,
- 7 was consideration given to your status as a public body,
- 8 as you've described it, in terms of how should we
- 9 approach these things?
- 10 A. I don't think so. I think the -- not terribly far
- 11 removed from that maybe was, you know, the concern that
- 12 Post Office is in every community throughout the length
- 13 and breadth of the country. That was -- Post Office's
- 14 status in those communities was I think part of it. But
- 15 that -- and we were also, you know, aware of, you know,
- 16 very considerable stakeholder interests from Members of
- 17 Parliament who were considered -- I think they were
- 18 quite offered referred to as a stakeholder group, but
- 19 I don't recall anything other than that, but that may be
- 20 because it just wasn't in my bailiwick.
- 21 Q. It's sometimes said that public authorities, public
- 22 bodies or organisations who discharge functions of
- 23 a public nature should operate by different standards in
- 24 litigation or quasi-litigation, like a mediation. Was
- 25 that something that was ever discussed within the Legal

 - Q. Was that a concept with which you were familiar at the
- 2 time: public authorities may have to behave differently,
- 3 when they come into contact with the law, than private
- 4 companies?

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- 5 A. No, that's not a concept I'm familiar with, I'm sorry.
- 6 Q. Would it be fair to say that, in your legal advice and
- 7 any discussions you had with clients, you regarded the
- 8 Post Office as any other litigant. It could be a big
- 9 City corporation?
- 10 A. No, no. I -- I don't think we could act in the way Big
- 11 Oil would act.
- Q. I'm sorry, I missed that word: big? 12
- 13 Big Oil, for instance, like a large petrochemical
- 14 company. No, I think there was --
- 15 Q. Why not?
- A. Because there was a sense that, I think, Post Office was 16
- 17 concerned about its images, it's in communities, it's
- 18 part of the fabric of society and, as a consequence, it
- 19 couldn't be a "plough on, be damned".
- Q. Okay, we'll move on. Can we turn to page 17 of your 20 21 witness statement and paragraph 36. You say:
- 22 "The Inquiry has asked me to comment on a draft 23 email addressed to John Scott, (the [Post Office] Head
- 24 of Security) and Rob King (the [Post Office] Senior
- 25 Security Manager and his [that's Mr Scott's] deputy),

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1 which was sent to me and Simon Baker on 13 May 2013 by 2 Dave Posnett (an Accredited Financial Investigator). 3 The drafts contains a series of bullet point updates on 4 the Spot Review process. It appears from the email that 5 I had asked for draft [responses] to be sent to me for 6 forward transmission to [Messrs Scott and King] 7 I believe I requested this for two reasons. First, part 8 of my role was sometimes to review and/or distil 9 information provided by one part of the business 10 comprehensibly for other parts of the business so that 11 there was a consistent 'joined-up' position. Second, if 12 the emails contained legal advice or concerned matters 13 on which legal advice would be required then [the Post 14 Office] would be better placed to claim legal

> Do you agree Post Office could not claim privilege over communications simply because they were sent by or to a lawver?

professional privilege over the material if it had been

20 A. Yes. You cannot claim privilege just because it's sent 21 to a lawyer.

sent to or received by a legal adviser."

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22 Q. Were you, by adopting this approach, routing emails like 23 this through you, seeking to protect the communications 24 in that way by making a claim of privilege available to 25 you?

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was to inadvertently be sent to the wrong email address or intercepted innocently or otherwise, once out in the public domain it will be hard to control.

"Having agreed with Susan Crichton, with immediate effect, all information should where possibly placed onto a document and access is through a password protocol. The procedure is easy to use and only takes a matter of seconds."

Then there are some administrative details and then:

"Additionally commercially sensitive and/or legally privileged information should not be copied/pasted onto unprotected email text to make it more easily readable on a BlackBerry."

management of and exchange of information with Second Sight?

- 17 A. I'm sorry? I'm sorry, it was a bit too quick. I didn't 18
- 19 Yes. Why was a review conducted in mid-2013 into the Q. 20 management of and exchange of information with Second 21
- 22 A. I don't know what triggered that.
- 23 Q. Can you recall --
- 24 A. Sorry, could I see the date of this?
- 25 Q. Yes, it's July.

Why was a review conducted in mid-2013 of the

22 Well, that's what I say, I'm not really familiar with 23 the concept of a review here. 24

25 scrutiny in the course of the review, wasn't it? The

Yes, if the claim was available. If the communication was for the purposes of obtaining advice or advice sort of flowed from it, it raised issue -- it's -- the -- my recollection at this time was information was being created and generated, that some of it was new to Post Office and it was certainly newly created, for instance the Spot Reviews, and it wanted, I think, to understand what that was, take advice as appropriate on it, before it entered the public domain where its ability to address the information would be harder to manage.

Q. Can we look, please, at POL00142323. I'm afraid 11 12 I haven't got the tab number for that. POL00142323, 13 thank you. It's a one-page email from Mr Scott to, 14 amongst others, you. You can see the distribution list at the top. 15

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. The subject is "Protection of Commercially Sensitive 18 and/or Legally Privileged? Information", and Mr Scott 19 savs:

> "A review has been conducted in respect of commercially sensitive and/or legally privileged information, in particular with the management of exchange of information subject to the Second Sight review. Whilst most information within this group will be [legally] privileged, nonetheless, if the information

Oh, sorry. Now I see the date, I imagine that this --I don't know about the review but there was certainly an issue with potential shredding of -- I mean, reported shredding or suggestion to shred, however you want to describe it, of documents, I think in July -- around this time. I might need some help with the date but it certainly feels contemporaneous to this.

8 Q. Do you think this review into the management and 9 exchange of information subject to the Second Sight 10 review was, therefore, triggered by the allegation that 11 some minutes of a meeting either had been shredded or 12 were ordered to be shredded?

A. Sorry, I think there are two parts to that. I don't --I'm not aware of a review, in the sense of -- we had quite a few sort of quite formal reviews. I'm not aware of a -- including, say, of the past prosecutions -- that was about to commence at this time. So I'm not quite sure about that. But I think that -- I suspect the catalyst for this will have been what you described. I'm not sure about the format. Does that make sense?

21 Q. Do you know who conducted the review?

Q. Mr Scott's was somebody whose department was under

- Second Sight review? 1
- 2 A. Yes, I think security files were being provided, yes,
- 3 I think that's correct, yes.
- 4 Q. le the way that investigators had conducted themselves
- 5 was something that some complainants had raised?
- 6 A. I don't know whether I was aware of that at the time but 7 I think that's correct, yes.
- 8 Q. Do you know whether Mr Scott conducted the review of
- 9 commercially sensitive and legally privileged
- 10 information?
- A. As I say, I'm not familiar with the review, so I don't 11
- know who may or may not have carried that out. 12
- 13 Q. Can I turn then to the Second Sight Interim Report of
- 14 8 July 2013. I think it's right you know that that
- 15 report referred to three bugs in Horizon: the receipts
- 16 and payments mismatch bug; the suspense account bug; and
- 17 the Callendar Square, sometimes called Falkirk, bug?
- 18 A. Yes.

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- 19 You know, I think, that Simon Clarke's advice of 15 July
- 20 was written in response to, amongst other things, that
- 21 Interim Report?
- 22 A. Can I say I'm afraid I get Mr Clarke's advices confused.
- 23 Can I be taken to the --
- Yes, we can look at the first advice, if you want to, 24 Q.
- 25 it's the 15 July advice, POL00040000. That's B65, if
 - suspense account bug.
 - He doesn't, in fact, mention, Mr Clarke here, the fact that Second Sight had been told about and picked up the Callendar Square and Falkirk berg. Then he continues, at 29:
 - "On Thursday, 27 June, Martin Smith of Cartwright King was telephoned by [the Post Office]. There then ensued number of conversations between [Martin Smith] and senior [Post Office] executives. The import of what [Martin Smith] was being told may be summarised thus: he was informed by [the Post Office] that a report commissioned from Second Sight by Post Office Limited, and as yet unpublished, indicated that Horizon may not be 'bug' free. There was much speculation as to the content of the Second Sight Report. It appeared to [the Post Office] that some within the organisation had been aware of bugs affecting up to 30 offices including some Crown Office branches. Jarnail Singh, Head of Criminal Litigation, had been unaware and did not know how long [Post Office Limited] had known of the existence of the bugs nor indeed who at [the Post Office] had known."
 - So we've got Mr Clarke recording here that Mr Singh, on being told of the possible conclusions of Second Sight, as to bugs, said that he had been unaware and didn't know for how long the Post Office had known of

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- 1 you want to look at it.
- 2 A. 65, was that?
- 3 Q. So we've got the Second Sight Interim Report picking up 4 the three bugs --
- 5 Α.
- 6 -- of 8 July 2013, and then this, seven days later.
- 7 Α. Yes

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- Q. We can see, if we go to the last page, which is page 14, 8
- 9 the date of the -- the date of Mr Clarke's advice. If
- 10 we go back to page 1, it's an "Advice on the Use of
- 11 Expert Evidence Relating to the Integrity of the Fujitsu
- 12 Services Horizon System". The Inquiry is very familiar
- 13 with this, so I'm not going to go through it at length
- 14 and, instead, take you to parts of it. Can we go to
- 15 page 10, please, and paragraph 28. Mr Clarke says:
- 16 "In considering this report [the Second Sight 17 Report] I only take account of those matters indicating
- 18 a prior knowledge of Horizon issues."
 - Then he says:
- 20 "The following paragraphs appear relevant", and then 21 he cuts in extracts from the Second Sight Report.
- 22 There at 6.5:
- 23 "The first defect", that's the receipts and payments 24
- mismatch bug.
 - Then at 6.6, the second defect, that's the local
- 1 the existence of bugs nor, indeed, was he aware who at
- 2 the Post Office had known, yes?
- 3 A. That's what it says, yes, I can see that.
- 4 Q. Keeping this in mind, in paragraph 46 of your witness
- 5 statement, I'm not going to ask for it to be turned up
- 6 at the moment, you tell us that, in relation to these
- 7 three bugs, that, prior to publication of the interim
- 8 report, your role was to collate and distil information
- 9 for the use of others considering the Post Office's
- 10 response to the interim report?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Yes?
- 13 A. Yes.

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- 14 Q. Can you please help us; before the Second Sight Report,
- 15 had Mr Singh ever informed you that, in fact, he had
- 16 been the prosecutor in the case against Seema Misra?
- 17 A. I don't know about that particular status but I remember
- 18 seeing an email exchange where, when I was asked to --
- I think we referred to it this morning, I was asked to 19
- 20 see if -- I contacted Bond Dickinson and DAC Beachcroft
- 21 to see if bugs had been referred to in any cases and
- 22 I saw that Jarnail seemed to have known about that, the
- 23 Misra case in that but I don't recall --
- 24 Q. I'm asking specifically whether, before the Second Sight
 - Report, Mr Singh had ever told you that he was in fact

- 1 the prosecutor in the case of Seema Misra?
- 2 A. I don't recall that, no.
- 3 Q. Did he, before the Second Sight Report, tell you that
- 4 having been the prosecutor in the Seema Misra case, that
- 5 he had been told about the Callendar Square or Falkirk
- 6 bug --
- 7 A. I don't recall that.
- 8 Q. -- back in 2010?
- 9 A. Yeah, I don't recall that being said, no.
- 10 $\,$ **Q.** That he had been told about a locking issue in Horizon
- 11 that had caused transactions to be lost?
- 12 A. I don't recall that, no.
- 13 Q. Did he tell you before or at this time that he had been
- told back in 2010 that there were some 200,000 system
- 15 faults recorded in relation to Horizon?
- 16 A. I don't recall that, no.
- 17 Q. Did he tell you that part of the work that Fujitsu had
- 18 undertaken in the prosecution of Seema Misra was to
- 19 provide an estimate of what would be involved in
- 20 providing the defence with all change requests made at
- 21 the Horizon counter but that the Post Office had decided
- 22 not to go through with that work?
- 23 A. I'm not aware of that, no.
- 24 Q. Did Mr Singh tell you at that is time or before this
- 25 time that both he and Rob Wilson, the then Head of 129
- Was there any sense at this time, mid-2013, around the time of the publication of the Second Sight Report, that the Post Office was essentially saying this
- that the Post Office was essentially saying thisinformation about the three bugs is newly acquired
- 5 information by Post Office?
- 6 A. It's -- I'm pausing to answer because it seemed to be
- 7 new to some people within POL, hence the -- you know,
- 8 the request to try to find the information and package
- 9 it up and present it to people. But by the same token
- 10 we seemed to be able to get answers to it.
- 11 $\,$ **Q**. Are you saying that when the Interim Report came out and
- 12 these three bugs were mentioned, that was news to some
- 13 people within Post Office but not to everyone?
- 14 A. It was certainly news to some people and what I don't
- 15 know is, having been able to find people within the
- 16 business with some understanding of it, I don't think
- 17 I ever found out whether they'd started that enquiry at
- 18 the same time I had or had prior knowledge of it. So it
- 19 was certainly new to some people.
- 20 Q. Did you seek to ascertain when the Post Office had first
- 21 become aware of those three bugs?
- 22 A. I think that came out with some of the -- I didn't
- 23 proactively seek to find that out. I just tried to find
- 24 out what we knew and, through that, it was clear that --
- 25 I think somewhere in there there's a date that says,

- 1 Criminal Law, had been personally informed about the
- 2 receipts and payments mismatch bug back in 2010?
- 3 A. I don't recall that no.
- 4 Q. That they had been engaged in discussions and
- 5 conferences as to whether or not to disclose that
- 6 information about the receipts and payments mismatch bug
- 7 to Seema Misra's defence team --
- 8 A. No, I don't recall.
- 9 $\,$ **Q.** -- and that a decision had been made not to give
- 10 disclosure.
- 11 A. I'm not aware of that, no.
- 12 Q. If we can turn up paragraph 46 of your witness
- 13 statement, please. Paragraph 46, at the foot of
- page 23. You say you have been asked to comment by us
- on your knowledge in mid 2013 of the "local suspense
- 16 bug":
- "I have been referred ... to some emails mentioningit from around the same time as those relating to the
- 19 'Callendar Square bug' ... I believe that [the Post
- 20 Office had brought the 'local suspense bug', along with
- the 'receipts and payments mismatch bug ... to Second
- 22 Sight's attention. The context in which I came to deal
- 23 with these bugs was the same as I have described above
- 24 ... and my role again was to collate and distil
- 25 information ..."

- 1 "We've known about this since", I did a timeline where
- 2 I think it was amended to include a date, but that
- 3 wasn't a line of inquiry, it was more a consequence of
- 4 my request for --
- 5 Q. Wasn't that line of inquiry an important one to
- 6 ascertain when the Post Office had first become aware of
- 7 those three bugs?
- 8 A. Probably, yeah, I would say --
- 9 Q. Would you go as far as definitely?
- 10 A. Yes
- 11 Q. I mean, if I give you an example, wasn't that
- 12 information critical to determining which prosecutions
- 13 might be tainted if full disclosure of the existence of
- 14 those bugs had not been given?
- 15 A. I have to say questions like that, I wasn't aware of at
- 16 the time. I had no idea of what the impact on
- 17 prosecutions might have been when I was being asked to
- 18 find information about the bugs.
- 19 Q. Wasn't that information that was of prime relevance to
- which, if any, subpostmasters' contracts may have been
- 21 wrongly terminated?
- 22 A. Possibly, it depends on the basis of termination,
- 23 I think.
- ${\bf 24}~{\bf Q}.~{\bf Wasn't}$ that information, ie "when did me in Post Office
- 25 know about the existence of these three bugs," relevant

- 1 to the issue of which, if any, of Mr Jenkins' evidence 2 may have been tainted?
- 3 A. That's a criminal law matter so I can't give a view on 4 that I'm afraid
- 5 Q. To your knowledge, did anyone seek to ascertain which 6 department or which individuals within such departments knew about the existence of those three bugs? 7
- 8 A. I'm not aware of that, no.
- 9 Q. Do you know why not?
- 10 A. I'm sorry, I don't.
- Q. "We've got this report that says there were these three 11 12 bugs. When did we, Post Office, first know about them 13 and how does that affect the proceedings that we've 14 brought against people, whether civil or criminal, and
- 15 how does it affect contracts that have been terminated?"
- 16 A. Well, I think there are two parts to that question.
- 17 There's -- the first bit is when did we first know about
- 18 that? Well, that seemed to be coming out from the
- 19 request for information about the bugs, that the use of
- 20 that -- as a segue, was it important to find out but
- 21 I think it was being found out, from what I could see.
- 22 Somebody said "Well, we first knew about it on this
- 23 date, we told Fujitsu about it on that date". That's
- 24 with respect to one of the two bugs, I can't remember
- 25 whether we did it for both.

- 1 Post Office was pretending that the Second Sight Report
- 2 was revelatory of matters that it didn't know about
- 3 when, in fact, that simply wasn't the case?
- 4 A. Well, again, I don't know if I can speak for the whole 5 company but there was -- I didn't get the sense of
- 6 anybody pretending anything.
- 7 Q. Can we --

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- 8 A. I didn't see any artifice around me, if that helps.
- 9 Q. Can we turn to actions arising from the Second Sight 10 Interim Report. Can we turn up, please, POL00006799,
- I think that's B79. 11
- 12 A. Thank you. Yes. 13 Q. If you go to the last page, please. You'll see that
- 14 this is Mr Clarke's Further Advice of 2 August 2013 and,
- 15 if we go to page 1, please, and paragraph 2, in 16 paragraph 1, he says:
- 17 "On 3 July I attended [the Post Office] in 18 conference at ... Head Office ..."

So this is an Advice written a month later where he is summarising or reflecting back what had happened at a conference on 3 July. Then in paragraph 2 he says:

"One of the topics considered by the conference was that of disclosure: I advised that there ought to be a single, central hub, the function of which was to act as the primary repository for all Horizon-related

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- 1 What its impact was fed into -- was being shared
- 2 with, certainly, the criminal lawyers at the time, who
- 3 would advise on what the impact of that for prosecutions
- 4 would be.

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- Q. Did you get any sense, working as you did within the 5
- 6 Post Office at a relatively senior level here, of the
- 7 Post Office reacting as though Second Sight's report was
- 8 revelatory of matters that it did not know about?
- 9 A. Yes, I did have that impression.
- 10 Q. At this time, mid-2013, did you know that there is
- 11 evidence that the Post Office first knew about the
 - Callendar Square/Falkirk bug way back in 2006?
- 13 A. I think if it's Falkirk/Callendar Square, I think that
- 14 seemed to have been a known issue in the company.
- 15 Q. We've got evidence that Fujitsu had told the Post Office
- 16 about the receipts and payments mismatch bug in 2010 and
- 17 we've got evidence that the Post Office had known about
- 18 the existence of the suspense account bug in 2012. In
- 19 fact, knowing about it before Fujitsu did. Did those
- 20 kind of -- did that information come to the surface at
- 21 the time of the publication of the Second Sight Report?
- 22 The only thing I can remember coming to the surface was,
- 23 I think, the 2012 one. When we first knew it, I don't
- 24 recall, I'm sorry.
- Q. Did you gain any sense at this time, mid-2013, that the 25
- 1 issues. [It] would collate, from all sources into one
- location, all Horizon-related defects, bugs, complaints, 2
- 3 queries and Fujitsu remedies, thereby providing a future
- 4 expert witness, and those charged with disclosure
- 5 duties, with recourse to a single information point
- 6 where all Horizon issues could be identified and
- 7 considered. The rationale behind the advice at the
- 8 arrived from the need to protect [the Post Office] from
- 9 the current situation repeating itself in the future."
- 10 What did you understand "the current situation" to
- 11 be referring to, the risk of which there was
- 12 a repetition?
- 13 I think bugs surfacing, which those who ought to be
- 14 aware of them weren't.
- 15 Q. Can we turn, please, with that context in mind, to
- 16 POL00191968, B57.
- 17 A. Yes
- 18 Q. You'll see it's your email of 12 July to Mr Scott,
- 19 copied to others, including Ms Crichton, Mr Flemington
- 20 and Mr Singh, with the subject of "Regular call re
- 21 Horizon Issues". So I think, putting the chronology
- 22 together, this is after the conference that we've seen
- 23 summarised by Mr Clarke of 3 July 2013, yes?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You say:

"... following [a call] earlier today, I set out a draft email to go to the various 'Heads of' regarding a weekly call during which any Horizon related issues can be raised with the wider business."

You ask for comments. Then you say:

"... someone from Bond Dickinson should participate in the calls we have with Cartwright King so that our criminal law lawyers and civil law lawyers are aware of what the other is doing. This will be especially important as further Spot Reviews come in, which may raise issues relevant to the prosecutions Cartwright King are pursuing."

Then the text of the email:

"We are instigating a regular conference call during which issues with Horizon, user experience and training support can be shared across and known to the various business units which use and rely on the system.

"[This] will aim to ensure that Horizon issues are brought to the attention of user groups who might not be aware of the issues, but whose use of Horizon may be affected by them.

"To make sure we have all user groups covered, we need to have a representative from each of the following teams ..."

Then you set them out and you ask for 137

- 1 necessary, development to take matters forward.
- 2 Q. So did you see it as a development caused by the
- 3 circumstances that the Post Office had got itself
- 4 into --

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- 5 **A.** Yes.
- 6 Q. -- rather than there ought always to have been a process
- 7 by which information or evidence that was potentially
- 8 relevant to prosecutions was routinely collated,
- 9 recorded and made available?
- 10 A. Sorry, I'm struggling to hear. Sorry. There are two
- 11 parts there, again, I had the first but lost the second,
- 12 I'm sorry.
- 13 Q. Were you seeing this as a development that arose because
- 14 of the circumstances that the Post Office found itself
- 15 in --
- 16 **A.** Yes.
- 17 Q. -- rather than something that always ought to have been
- in existence, namely a process by which information and
- 19 evidence potentially relevant to prosecutions was
- 20 routinely collated, recorded and made available to
- 21 prosecutors?
- 22 A. Yeah, I can't comment on the second part of it. I don't
- 23 know whether it ought to have been there or not but it
- 24 certainly seemed to be something that needed to be put
- 25 in place now.

- 1 representatives to be put up, yes?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Can we go to paragraph 69 of your witness statement,4 please, which is on page 35.
- 5 **A.** Thank you. Yes.
- 6 Q. You say in the third line, page 35, paragraph 69:
- 7 "My recollection is that the purpose behind the
- 8 calls was for issues with Horizon to be raised and
- 9 recorded so that there would be visibility of them
- 10 across the business and to avoid operating in silos.
- 11 I also recall that [the Post Office's] external criminal
- 12 lawyers were keen to have these calls so as to create
- 13 a record of Horizon issues which they could consider for
- 14 disclosure in prosecutions."
- 15 **A.** Yes
- 16 Q. That can come down, thank you. Would you accept that
- 17 the advice that Mr Clarke had given, that we've seen
- about the creation of a central repository, reflected no
- 19 more and no less than a duty that the Post Office had
- 20 always been subject to, to retain and record information
- 21 that was potentially relevant to its prosecutorial
- 22 function?
- 23 A. I don't think I can make that jump on whether it's part
- of the prosecutor's duties or had or had not been. It
- certainly seemed to be, to me, a pragmatic, in fact
- 1 $\,$ Q. Did it seem to you, even as somebody who was not expert
- 2 in criminal law, surprising that it was only in 2013
- 3 that steps were taken to ensure that material was not
- 4 held in silos?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. In relation to this proposed hub or forum, were
- 7 technical specialists from the Post Office and Fujitsu
- 8 invited to attend and contribute to them?
- 9 $\,$ A. I certainly think from the Post Office side there was,
- 10 I don't recall about Fujitsu.
- 11 Q. We've seen the cast list, the departmental cast list
- 12 that was previously set out, I don't think there's
- 13 anyone from Fujitsu on that, is there?
- 14 A. No, I don't think so, no.
- 15 Q. Why was that?
- 16 A. I don't -- I don't know. I may have put that together
- 17 quickly and I had a place holder. I don't know why it's
- not there, I don't think it was -- sitting here today
- 19 I don't think it was a deliberate omission, put it that
- 20 way.
- 21 Q. You don't think it was?
- 22 A. I don't think it was a deliberate omission, I just --
- 23 Q. Well, if the intention or purpose of the hub was to
- 24 avoid operating in silos, why weren't Fujitsu invited to
- 25 attend?

- 1 A. I have to say when I put that together I was still
- 2 trying to get my head around how things worked.
- 3 I didn't know who the right people were, which is why
- 4 I had a place holder in the draft for other -- I don't
- 5 know whether we had the internal capacity to deal with
- 6 it ourselves. I think I had subsequently come to know
- 7 that we didn't have the internal capacity. When I wrote
- 8 that email, I wouldn't have known either way, I don't
- 9 think.
- 10 Q. Going back, then, to Mr Clarke's first advice -- we
- 11 skipped forward to his second to see something he had
- 12 written about an event that had occurred in July. In
- paragraph 80 of your witness statement, which is on
- page 40, you say:"The Inquiry h

"The Inquiry has invited me to comment on two ...

16 pieces of advice ..."

17

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I've not taken you to the 19 July one yet. Then

about five lines in, you say:

- "I do ... recall that the 15 July 2013 advice raised Cartwright King's serious concerns about evidence which
- 21 Gareth Jenkins had provided in prosecutions. I believe
- 22 ... that those concerns would have been taken forward as
- 23 appropriate [the Post Office's] criminal lawyers and
- 24 recall there being a general consensus following this
- 25 advice that Gareth Jenkins could no longer be used as
 - 141
- 1 A. Which tab is this one at, sorry? Is it 76?
- 2 Q. B65.
- 3 A. I beg your pardon. So it's between -- thank you.
- 4 Thank you.
- 5 Q. If you look at paragraphs 33 to 35, did you form
- 6 a view -- never mind the implications for historic
- 7 convictions -- but did you form a view that the Post
- 8 Office could no longer reasonably maintain that the
- 9 Horizon system was robust in the light of, in
- 10 particular, the opinion at paragraph 35?
- 11 A. Okay, I'm sorry, I've read that. Could I have the
- 12 question again, please?
- 13 Q. Did you form a view that the Post Office could not
- 14 reasonably maintain that the Horizon system was robust
- or had been robust in the light of Mr Clarke's opinion,
- in particular that at paragraph 35?
- 17 **A.** No, I didn't.
- 18 Q. Did you think that it was still open to the Post Office
- 19 to say that, notwithstanding the advice it had received,
- 20 it could say that Horizon was a robust system and the
- 21 data that it produced had integrity?
- 22 A. I think that's -- it's -- to me, I don't think so and
- 23 I don't think so because it's conflating quite a lot,
- 24 some isolated examples, admittedly in an extremely

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25 serious context, I totally acknowledge that. But

- 1 a witness in criminal proceedings."
- Were you personally concerned by the advice given in
- 3 relation to Mr Jenkins and its potential impact on the
- 4 safety of historic prosecutions?
- 5 A. Again, there are sort of two parts to that question.
- 6 Was I concerned? I saw there was concern from the
- 7 criminal lawyers advising Post Office, so I assumed that
- 8 wasn't -- I assumed that was well founded. I should say
- 9 that's a positive thing. Quite how it would impact past
- prosecutions isn't something I could comment on.
- 11 Q. Did you form a view that some past convictions that had
- 12 been founded upon Mr Jenkins' evidence were unsafe or,
- 13 at least, were potentially unsafe?
- 14 A. I've never been able to form a view on the safety of
- 15 convictions, I'm sorry.
- 16 Q. So you didn't?
- 17 A. I didn't know either way. It's what I could see is that
- the right people seemed to have raised it and would know
- what to do with it and they seemed exercised by it.
- That is my recollection. But quite what the impact of
- 21 it would be, I had no frame of reference to measure it
- 22 or judge it by.
- 23 Q. Can we, please, go back to Mr Clarke's advice.
- POL00040000. Can we turn up page 11 and look under
- 25 "Discussion".

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- 1 I think in terms of the reliability and robustness of
- 2 the system as a whole, you look at the operation of the
- 3 system as a whole, which was what Post Office was doing,
- 4 it was being used every day, and --
- 5 Q. There's so many thousand transactions --
- 6 A. Exactly, exactly.
- 7 Q. -- there's so many million customers, 1 billion a year,
- 8 that line?
- 9 A. Yes, it's not a line, it is what was happening every
- 10 day.
- 11 Q. It was the line though, wasn't it? That was the line to
- 12 take, wasn't it?
- 13 A. Well -- no, it -- I'm sorry, that has a pejorative
- 14 connotation to it --
- 15 Q. Absolutely.
- 16 A. -- what you're saying, and I don't believe it was, but
- 17 it's -- it is a line that was used, yes.
- 18 Q. Why were the concerns about Mr Jenkins not taken to the
- 19 police to investigate?
- 20 A. I don't know.
- 21 Q. Was there any discussion of that?
- 22 A. I don't recall that.
- 23 Q. Was there any discussion of which you were a party or of
- 24 which you were aware that the police should be called in
- 25 to investigate here?

- 1 A. I don't recall that.
- 2 Q. Was there any investigation conducted by the Post
- 3 Office, of which you're aware, into Mr Jenkins and the
- 4 matters that had been raised in Mr Clarke's advice?
- 5 A. I don't recall, no.
- 6 **Q.** Were any instructions given as to how the information
- 7 contained in Mr Clarke's advice was to be handled and
- 8 disseminated?
- 9 A. I don't recall any discussions to that, no.
- 10 Q. Was a decision made as to whether or not the information
- 11 contained in the advice should be disclosed to past
- 12 defendants, possible appellants, civil claimants,
- 13 against the Post Office?
- 14 A. At that time -- this was arising at the time where Post
- 15 Office's disclosure duties in prosecutions was being
- 16 considered. I don't know the extent to which the
- 17 specific Jenkins witness evidence -- or this particular
- 18 advice, I don't know to what extent that folded into it.
- 19 So I think the answer is -- I'm sorry, if you give me
- 20 the question again, I think I can answer it.
- 21 Q. I'll put it another way. Do you know why the
- 22 information in Mr Clarke's advice concerning Mr Jenkins
- 23 was not disclosed until the criminal appeals in November
- 24 2020?
- 25 **A.** I don't know why it was -- I don't know why it wasn't 145
- 1 concerns about this employee of Fujitsu with Fujitsu?
- 2 A. So I worked with Womble Bond Dickinson to work out
- 3 an approach that we could -- correspondence and a means
- 4 by which we could raise the issue with Fujitsu, which we
- 5 started off, I think, by looking at drafting a letter
- 6 that would put it -- bring it to their attention.
- 7 Q. Mr Williams, one conclusion that might be drawn from the
- 8 fact that the Post Office or part of it acted as if the
- 9 three bugs raised by Second Sight was revelatory, that
- 10 no one investigated what knowledge the Post Office in
- 11 fact had of the three bugs, and when, and no one
- 12 disclosed the Post Office's view that the expert that it
- 13 had placed reliance on was discredited was that the Post
- Office that now entered a cover-up mode; is that true?
- 15 A. Again, there's quite a lot of things that don't --
- 16 I think you're asking was -- could somebody see that?
- 17 I think somebody probably could see that.
- 18 Q. Is it factually correct? Was a decision made, "Let's
- 19 not find out when we, in fact, knew about all of these
- 20 bugs; let's at least some of us pretend this is
- 21 revelatory"?
- 22 A. That wasn't the impression I had.
- 23 Q. "Let's not disclose to convicted defendants that we have
- 24 taken this view of an expert, who has given evidence or
- 25 a witness who has given evidence, either in writing or 147

- disclosed.
- 2 Q. That can come down from the screen, thank you. Given
- 3 that Mr Clarke's advice about Mr Jenkins concerned the
- 4 probity and integrity of one of the architects of the
- 5 system, Mr Jenkins himself, was consideration given to
- 6 whether that had a wider implication on the reliability
- 7 of the Horizon system itself?
- 8 A. I don't recall that, no.
- 9 $\,$ Q. Were the concerns about an employee of Fujitsu, to your
- 10 knowledge, then discussed with Fujitsu?
- 11 A. No, I don't know.
- 12 Q. What did you try to do to ensure that people in Fujitsu
- who needed to know this information got the information
- that one of their employees had, according to the Post
- 15 Office, been given discreditable or tainted evidence in
- 16 court?

8

- 17 A. I'm sorry, can I check the privilege point on that
- 18 because we're dealing with --
- 19 Q. No, just answer the question.
- 20 A. Okay, I'm sorry.
- 21 Q. If somebody wants to take a point on privilege --
- 22 A. I'm sorry, I beg your pardon.
- 23 Q. -- they'll stand up.
- 24 A. Thank you, can I have the question again, please?
- 25 **Q.** What steps were taken, to your knowledge, to raise any
- orally in court, that we're now entering into a phase of seeking to cover up what's happened."
- 3 A. I think to do that, that requires a positive decision,
- 4 and I'm not aware of that decision having been made, or
 - communicated to me or I became aware of that in any way.
- 6 I accept actions weren't taken but whether that
- 7 was -- I haven't -- I wasn't aware of anything that said
 - that was a deliberate choice.
- 9 Q. So you're not aware of any sort of master plan, as it
- were, that said, "Let's not investigate when we, in
- 11 fact, knew about this; let's, to the outside world,
- suggest that Second Sight has uncovered something about
- 13 which we didn't know. Let's not tell convicted
- 14 defendants about the view we've taken of Mr Jenkins'
- 15 evidence". There was no meeting of that kind or
- 16 instruction of that kind?
- 17 A. Not that I was aware of, in any way --
- 18 Q. Did you view --
- 19 A. -- or that I recall, anyway. I mean, I think I would
- 20 have remembered something like that but I don't recall
- 21 that, no.
- 22 Q. Did you view the issue raised by Mr Clarke's advice as
- 23 relating solely to the Post Office's past criminal
- 24 prosecutions?
- 25 **A.** Yes.

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- Q. Accordingly, did you not consider the potential impact 1
- 2 on past civil actions?
- 3 A. No, I didn't.
- 4 Q. Did anyone do that?
- 5 A. I don't believe so.
- 6 Q. As a lawyer with significant experience of civil
- 7 litigation, at the centre of the team that was dealing
- 8 with Horizon at the time, if anyone had considered the
- 9 potential impact on civil proceedings, you would have
- 10 been aware of it, wouldn't you?
- A. I would -- oh, yes, I would sorry. Yes. 11
- 12 What did you, in fact, do as a result of the receipt of
- 13 the 15 July Simon Clarke Advice?
- A. Well. I think I read it. 14
- Q. And put it away? 15
- 16 A. I suspect, yes, it was being dealt with by what
- 17 I considered to be the -- what appeared to me, I should
- 18 say, to be the people who were advising the business on
- 19 the steps that should be taken. I'm not sure that what
- 20 I saw in there necessarily impacted other activities in
- 21 the business. He hadn't -- I don't know, I wasn't aware
- 22 of him giving evidence for any live proceedings at that
- 23 time where the particular issues raised in here were
- 24 germane.
- Going back to the advice, please. POL00040000, and 25 Q. 149
- 1 Q. It was an important issue that demanded answers?
- 2 A. I don't know what the issue -- what the follow-on steps
- 3 from it were because that was for those with the
- 4 expertise to advise on.
- 5 Q. Was it not considered imperative to ascertain the
- 6 circumstances in which Mr Jenkins had given written and
- 7 oral evidence in some Post Office prosecutions and,
- 8 according to Mr Clarke, had breached his duties to the
- 9 court?
- A. I really can't comment on matters of the criminal 10
- 11 justice system. I just had no familiarity with it and
- what was required or not required. I'm sorry. 12
- 13 Q. Did you ask questions of Mr Singh or, indeed, any other
- 14 of the lawyers in the department or engaged in
- 15 discussions with them as to whether Mr Jenkins had been
- 16 properly instructed as to his or an expert's duties of
- 17 disclosure?
- A. That I think I recall raising orally with Cartwright 18
- 19 Kina.
- 20 Q. What was the answer you got back?
- 21 A. I'm sorry?
- 22 Q. What was the answer you got back?
- 23 A. I don't recall one.
- 24 Q. Did you ever see any instructions which the Post Office
- 25 had provided to Mr Jenkins that might properly set out 151

- 1 page 13, please. Under Mr Clarke's "Conclusions":
- 2 "What does this all mean? In short, it means ..."
 - I'm going to replace the text with the correct name:
 - "... that [Mr Jenkins] has not complied with his
 - duties to the court, the prosecution or the defence."
- 6 Then paragraph 38:
 - "The reasons as to why [Mr Jenkins] failed to comply
- 8 with his duty are beyond the scope of this review."
- 9 So in 37, Mr Clarke advised that Mr Jenkins had not 10 complied with his duties to the court, the prosecution
- 11 or the defence, and 38 said the reasons why he failed to
- 12 comply are beyond the scope of his, Mr Clarke's, review,
- 13 correct?
- 14 **A**.
- 15 Q. Do you agree, therefore, that it left that question very
- 16 much widely open?
- 17 A. I wouldn't have said very much widely open, I think
 - I would have said, if there were actions to be taken,
- 19 I would have expected them to have been advised on next
- 20 steps -- what else is to be done.
- 21 Q. Well, you would agree, I think, with this, that the
- 22 reasons why Mr Jenkins failed to comply with the duty
- 23 was an important issue.
- 24 A. That certainly seemed to be what the criminal lawyers
- 25 were saying.

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- 1 his duties to the court?
- 2 A. I haven't seen that but, also, I didn't -- I didn't look
- 3
- 4 Q. When you read this advice, did it give rise to any
- 5 concern in your mind that what you read might be
- 6 indicative of any broader prosecutorial failings by the
- 7 Post Office?
- A. No, because I didn't know enough about the prosecutorial 8
- 9 process to know where it may lead. It certainly seemed
- 10 to be addressed seriously by those who understood the
- context in which it was relevant. So I don't know where 11
- 12 else it would have gone beyond that, I'm afraid.
- 13 Were you aware of any discussion within Post Office
- 14 Legal at this time as to whether the appropriate course
- 15 might be actually to speak to Mr Jenkins to understand
- 16 events from his perspective?
- 17 A. I don't recall that, no.
- 18 MR BEER: Sir, thank you. That's a convenient moment. It's
- just up to 3.10 now, might we break until 3.25? 19
- 20 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, of course.
- MR BEER: Thank you, sir. 21
- 22 (3.07 pm)
- 23 (A short break)
- 24 (3.25 pm)
- 25 MR BEER: Sir, good afternoon. Can you see and hear us?

1	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you.
2	MR	BEER: Thank you very much.
3		In the next set of questions, Mr Williams, please
4		don't worry about questions of privilege, they have been
5		resolved between the Inquiry and the Post Office.
6	A.	I apology.
7	Q.	No need to apology. Can we look, please, at
8		POL00193383.
9		Can you see at the foot of the page there's an email
10		from you to Lesley Sewell, Susan Crichton, Simon Baker
11		and Hugh Flemington of 11 August 2013, and you say:
12		"Lesley
13		"Please find attached two drafts of a letter to put
14		us 'on the record' with Fujitsu about the issues raised
15		in Second Sight's Interim Report, and the impact of them
16		on the court proceedings we bring.
17		"The drafts differ in tone:
18		"The 'shot cross the bow' aims to put pressure on
19		[Fujitsu] to work with us to improve Horizon and user
20		confidence in it;
21		"The 'letter of claim' goes further, tying the
22		issues to our contract with [Fujitsu] and escalating
23		them through its dispute resolution procedure.
24		"In either case, we need to set out what we want
25		[Fujitsu] to do. That should set the tone for the 153
1		investigations are ongoing. In particular, Second Sight
2		highlighted the following areas of concern", and can you
3		see that six are then set out?
4	A.	Mm-hm.
5	Q.	Yes?
6	A.	Yes.
7	Q.	Along with a note saying, "This list is taken from
8		Second Sight's Report [the Post Office] needs to
9		carefully consider whether responsibility for these
10		criticisms falls on Fujitsu or [the Post Office]."
11		Then over the page:
12		"It is noted the above criticisms are a product of
13		only an Interim [Review] we know there are a number
14		of other potential allegations. Further details of
15		these issues will be presented once received from Second
16		Sight.
17		"One major area for concern is the scope and quality
18		of Fujitsu's support to Post Office in Court
19		proceedings. Where appropriate, Post Office commences
20		criminal prosecutions against subpostmasters believed to
21		have acted criminally. It also brings civil proceedings
22		
23		"Data from Horizon is integral to the success of
24		these court actions. It is imperative that this data
25		is, and is seen to be, reliable. Perceptions of
		155

1 letter -- the more aggressive we are, the more defensive 2 (and therefore less supportive) [Fujitsu] are likely to 3 be." 4 Can we look, please, at POL00140620. Can I get a bundle reference? 5 A. 6 Yes, E77. 7 Α. B? Q. 8 E77. 9 Yes, thank you. I have it. Thank you. 10 This is headed up "Letter of Claim" and it appears to be 11 one of the two attachments to your email, albeit I'm not clear whether it's the "shot across the bows" letter, or 12 13 the formal letter of claim letter. I don't think that 14 matters for present purposes because it's the content that I wanted to discuss with you. Can you see it's 15 16 a draft letter to Fujitsu and says it's a letter to 17 claim pursuant to the practice direction? 18 In the background, it says: 19 "... Post Office has commissioned an independent 20 inquiry into Horizon which is being conducted by Second 21 Sight." 22 The report was published on the 8 July: 23 "Although the Report found no evidence of 24 system-wide problems with Horizon, a number of 25 criticisms were levied against the system and further weakness in the system or any suggestion that Post 2 Office or Fujitsu is attempting to hide weaknesses, 3 seriously undermines our credibility and significantly 4 increases the complexity and the costs of court 5 proceedings." 6 This is the paragraph I wanted to ask you about: 7 "Post Office was therefore disappointed to discover

"Post Office was therefore disappointed to discover that witness evidence prepared by Fujitsu may not have been fully disclosing historic (albeit known and resolved) defects. This has let Post Office having to review all its historic criminal prosecutions for the last three years (since the rollout of [Horizon Online]) to ensure that it has not breached its duties of disclosure under the Criminal Court rules."

Was your reference to the witness evidence prepared by Fujitsu a reference to the witness evidence of Mr Jenkins?

18 A. I think it must have been, yes.

8

9

10 11

12 13

14

19 Q. Was it the case that the Post Office discovered, by the
 20 Second Sight Report, that he, Mr Jenkins, may not have
 21 been fully disclosing historic defects?

22 A. Sorry, the question again? You said from the Second23 Sight Report?

24 Q. Yes, was it the case that the Post Office only
 25 discovered from the Second Sight Report that witness
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- 1 evidence prepared by Mr Jenkins may not have fully
- 2 disclosed defects in Horizon?
- 3 A. That seemed to me to be the case.
- 4 Q. What investigation had taken place by the time of you
- 5 drafting this letter in August 2013 to be able to say
- 6 that it was only the Second Sight Report that had caused
- 7 the Post Office to discover those facts?
- 8 A. I'm not sure, I'm sorry. I think the question is what
- 9 investigations. I don't think any investigations were
- 10 undertaken so my -- I think it must have been that that
- 11 was the perception, the feeling, although, I have to
- say, this is also a draft, so we may have invited
- 13 comment on it before progressing.
- 14 Q. It's about that perception and feeling that I want to
- 15 ask you. Remember before the break I asked you
- 16 questions about pretending that it was only upon the
- 17 publication of the Second Sight Report that the Post
- 18 Office discovered facts that Mr Jenkins may not have
- 19 been fully disclosing historic defects in Horizon. This
- 20 is an example of that, isn't it?
- 21 A. The perception that it was -- yes, it would be, yes --
- 22 Q. That it was a new discovery?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. A new fact?
- 25 A. Yes.

- 1 sorry.
- 2 Q. Thank you. Could you translate what the first part
- 3 says, please?
- 4 A. It appears to be "Draft BPs".
- 5 Q. Yes?
- 6 A. So the first piece is "Horizon-FJ positioning". Then it
- 7 appears to be "Draft BPs".
- 8 Q. So if we can expand that first bit, please. "Draft", is
- 9 that bullet points?
- 10 A. It might be. That seems sensible but I don't know.
- 11 Q. Then carry on translating please?
- 12 A. "Reports didn't contain all they should have.
- 13 "Reluctance to deal with known issues.
- "As a conseq", which would be consequence.
- 15 Sorry, do you want it verbatim?
- 16 Q. Yes, keep going.
- 17 A. "... necess [which would be necessary] to review cases
- 18 to determine to whether or not a partic deft ..."
- 19 Q. Particular defendant?
- 20 A. Correct:
- "... was prejudiced by absence of info."
- 22 $\,$ **Q.** Then scroll down, please. If you look at the next bit
- "Copies of Advice", can we blow that up, please. Just
- under the part we were looking at?
- 25 **A.** I can probably do that from here "Copies of Advice 159

- 1 Q. I'll ask you again: what had been undertaken within the
- 2 Post Office to discover whether that was true or not,
- 3 that this was the discovery of a new fact, as opposed to
- 4 something that the Post Office had, in fact, known about
- 5 all along, the existence of the three bugs?
- 6 A. We didn't do anything, I don't think.
- 7 Q. Can we turn, please, to POL00155555. This is
- 8 a manuscript note dated 2 September 2013. The
- 9 authorship is not shown on the document but do you
- 10 recognise the writing?
- 11 A. It's mine.
- 12 Q. You wrote this?
- 13 A. I think so. It looks like mine, yes.
- 14 Q. It appears to have been written by somebody, ie you, who
- 15 had read Simon Clarke's advice of 15 July 013. It
- 16 refers to conversations with Martin Smith of Cartwright
- 17 King and Brian Altman KC. Can you see, if we pan out
- 18 a little bit, please --
- 19 A. Can I have the reference --
- 20 **Q**. Yes
- 21 A. -- please? Just to help --
- 22 **Q.** E96.
- 23 A. Thank you.
- 24 Q. Are you at E96?
- 25 **A.** Yes, sorry, I am. I've just been reading it. I'm
- 1 [arrow] Share under a common interest privilege."
- 2 Q. Can you help us, to whom was the advice to be shared
- 3 under a common interest privilege?
- 4 A. I anticipate that would have been with Fujitsu.
- 5 Q. Did that happen?
- 6 A. I don't believe so.
- 7 Q. Do you know why it didn't happen?
- 8 **A.** No
- 9 Q. Then carrying on, please, the six statements.
- 10 A. "6 statements as examples -- might [underlined] be 'tech
- 11 correct' [which would be technically correct, I imagine]
- 12 but no in substance."
- 13 Q. So six statements as examples might be technically
- 14 correct but not in substance.
- 15 A. Yes, I think it might be missing a T.
- 16 **Q.** Yes? And you've written that against paragraph 34 of
- 17 the advice?
- 18 A. It does look right.
- 19 Q. Then underneath please?
- 20 A. "It goes to Fairness/[I think that might be] obligations
- 21 to do justice."

24

- 22 Q. Then next "Telephone to MS"?
- 23 A. Yeah, that's right:
 - "Int Report revealed existence of bugs."
- 25 **Q.** Then underneath does that say, "Clashed with Gareth"?

(40) Pages 157 - 160

- A. I think it does, yes. 1
- 2 Q. Then to the right-hand side of the squiggle?
- 3 A. Then I've got:
- 4 "[Without] this [that will be 'would've', would
- 5 have] continued [with] premise all is okay (as per GJ)."
- 6 Q. What does that mean? What are you saying in this note
- 7 here? Are you referring, firstly, to a telephone
- 8 conversation with Martin Smith --
- A. Yes. 9
- 10 Q. -- of Cartwright King?
- A. Yeah, I'm going -- without this, I think that may be --11
- I'm -- I fear I might be speculating a little bit 12
- 13 because it's been a long time but "would have continued"
- 14 presumably with prosecution activities, "with premise
- 15 that all is okay".
- 16 Q. As per Gareth Jenkins?
- 17 A. "As per Gareth Jenkins".
- Q. So translating that, do you think that possibly means 18
- 19 "Without the Second Sight Report we would have continued
- 20 to prosecute on the premise that all is okay, as Gareth
- 21 Jenkins said it was"?
- 22 A. I think that's right yes.
- 23 Q. Thank you. Then the box over to "Second Sight Report".
- 24 A. "SS Report [equals] he tells of bugs not mentioned in
- 25 his statements."

- 1 "We do have an issue with how we share the info."
- 2 Q. What was the issue and sharing with whom?
- 3 A. I don't know what that's relating to. I don't --
- 4 Q. Do you remember I asked you earlier about whether the
- 5 Post Office had considered whether it needed to disclose
- 6 the information in Mr Clarke's advice about a view that,
- 7 essentially, Mr Jenkins was a tainted witness, he had
- 8 breached his duties to the court, needed to be shared
- 9 with convicted defendants? Do you think that was part
- 10 of your discussion with Mr Smith?
- A. That's plausible but I don't know. It's -- having --11
- Why were you discussing these things with Mr Smith if 12
- 13 your expertise was not in criminal law?
- 14 A. I don't know. I may have been just the one who was
- 15 asked to see what we did but I'm certainly speaking to
- 16 Martin Smith, who does have the expertise. Sorry, I do
- 17 know why -- I beg your pardon. Sorry, it's come back to 18
- me. One of the outcomes of the Second Sight Report was
- 19 dealing with Fujitsu and I was asked to sort of help
- 20 with that. That was sort of on my agenda.
- 21 Underneath Martin Smith and I think that says
- 22 "inference" --
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 -- can you tell us what bullet point (1) is?
- 25 A. I think that's:

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- Q. Yes, and then on the right-hand side? 1
- 2 A. His [statements] say we have lists to check but doesn't
- 3 say [what types -- what -- oh, I'm sorry] what happens
- 4 as an outcome."
- Q. Okay, then scrolling down, please. You asked the 5
- 6 question, "What else?!?"
- 7 Α. Yes.
- Q. Is that a note to yourself? 8
- 9 A. I don't know, it's -- certainly, it's my note, so --
- 10 I don't quite no what that's referring to.
- Q. Do you think it means --11
- 12 There might be other bugs, I think that's -- I'm trying
- 13
- 14 Q. Yes, if it's been discovered that Mr Jenkins has said to
- 15 Second Sight -- ie he tells of bugs -- Mr Jenkins said
- 16 things to Second Sight about bugs that were not
- 17 mentioned in his statement, what else is there to
- discover about what Mr Jenkins has not said? 18
- 19 I mean, that might be correct. I don't recall what
- 20 I was putting that to, but ...
- 21 Q. Okay:
- 22 "We do have an issue" --
- 23 A. "With how" --
- Q. -- is the next line. 24
- 25 Δ Yeah:

162

- 1 "System designed to look for bugs, but doesn't
- 2 mention any.
- 3 "By implication, there are none [because] none are 4 mentioned."
- 5 Q. Then to the right-hand side, dealing with this page as
- we go down, you've written: 7 "So -- we know of some of these ...
 - "What were we doing to instruct [Gareth Jenkins]?"
- 9 Do you remember I asked you before the break --
- A. That looks like --10
- Q. -- the question of what the Post Office had done to 11
- 12 discover the instructions that it had given to Gareth
- 13 Jenkins were, and you said you don't think consideration
- 14 was given to that or you couldn't recall any
- 15 consideration?
- 16 A. No.

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- Q. It appears that such consideration was given by you? 17
- A. I thought I did say that I'd raised it with Martin 18
- 19 Smith. I thought I did say that in my answer?
- 20 Didn't I? I thought I did. I beg your pardon.
- 21 Q. What was the product of your discussion with Martin Smith, then, as to the issue of what the Post Office had 22
- 23 done properly to instruct Gareth Jenkins?
- 24 A. I don't know from this. I don't think any actions were 25 taken.

- 1 Q. Was there any introspection at all here by the Post
- 2 Office, "To what extent do we, as Post Office, bear
- 3 a responsibility for what has been revealed by
- 4 Mr Clarke's 15 July advice"?
- 5 A. Oh, yes, I would think so, and, on that, we'd have been
- 6 asking those who advise on the appropriate -- who raised
- 7 the issue on the appropriate steps to take next.
- 8 Q. Was anything specifically done to answer the question
- 9 that you raise there, "What were we doing to instruct
- 10 Gareth Jenkins"?
- 11 A. Sorry, the question again? I'm still familiarising
- 12 myself with the document, I'm afraid, sorry.
- 13 Q. What was done to take that issue forwards, to your
- 14 knowledge? Discovering what the Post Office had done
- 15 properly to instruct Gareth Jenkins?
- 16 A. I don't know that anything was done.
- 17 Q. Was there any sense that you're aware of, "Let's best
- 18 not answer that question because we might not like the
- 19 answer"?
- 20 A. Not that I recall, but ...
- 21 Q. Carrying down on the left-hand side, please:
- 22 "M Smith."
- 23 First point:
- 24 "Don't think ..."
- 25 **A.** "Don't think has ever been advised of his duties."
- 1 Limited on the charge sheet. We owe duties to the
- 2 court. There needs to be some investigation here of
- 3 what we, the Post Office, have done wrong, if anything.
- 4 Can you look that, please, Martin", rather than lumping
- 5 it all on Mr Jenkins?
- 6 A. I don't know if we were doing that. This was
- 7 a discussion on how to take something forward with
- 8 Fujitsu with the criminal lawyer and I would have
- 9 expected through this, given I'm not a criminal lawyer,
- 10 for the advice on what's appropriate or not to be taken
- 11 to be coming in that -- or from the expert.
- 12 Q. Underneath, does that say "started with Misra 2010"?
- 13 **A.** Yes.
- 14 **Q.** Then if you can read the final three bullet points on
- 15 that page.
- 16 A. "Has turned up since (but not given)."
- 17 Q. So does that mean, do you think, in context, Mr Jenkins
- had turned up to court since 2010, since *Misra*, but
- 19 hadn't given evidence as, in fact, was the case?
- 20 A. That's my understanding, yes, I think that's right.
- 21 Q. "His duty is to the court."
- 22 **A.** Yes.
- 23 **Q.** Then what does the last bullet point say?
- 24 A. It seems to say:
- 25 "Seem to rely on this -- CK haven't done anything 167

- 1 Q. Who's the "he"?
- 2 A. That must be Mr Jenkins, I think. Must be Mr Jenkins
- 3 sorry, my voice dropped.
- 4 Q. So your criminal law expert was telling you that he
- 5 didn't think that Mr Jenkins had ever been advised of
- 6 his duties. What was done as a result of that?
- 7 A. Again, I don't know, I'd been looking to Martin Smith
- 8 for the reaction to that.
- 9 Q. But you're the company lawyer, aren't you? You're the
- 10 Post Office lawyer, and your external lawyer is telling
- 11 you "We don't think this expert, who Simon Clarke has
- 12 written a very powerful advice about, with very
- 13 concerning and difficult conclusions in, was ever
- 14 advised by the Post Office or anyone of his duties";
- 15 what did you do with that information?
- 16 A. I do recall but I cannot say as in the context of this,
- 17 I remember in the various discussions I may have had
- 18 with Martin over the time that, if there was action we
- 19 needed to take, they --
- 20 Q. So what action was taken?
- 21 A. None but it was saying, you know, if you tell us we need
- 22 to do something, I genuinely think Post Office would
- 23 have been doing it.
- 24 Q. Well, did you say back "That's an important point. We,
- 25 after all, are the prosecutors here. It's Post Office

- 1 since."
- 2 Q. Do you know what that means?
- 3 A. No, I'm sorry.
- 4 Q. Then the final part on the right-hand side of the page,
- 5 underneath the part that was double underlined, "Signed
- 6 statements ..."
- 7 A. "... after telling SS of the bugs."
- 8 Q. Does that mean that Mr Jenkins -- or you were being told
- 9 that Mr Jenkins had continued to sign witness statements
- 10 that didn't make mention of bugs, even after telling
- 11 Second Sight of the bugs?
- 12 A. I think so, yes.
- 13 **Q.** We'll come to that later in this phase.
- 14 "[Fujitsu] will say", can you translate the rest,
- 15 please?
- 16 A. "It's up to defence council to raise the issue."
- 17 Q. Do you know what that is? Is that Mr Smith speaking
- 18 there?
- 19 **A.** I don't know, I don't know who put that. It may have
- been me, it may have been him.
- 21 $\,$ Q. Can you help us with the context of that, ie "Fujitsu
- 22 will say it's up to defence counsel to raise the issue"?
 - 23 A. My guess is, in terms of bringing this to the attention
 - of Fujitsu, they'll say, "Well, you were conducting the

25 prosecutions, you should have told them 'It's your

1 fault'."

- 2 Q. Then the last part on that page, in the bottom right?
- 3 A. I think it's:
- 4 "Wholly affected -- [I think that might say 'it's
- 5 cute']."
- 6 Then it's:
- 7 "Are FJ legal review this?"
- 8 Q. "Are [Fujitsu] legal reviewing this", yes?
- 9 A. And then quotes:
- 10 "'And correctly account for it'.
- 11 "Misleading."
- 12 Q. Can you help us with what that note means?
- 13 A. No, I'm sorry, I don't know what "this" is.
- 14 **Q.** Well, one of there employees might have breached their
- 15 duties to the court, presumably?
- 16 A. I don't know. I'm sorry. I don't know if that is --
- 17 Q. Okay, over the page, please, to page 3. Is this
- 18 a continuation of the same note?
- 19 A. Quite possibly, yes.
- 20 Q. Can you help us with what the first part means?
- 21 A. It says:
- "[Fujitsu]: this is how we did it and confirm."
- 23 Q. Yes?
- 24 A. "Plus we don't do 'bug free' -- it's up to you what you
- do [with] the system.
- 169
- 1 an expert witness, in breach of its own legal duties,
- 2 then that was serious?
- 3 A. Well, I didn't know what the duties -- what Post
- 4 Office's duties were, which is -- as a prosecutor --
- 5 which was speaking to the criminal lawyers.
- 6 Q. We've seen a note which says, "We don't think he has
- 7 ever been advised of his duties"; did you think that was
- 8 serious?
- 9 A. Well, I don't know. I'm not sure in the civil context,
- when we -- oh, no, we didn't with experts, you're right.
- 11 So yes, yes, I do think it's serious.
- 12 Q. Why were you having this conversation with Mr Smith?
- 13 A. Well, because we wanted to raise it with him -- we
- 14 thought it needed to be raised with Fujitsu. That is --
- 15 what are we going to raise with Fujitsu?
- 16 Q. The type of issues we see discussed here, namely
- 17 a record of a witness continuing to sign witness
- 18 statements that failed to mention bugs, even though he's
- 19 told Second Sight about them; a record of the breach by
- 20 the witness of his duties to the court; a realisation
- 21 that he, it is said, has not been advised of his duties
- 22 to the court; were they, to your knowledge, ever raised
- 23 with the Post Office Board?
- 24 A. I don't know with the Board, I think they were put in --

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25 there are other drafts of letters to Fujitsu, I think --

- 1 "Plus (per CK) [defence] counsel should raise this."
- 2 Q. Is this Mr Smith telling you what he thinks Fujitsu
- 3 might say, you recording what you think Fujitsu might
- 4 say, or something else?
- 5 A. I don't know now, I'm sorry.
- 6 Q. Then I think the rest is either irrelevant or
- 7 ascertainable and irrelevant.
- 8 Do you think, by this time, the Post Office had
- 9 realised that it had failed to instruct Mr Jenkins
- 10 properly as an expert witness?
- 11 A. Yes, I -- Post Office employee, so yes.
- 12 Q. If the Post Office had failed to instruct Mr Jenkins
- properly as an expert witness in accordance with its,
- the Post Office's, own legal duties, would you agree
- that that was a serious issue?
- 16 A. If we'd been advised it was, yes.
- 17 Q. Would you not regard it as serious of itself, without
- 18 having to be told?
- 19 A. In this context, I mean, we knew it was serious, because
- 20 it had been raised but what to do with it? Again, I --
- 21 I'm sorry, can have the question again?
- 22 Q. If it was the case that, as this note may indicate -- it
 - can come down, incidentally -- that the Post Office
- through you realised or had been advised that the Post
- 25 Office had failed to instruct Mr Jenkins properly as
 - 17
- 1 Q. Yes, I'm talking --
- 2 **A.** -- which were --
- 3 Q. We can see what said in that draft letter.
- 4 A. Yes, there were others.
- 5 Q. I'm asking where else that information was directed?
- 6 A. I-

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- 7 Q. Was it sent up to the board, to your knowledge?
- 8 A. I -- no, not to my knowledge, no.
- 9 Q. Was Second Sight told about it?
- 10 A. No, not to my knowledge.
- 11 Q. Was the Mediation Scheme Working Group told about it, to
- 12 your knowledge?
- 13 A. I don't know whether they were or weren't.
- 14 Q. Was Mr Altman KC told about it?
- 15 A. Of the issue with Gareth Jenkins?
- 16 **Q.** No, the -- I'm taking it beyond the issue with Gareth
- 17 Jenkins. I'm talking about a realisation that the Post
- 18 Office itself may have failed to instruct Mr Jenkins
- 19 properly as to his duties?
- 20 A. Quite possibly not. Put it this way: I don't recall him
- 21 being told that, no.
- 22 Q. Was it to your knowledge raised with the CCRC?
- A. No, not unless that sort of came out from the advicenotes we've had, no.
- 25 Q. To your knowledge, was the first time that the Post

1 Office acknowledged to any external body that Mr Jenkins 2 had not been properly instructed as an expert until this 3 Inquiry? 4 A. Quite possibly, yes. Oh, it may -- I don't know, it may 5 have come out in the Court of Appeal proceedings. 6 Q. I don't think there was any, from memory, direct 7 acknowledgement in the Court of Appeal proceedings by 8 the Post Office that that was so? 9 A. I'm sorry, I'm speculating there. I beg your pardon. 10 Can we turn, please, to POL00125758. I'll give you the tab number in a moment. 11 B176, Mr Williams. 12 13 A. 176? Q. Yes, B176. Have you got that? 14 A. I beg your pardon, yes, I have. Sorry. 15 16 Q. You'll see this is a speaking note for a meeting with 17 the CCRC on 8 May 2015. 18 A. Yes. 19 You can see who the attendees were intended to be. From 20 Post Office's side you and the General Counsel, Ms McLeod. 21 22 A. Mm-hm. 23 Q. Did you write this speaking note? A. I think -- I think I may well have done. 24 25 Q. Yes, and if we just scroll through it please, you 1 From your knowledge and understanding, was that the 2 first time that the attribution of branch losses was 3 raised? In early 2012? 4 A. I think -- I don't know when PMs started attributing 5 branch losses. 6 Q. You knew I think about the Castleton case? 7 A. Yes. 8 Q. So he had been doing it in -- making that suggestion in 9 the early 2000s? 10 A. Correct, yes. 11 Q. You knew about the Seema Misra case and she had been making that suggestion in 2009 and 2010? 12 13 Α. Correct. 14 Q. Did you know about the Computer Weekly article that 15 summarised half a dozen or so subpostmasters who said 16 exactly the same thing? A. I'm aware of that article now, I don't quite know when, 17 18 but it was likely by this time that --By mid-2015 you would have been aware of the Computer 19 Q. 20 Weekly --A. Yes, yes, absolutely. 21 22 Q. Okay, so is it right then that this is not supposed to

be a comprehensive account of when problems with Horizon

No, I think what I've done here is PMs at some point

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1 proposed to set out the background to the Complaint 2 Review and Mediation Scheme. 3 A. Mm-hm. 4 Q. Post Office as a retailer, it's the UK's largest branch network; 11,500 branches, 8,000 agents; postmasters 5 6 handled Post Office's money; £70 billion in cash; 7 there's a duty to account, under contract and common on 8 law, under agency, for daily cash declarations, weekly 9 balances and monthly trading rollover periods; Post 10 Office monitors branch accounts, there's an audit if 11 questions about declared levels of cash holding; if 12 audit reveals a shortfall, then the Post Office seeks to 13 rock under a contractual right that shortfall, and you 14 quote in clause 12 of the contract; suspend; 15 termination; potential prosecution, if conduct is 16 suspected; prosecutions under the POA about 50 a year. 17 Over the page, please. Post Office uses the Horizon 18 accounting system in every branch, it's supplied by 19 Fujitsu. First introduced in 1995, online in 2010. 20 60,000 users or more, processing 6 million transactions 21 a day, 2 billion transactions a year. 500,000 users 22 since launch. The key principles of it, 2.3, some 23 postmasters started attributing branch losses to 24 Horizon. Early 2012, James Arbuthnot asked the Post 25 Office to look into it. 174 1 started attributing losses but then, in early 2012, that's when Lord Arbuthnot --2 3 Q. Okay --4 A. -- I'm not seeking to say it started in 2012, I think 5 that's a --6 Q. Okay, in 2012, Post Office instructs Second Sight to 7 look at some of the cases. The first report was in July 8 2013, and you cite the no evidence of system-wide/systemic problems with Horizon software, but 9 10 issues with the way we dealt with individual 11 postmasters. 12 Post Office was very concerned about the impact on 13 criminal cases. It considered the July '13 report 14 against the prosecutors duty of continuing disclosure, 15 set up a "sift review" process. Suitability was checked 16 by Brian Altman, made disclosures as a consequence. 17 Revisited its approach to agent engagement. 18 Then 2.5. 19 "Scheme to resolve individual complaints." 20 You'll read what's summarised there. 21 Yes. Α. 22 **Q.** Then over the page. 2.6: 23 "Focus of complaints continues to be ... processes 24 and practices."

The Second Sight investigations, you told the CCRC,

have shown that the majority of branch losses were caused by errors made at the counter.

Second Sight expressively accepts it is not an expert in criminal law and procedure but still, in Part Two, state the Post Office might not have investigated claims properly, have the evidential foundation to bring the criminal charge. These statements have entered the public domain and may encourage people to take action. Other avenues being pursued

Then "Categories of Responsive Documents", under section 17 notices, if you just scroll to the end, you enter into a practical discussion about provision of material, yes?

15 A. Yes.

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- 16 Q. Why is there no mention there of what the Post Officehad found out about Mr Jenkins?
- 18 A. I think, by this stage, we had disclosed -- we may have
 19 disclosed the Brian Altman advice reviewing the -- what
 20 I understood the impact of the Jenkins issue was, was
- 21 that it triggered Post Office's duty to make further --
- 22 to consider further disclosure in cases --
- 23 Q. Of the Second Sight Report?
- A. Of the Second Sight -- of the materials that we'd been
 advised to disclose, which I think was, in some cases,
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- A. -- if that was done. I don't want to mislead. That's
 my recollection but I'd like to check it.
- 3 Q. Why wasn't it something volunteered?
- 4 A. I don't know. We -- some things were volunteered,
- 5 I think, but it wasn't a --
- 6 Q. I'm asking about this one.
- 7 A. No particular reason. The material they asked for was
 - provided, it indicated what else there might be and
- 9 I don't know at this time, but certainly the process we
- 10 had going forward with them was not to show them what we
- 11 thought they might be interested in but for them --
- 12 Q. To rely --

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- 13 A. -- to conduct on their -- yeah, well, for them to
- 14 conduct their investigation and follow the lines of
- 15 inquiry that they would want to. That was the repeated
- 16 advice I recall us receiving, is the CCRC would conduct
- 17 their own investigations and should be left to it.
- 18 Q. Can we look, please, at POL00103238. I'll just wait for
- 19 Mr Stevens to turn that up. POL00103238, B182, please.
- 20 A. B182. Thank you. Yes.
- 21 Q. Can we turn to page 2, please, and scroll down. We can
- see an email here of 1 August 2016 and, if we scroll on,
- 23 please -- if we keep going -- we can see that it's sent
- 24 by Amanda Pearce, the group leader of the CCRC. If we

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go back to the beginning of the email, please. She

1 the Second Sight Report and in some cases -- most cases

- 2 I thought it was both -- the Helen Rose Report. That
- 3 process had been reviewed by Brian Altman and the advice
- 4 on that had, I think -- although I'd like to check the
- 5 dates -- been shared with the CCRC by the 8 May 2015.
- 6 If it hadn't been it was around the time of this, it was 7 disclosed --
- 8 **Q**. The Simon Clarke advice --
- 9 **A.** Er --
- 10 **Q**. -- of 15 July 2013?
- 11 A. I don't think the Cartwright King advices were shared.
- 12 Q. Why was that?
- 13 A. We tended to respond to requests for information from
- 14 the CCRC and we -- it was -- the Cartwright King advice
- 15 was referred to in Brian's advice and we invited the
- 16 CCRC to tell us which documents they would like from it,
- and some of those were, I believe, provided, but not
- 18 those. I think that's what --
- 19 Q. How would the CCRC know about the Clarke advice?
- 20 A. It would have been referenced, I think, I hope -- well,
- 21 I can -- they would only know, I think, if it's properly
- 22 referred to in Brian's advice.
- 23 Q. Mr Altman's advice?
- 24 A. Would you like me to check to see whether that --
- 25 Q. No, it's okay --

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1 says:

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2 "Hi Rodric ..."

Then under "Documents":

"I'm afraid I've also got some further requests for information and documents."

Under "Documents":

"We met with Ron Warmington of Second Sight ... He mentioned a couple of documents we think it would be helpful to see (i) the thematic spreadsheet which Second Sight created identifying the alleged faults/problems; and (ii) a June 2014 report which Mr Warmington prepared on [the Post Office's] Investigations Department and prosecution process. I attach a section 17 notice to cover this request ...

"2. We are trying to locate the transaction logs for the Misra case. We haven't been able to find them in the data room. We have found a 255-page 'event log' and a 29-page log of 'Transactions ...' but no sign of the full transaction logs. If the logs weren't printed out for trial are you still able to access them ...

(... I haven't sent a ... section 17 ..."

Then scroll down:

"1. In November 2015, Computer Weekly reported an issue whereby payments had been duplicated on Horizon. It was reported that this was used by the user 180

forcing log off. We have also seen this referred to as the 'Dalmellington Error'. Would it be possible for POL to provide us with an explanation of this issue ...

- "2. We've seen numbered of references to the 'Receipts and Payments Mismatch Problem' which, we think, has also been referred to as the Callendar Square/Falkirk problem. Are we right in thinking that they're the same thing ...
- "3. We've seen references to some sort of 'fault log' produced by [Horizon]. I understand ... that this has been variously referred to as the 'PEAK incident reports', 'PinICL', and the 'Known Error Log'. Do these refer to the same thing? Is it one document or is it a series of documents ... I'm trying to get a better sense of what they are ..."

Agree all very relevant, direct and penetrating questions?

18 A. Yes.

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19 Can we scroll up, please, to page 2 and keep going to 20 the top of page 2, there, thank you. You send this on, 21 if we just look at the bottom of page 1. That's from 22 you. You send that email on to Andrew Parsons and 23 others and say, "Can we discuss it?":

> "I'd like to start thinking about whether and how we can start forcing the issue with the CCRC -- they've

Weekly. I think the -- I mean, I'll be frank, I think that's just me writing a short email. I think what I was trying to actually do is, what Post Office's approach to the CCRC had been was to, as I said before, leave them -- and that was the consistent advice, leave them to their investigations. They knew what they were doing and how they would go about it.

I think, around this time, because the Group Litigation had started -- I think it started what, in April 2016 -- there was some discussion around how long does this take? That's a question I was frequently asked. I thought it important to at least think about testing what had been our position and to see whether it was still viable and valid. Is how we've been dealing with this appropriate? Should we be thinking about doing something else? And that's what I was trying to do there, you know, is this is an ever-expanding, you know, running down a rabbit hole, as I seem to have intimated there or should we stick to what we had been doing and what I believe we continued to do, which is to engage with them as they required from us.

22 Q. It's that siege mentality again, isn't it, Mr Williams? 23 Challenges to the Post Office are hostile and must be fended off, rather than considered on their merits?

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I think that's maybe overstating it but it's -- there's 25 A.

1 been looking at these for a long time and seem to be 2 jumping down every rabbit hole they're directed to ..."

3 Why did you think the CCRC was jumping down rabbit 4 holes?

- A. Two reasons, I think now. The Computer Weekly issue was 5 6 the -- I think it referred to an outreach bug, which 7 I think, when we'd discussed it -- I don't know where it 8 came from -- seemed to have been a recent event. I'm
- 9 not sure whether that actually is the case or not but 10 that's what I recall being at the time. And I -- but
- 11 I think, more pressingly, they'd asked for quite a bit
- 12 of disclosure on an Employment Tribunal claim that, as
- 13 far as I was seeing it, was an Employment Tribunal
- 14 matter, not a -- it was unrelated to any prosecution
- 15 material and it just -- what I think was going on there
- 16 was what we had -- certainly, my impression of what we
- 17 were seeing was lots of people raising lots of issues
- 18 that would get looked into and not go anywhere, and just
- 19 extend the period of review without reaching
- 20
- 21 Q. You've just agreed with me a couple of minutes ago that 22 the questions that the CCRC were raising with you were
- 23 relevant, direct and penetrating issues. Why did you
- 24 think they were going down rabbit holes?
- 25 A. I think -- I've just said, for example, the Computer
- 1 probably something in that, I think that's fair.
- 2 Q. You say that they're being directed to rabbit holes.
- 3 Were you paranoid that others were acting in concert 4 with the CCRC?
- 5 A. I had -- well, I'd said "seemed to be". I didn't know
- 6 whether these were things they got to on their own or
- 7 with prompting but I'm quite sure they would have been
- 8 doing what they do with us, which is their own
- 9 investigation impartially.
- 10 Q. Did you think they were lacking impartiality?
- 11 A. No, not in any way.
- 12 Q. Why did you want to force the issue with the CCRC?
- I wanted to start thinking about whether we can. As 13 A.
- 14 I say, to me this is testing is our approach still the
- 15 right one? And it turns out, I believe, as are
- 16 subsequent actions -- it was the right one, to continue
- 17 to lead them to do the job as best they knew.
- Q. Is there really an option there? On the one hand, we 18
- 19 should leave the statutory body that investigates
- 20 possible unsafe convictions and miscarriages of justice
- 21 to get on with its work, or we stand in their way?
- 22 A. I don't think so but I was often asked -- I seem to
- 23 recall being asked "When are they getting back? What
- 24 can we do?" And it helped me to be able to say, "Look
- 25 this is the approach we've been taking. You know, we

		The Pos
1		are keeping it under review, we test it, and it is still
2		the right thing to do", even if it seems, as you just
3		said, you know, frankly obvious. I think it's important
4		to keep things under review.
5	Q.	Can we look at a different aspect of this, please. And
6		turn to paragraph 76 of your witness statement that
7		can come down now which is on page 38.
8	A.	Sorry, yes.
9	Q.	I think that must be a rogue reference. I'll move on,
10		POL00066789, which is tab B64. This is an email chain
11		between you and Mr Smith regarding disclosure of the
12		Helen Rose Report. You remember what the Helen Rose
13		Report was?
14	A.	Yes.
15	Q.	Can you, for those less familiar, summarise your present
16		understanding of what the Helen Rose Report was?
17	A.	I think the Helen Rose Report it is unfortunate, we
18		tried for a while to have it referred to as the Lepton
19		report because it concerned a branch rather than
20		an individual was an issue raised by a member,
21		I think, of Post Office's Security Team in connection

section) or the non-privileged material (eg the background transaction data) repackaged for disclosure to the defence.

with an issue revved by Second Sight's Spot Review --

can't remember what the technical piece is, but it's how

system reversals, I think, are visible from information

ultimately thorough a Spot Review, on -- I actually

"If you advise that Helen's report does not attract any privilege, please ensure the reference to privilege is removed from the header (I don't want someone else to say the report is privileged, but that we waived thereby giving rise to possibly difficult issues of collateral waiver)."

So you were asking Mr Smith why the report was being disclosed first, yes?

12 Α.

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Q. And you were asking for advice on its privileged status. 13

14 On what basis did you consider the report to be 15 privileged?

16 A. Well, I wasn't sure whether it was privileged or not,

which is why I was asking the question. But I had

understood, when this came out, that the report, as in 18

the physical report, had been prepared for -- for the 19

20 purposes of obtaining legal advice, as in "Here's

21 an issue, what do we do?"

22 Q. So what did you think that occasion of privilege was?

23 Obtain legal advice about what?

24 Α. Well, whether it raised issues that needed to be 25 disclosed.

derived from Horizon. 1

2 Q. Thank you.

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3 A. A question about whether it was the reversal was 4 generated by the system or by a user.

5 Can we turn, please, to page 4 of this chain. At the 6 foot of the page, in the context of the case against 7 Mr Ishaq in July 2013, Martin Smith sending a copy of 8 a letter to Mr Flemington and copied to you, to be sent 9 to Mr Ishaq's solicitors. Then up the page, please --10 keep going -- we can see your reply on 10 July 2013:

"Thanks Martin.

"First point? We presume that Helen Rose's report is being disclosed because [the Post Office's] evidence in the prosecution included an ARQ report. Is that right?

"Second point -- Helen Rose's report is marked 'Confidential and legally privileged'.

"I understand she did this because she prepared the report to give to Post Office Legal for legal advice on the implications of her investigation (please call on [her number] to confirm).

"Please therefore consider what information from the report needs to be disclosed to Mr Ishaq's solicitors and in what format, ie whether parts of the report should be removed or redacted (eg the Recommendations

1 No, why did you think it was possibly the case that the 2 Helen Rose Report enjoyed privilege? 3 A. It's the same, because I thought it had been prepared to

give to the Post Office Legal for advice. We found this issue, what are the legal implications, Post Office Legal? That's -- whether that actually was the case or not, I don't know, which is why I was asking Martin Smith what his view on it was. And it was marked privileged, which I know isn't determinative of anything, but somebody thought it was privileged and I wanted to know -- not having any familiarity with the criminal justice system --

13 Q. In any event --

14 -- I -- I wanted the expert to tell us what to do.

15 Q. If we move up, please, to page 1., at the foot of the 16 page, Mr Smith says:

"Rodric ..."

Then there's an explanation of privilege. Second sentence:

"I guess here you suggest that such privilege attaches because of by reason of [the Post Office's] contemplation of adversarial proceedings involving Fujitsu."

Is that right? You thought that Helen Rose's report --

187

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Then scroll up.

A. So, to put that in context, to the best of my

192

2	Q.	No?
3	A.	No.
4	Q.	That's just way off beam?
5	A.	It was, yes.
6	Q.	" in criminal litigation, the emphasis is on ensuring
7		a defendant is not prejudiced by the absence of material
8		which would otherwise assist him or undermine the case
9		against him criminal disclosure law trumps civil
10		privilege, but only in circumstances where the material
11		in question meets the test for disclosure"
12		Quite a lot in there.
13		"Thus there are only a limited number of ways in
14		which we can prevent disclosure of material which we
15		would otherwise be required to disclose to defendants."
16		Then over the page.
17		"Seek a Public Immunity [I think that's meant to
18		mean "public interest immunity"] Certificate from the
19		trial judge as we did in [another case]. To achieve
20		this we would need to demonstrate a real public interest
21		in non-disclosure [or]
22		"Terminate the prosecution."
23		Then he sets out why Helen Rose's report is
23 24		disclosable.
2 4 25		If we go to page 3, second paragraph:
25		ii we go to page 3, second paragrapii. 189
1		happened. I think I saw a version of it at some point
2		where it effectively went without the markings but,
3		certainly, that wasn't
4	Q.	Then, lastly on this topic, before the break, can we
5		look at POL00108163, please
6	A.	Yes.
7	Q.	an email from you to Martin Edwards. Can you help us
8		with who he was?
9	A.	He was, at this time, I think, the Chief Executive's
10		Chief of Staff.
11	Q.	Within Post Office?
12	A.	Within Post Office. I beg your pardon.
13	Q.	If we scroll down to point (iii), the briefing can
14		address the issues we discussed yesterday, namely:
15		"Whether the 'Helen Rose Report' is in the public
16		domain (it's not)"
17		Then:
18		"I think it is sensible to keep references to the
19		Helen Rose Report to a minimum"
20		In what context were you advising the Chief of Staff
21		to keep any references to the Helen Rose Report to
22		a minimum?
23	A.	I think, in this, you need to get this is a document
24		where the full trail, I think, is important in the
25		context of what's happening. I think I'd been asked
		191

A. No.

1 "... I am in no doubt that this document is 2 disclosable ... if the matter were to come before 3 a criminal court the judge would without hesitation 4 order the disclosure in the appropriate case." Then I think you gave your instructions on page 1: 6 "Please disclose all information from the report 7 that needs to be disclosed. 8 "... do so in the form of a new, standalone document 9 (Helen presented the info in the form she did so as to 10 provide it to the Legal Department for its view)." 11 Why did you want a new, standalone document? I think it just separated that -- I think I said it 12 13 earlier. It just removed any question about what had 14 been prepared for. I had been told, I think by Cartwright King, that you can give disclosure in the 15 16 form of disclosure notes, as opposed to the document 17 itself, and I had thought, look, they know what needs to 18 be disclosed from there, which is the key of it, you 19 disclose what needs to be disclosed, do it in a way that 20 sort of removes the question around this. 21 Q. Would that not have had the effect of obscuring the 22 context in which the report had been originally 23 generated? 24 Not necessarily. It could have been as simple as A. 25 removing the privileged piece, which I think is what 1 if we go -- can I have the tab reference, please? 2 Q. We'll give you the tab number. B84. 3 A. Sorry, that's 184. If we go all the way through to --4 Pages 4 and 5. 5 A. Yes, thank you. 6 If we look at the foot of page 4 and on to page 5. 7 Mr Edwards sends you some text for a report to the CEO 8 on criminal cases. Yes. 9 A. Q. The text is: 10 11 "Our criminal barrister, Brian Altman QC, has 12 completed his review of the approach we are taking to 13 reviewing cases that have been subject to prosecution, 14 in particular looking at whether we are complying with 15 our duty to disclose the findings of the Second Sight Report to the defence teams ... His conclusion is that 16 17 our approach is 'fundamentally sound', providing us with 18 strong grounds to resist any formal review of our prosecutions (for example by the [CCRC]). To date, 19 20 following several sifts our external firm of solicitors 21 has identified 11 cases where disclosure is required. 22 It is a matter for the defence to determine what action 23 they might take ..."

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1 recollection is that the -- and I think it's in the --2 it's in the heading, it's the CEO report. So a report 3 was prepared for the Chief Executive. I don't know to 4 whom, I assume it's the Board. It would be collected 5 from various parts of the business on matters that had 6 been -- were of interest to the Board, I don't know what 7 the criteria for that were, and then they would ask 8 whoever was around to give either approval, sign off the 9 writing.

> So I don't know where the draft started from on that but he was saying "Here's an extract from the CEO report -- which you can see is relatively small, sort of very high level -- what do you think?" That's what I was asked to do.

> So I then -- in the next one, I made some suggested amendments.

- 17 Q. In the amended text we're looking at on the screen, you added in the words that are emboldened and underlined? 18
- 19 A. Yes. That's right, and I think -- did I strike any out? 20 It doesn't look like it. Well, I think I replaced some 21 words where it felt like we might be overreaching.
- 22 Q. Then if we go to page 3, please.
- 23 A. It's at that point -- my understanding was the documents 24 being considered for -- through the Sift Review for 25 disclosure and past prosecutions was not just the Second

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1 a minimum?

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- 2 A. Well, to a minimum? Because -- I say this later on --3 well, it generated a lot of activity about what it was
- 4 and what it involved, and I offered to go through it --
- 5 Q. Why did it generate activity about what it was and what 6 it involved?
- 7 A. Well, we can see here martin says:
- 8 "Thanks ... Unfortunately I think I probably do need 9 to give Paula more information on this [this is on 10 page 2], as this is going to raise all sorts of 11 questions from her and the Board! Please could you send me the report and any associated advice ..." 12
- 13 Q. Yes.
- 14 Α. So then I go:
- "Can we take some time to discuss?" 15
- 16 Q. Yes.
- We agree, it's a quick -- Martin says: 17 Α.
- 18 "... it's probably better not to mention [the report] specifically, as it will ... serve to confuse 19 20 things ..."
- Why would the mention of the report confuse things? 21
- A. I don't know. That's a -- I don't know. 22
- 23 Q. Then we get to page 1 --
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. -- where you say:

1 Sight Report, but also the Helen Rose Report, and so 2 I introduced it in at this point saying, "Well, hang on, 3 it's not just that document; there are two of them".

4 Q. Mr Edwards asked you, at the foot of page 3:

"Is the Helen Rose Report a key part of the 6 disclosure? If so I think we'll need to include the reference to it in square brackets below."

8 So is that him adding the text in that we've just 9 looked at?

10 A. Sorry, who is that? Is that -- I'm sorry, what am 11 I looking for in the highlighted section?

Q. Mr Edwards replied: 12

13 "Is the Helen Rose Report a key part of the 14 disclosure? If so I think we'll need to include the 15 reference to it in square brackets below."

16 So it looks like he has added those words in, "and 17 Helen Rose", in the text on page 4.

- 18 In the text on page 4 now?
- 19 Yes. I don't want to spend too long on this --
- 20 A. Oh, yeah. No, I'm sorry --
- 21 Q. -- about the intricacies of drafting.
- 22 A. I beg your pardon. I think I'd added it in. It's not 23 in the --
- 24 Q. My only question was: on page 1 of the email, why did 25 you want to keep references of the Helen Rose Report to 194

1 "I think it is sensible to keep references to the 2 Helen Rose Report to a minimum ..."

3 My question is: why did you think it sensible to 4 keep references to the Helen Rose Report to a minimum? 5 A. So it was -- so the way I'd read this, it was a question

6 about what's being disclosed. The Helen Rose Report was 7 something that was being disclosed and, in the briefing 8 note we'd received -- which I think must have been from

9 Cartwright King, I attach a briefing note -- it says,

10 "It's unlikely to require disclosure in any further

11 cases". So in a short summary of matters in a larger

12 report on other things, as I understood it, it was

13 something that didn't appear to be a live issue going 14 forward.

- 15 Q. Live issue for who?
- A. For disclosure, and then -- so it wasn't going to be 16 17 something that was continuing to be disclosed. Actions 18 weren't going to be continued to be taken with respect 19 to it, I think. And then I also added in that we --20 Brian's view was that it added very little.

21 So I'm sitting here thinking I don't know if it's --22 it doesn't seem, to me, to be particularly relevant 23 going forward.

24 MR BEER: Thank you.

25 Those are the only questions I ask today. 196

1	Sil, call we start at 9.45 and tollionows. The pick up	į.	(The hearing adjourned until 3.45 and the following day)
2	questioning with the shredding advice.	2	
3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes. Tomorrow, Mr Beer, we embark on	3	
4	a new form of procedure, do we not, in that the	4	
5	representatives of Core Participants will be given	5	
6	a 45-minute time slot, and I think three have claimed	6	
7	it, to ask questions of Mr Williams?	7	
8	MR BEER: That's right, sir.	8	
9	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I'm just telling everyone now that, in my	9	
10	view, this will only work if people are scrupulous about	10	
11	using the time because the last thing we want is for the	11	
12	third person of the Core Participants tomorrow afternoon	12	
13	being truncated because the two before him (or her) have	13	
14	overrun.	14	
15	So it's 45 minutes each, and I propose to be	15	
16	ruthless about it, just for everybody to know.	16	
17	Mr Williams, overnight, I dare say you'll want to	17	
18	relax, if you can, but you won't want to talk to anybody	18	
19	about your evidence, I'm sure, and I know you understand	19	
20	that you shouldn't.	20	
21	THE WITNESS: I do, sir.	21	
22	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So with that, I'll see you all tomorrow.	22	
23	THE WITNESS: Thank you, sir.	23	
24	MR BEER: Thank you, sir.	24	
25	(4.34 pm)	25	
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RODRIC DAVID ALUN WILLIAMS (sworn)		
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