Friday, 3 March 2023 1 1 A. Yes. 2 (10.00 am) 2 Q. Thank you. A copy of that witness statement will be 3 MR BEER: Good morning, sir. Can you see and hear me? 3 uploaded to the Inquiry's website and therefore I'm only 4 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you. 4 going to ask you questions about selected parts of it. 5 MR BEER: May I call Andrew Winn, please. Can we turn to the second witness statement, please. 5 6 ANDREW FRANK WINN (affirmed) 6 That's four pages in length and was signed by you today. 7 Questioned by MR BEER 7 Can you look at the fourth page, please, and tell me 8 MR BEER: Good morning, Mr Winn. My name is Jason Beer and, 8 whether that's your signature? 9 as you know, I ask questions on behalf of the Inquiry. 9 A. Just give me a moment. I'm struggling with my folder 10 Can you give us your full name, please? 10 here. Sorry, where is it? Andrew Frank Winn. 11 Q. I think it's immediately after the first witness 11 Α. Thank you. Many thanks for coming to give evidence to 12 statement. 12 13 the Inquiry today and for the provision of two witness 13 A. Yes. 14 statements. Can I deal with your first witness 14 Q. Is that your signature on the fourth page? 15 statement first, please. It should be in the hard copy 15 A. 16 bundle in front of you at tab A1. It's 24 pages in 16 The URN for that is WITN01090200. Are the contents of 17 length and is dated 26 December 2022. Do you have that? 17 that witness statement true to the best of your 18 18 A. Yes. knowledge and belief? 19 For the transcript the URN is WITN01090100. Can you go 19 A. Yes. 20 to the 24th page of it, please. 20 Q. Thank you very much. 21 21 Α. Yes. I'm going to ask you, Mr Winn, questions about the 22 22 Q. Is that your signature? matters that arise in what we in the Inquiry are calling 23 A. Yes. 23 Phase 3 of the Inquiry. 24 24 Q. Are the contents of that witness statement true to the I'm not going to ask you any detailed questions 25 best of your knowledge and belief? 25 today about cases involving the prosecution of 1 individual subpostmasters, as that will be a matter Q. What was the audit role? 2 addressed in Phase 4 of the Inquiry, or in relation to 2 Initially it was with Parcelforce, which largely 3 investigations that took place after the scandal broke. 3 involved checking out individual branches, depos, 4 That may be addressed in Phase 5 of the Inquiry and you 4 checking the records, et cetera, and then we moved into 5 5 may be recalled within it. There may be some questions a group audit. It consolidated into a group audit and 6 that do touch on those matters but only where it's 6 that would involve going into all the different areas of 7 7 necessary to understand and explore your evidence on the business, usually in groups and carrying out audits 8 Phase 3 issues. Do you understand? 8 of what was going on there. 9 Q. Before 2001, before you took up your role in the Post A. Yes. 9 Q. Thank you. Can I start with your background and 10 Office in 2001, did your role require you to have any 10 11 involvement with the Horizon System? 11 experience. I think you worked for the Royal Mail Group 12 and then the Post Office for 20 years between 1996 and 12 A. No, I believe not. 13 2016; is that right? 13 **Q.** Before you took up your role in the Post Office in 2001, 14 A. That's correct. 14 what did you know, if anything, about the Horizon Q. Have you any professional qualifications that are 15 System? 15 16 relevant to the issues that we're considering today? A. Nothing. 16 Q. If you can just maybe move forward slightly so that the 17 17 A. No. Q. You say in your witness statement that you started 18 microphones pick up your voice. You will see that the 18 working for the Post Office or Post Office Limited in Chairman is listening remotely and the proceedings are 19 19 20 around 2001. Before that time, what was your role 20 broadcast and so it's really important that the 21 within Royal Mail Group? 21 microphones pick up what you say. 22 A. I started off as a postman, part-time postman. Then 22 A. Okay, sorry.

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Q. So the answer was "Nothing" I think.

25 Q. Thank you. So does it follow that before you took up

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in an audit role and, from there, I moved into Post

I worked in a management reporting role. Then I worked

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Office Limited.

- 1 your role in 2001, you didn't know anything about
- 2 whether there existed any bugs, errors or defects in the
- 3 Horizon System?
- 4 A. Correct.
- 5 Q. Now, you joined Post Office Limited, you say in your
- 6 statement, in 2001 in the Network Improvement Team.
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. What was your job title in the Network Improvement Team?
- 9 A. I can't remember.
- 10 Q. What was your function in the Network Improvement Team?
- 11 A. A little bit, as the name suggests, trying to find ways
- of improving the performance of the team. I was
- particularly involved in an activity based costing
- 14 exercise, trying to pull together activity based costing
- to help make decisions and, in truth, it ended up being
- too high a level to have much effect.
- 17 I also got involved with the -- I can't remember
- 18 what it were called but, basically, where you get
- 19 mystery shoppers going into branches. So I was involved
- 20 in creating the questions and writing -- and that
- 21 changed every month, so that would be part of my job.
- 22 Q. What level within the Network Improvement Team were you?
- 23 A. In terms of tiers, you mean?
- 24 Q. Well, were you at the lowest rung in the ladder? Would
- you a supervisor, if there were such things? Were
  - 5
- 1 seen an email which suggests that it was earlier than
- 2 that because it refers to you being in that team in at
- 3 least 2003?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. What was your job title in the problem management team?
- 6 A. Problem management team leader.
- 7 Q. What was the function of the problem management team?
- 8  $\,$  A. As I understand, it was a response to basically the Post
- 9 Office moving onto an IT-type platform, rather than
- a manual-type platform, and it was part of the kind of
- 11 plan that was laid out that, effectively, the concept
- 12 was that anybody within the Post Office who got
- a problem reported it to the problem management team.
- 14 In reality, it should have been just an IT
- function but the way it was set up was that everyone who had a problem reported it in there. The IT kind of
- 17 structure at the time was that the problem management
- 18 team managed the problem in terms of making sure the
- 19 relevant people were involved in correcting the problem,

- 20 rather than actually resolving the problem themselves,
- 21 which I found a difficult concept to deal with.
- 22 Q. So it was like a signposting service, was it?
- 23 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 24 Q. Did you manage a team?
- 25 A. I did, yes.

- 1 a manager? Were you the head of the unit?
- 2 A. I was manager without anybody to manage. So I was what
- 3 would be a CM2 grade, I believe. So there was an admin
- 4 officer, who would be the admin grade, but then I think
- 5 there was probably one person same grade as me and then
- 6 three or one senior manager grades with a team leader on
- 7 top of that.
- 8 Q. To whom did you report?
- 9 A. One of the senior managers.
- 10 Q. You didn't manage a team?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. How many people were in the Network Improvement Team?
- 13 A. Seven or eight.
- 14 Q. Where was it based?
- 15 A. In Chesterfield.
- 16 Q. Did your role in the Network Improvement Team require
- 17 you to have knowledge of and understanding of the
- 18 operation of the Horizon System?
- 19 **A.** No
- 20 Q. In the course of that role, did you acquire any
- 21 knowledge about whether there existed any bugs, errors
- 22 or defects in the Horizon System?
- 23 A. No.

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- 24 Q. You say in your witness statement that you moved to the
- 25 problem management team in 2005. I think you've since

  - Q. How many people were in that team?
- 2 A. There was probably, I think, about 12 other team
- 3 members.
- 4 Q. To whom did you report?
- 5 A. A senior manager.
- 6 Q. Who was that?
- 7 A. Initially, it was Marie Cochate but she left. I can't
- 8 remember who took over from there.
- 9 Q. Where were you based?
- 10 A. In Dearne House.
- 11 Q. Which is?
- 12 A. Near Barnsley.
- 13 Q. Did that role and the role of the team that you managed
- 14 require knowledge of and understanding of the operation
- 15 of the Horizon System?
- 16 A. Yes, but I didn't have knowledge of the Horizon System.
- 17 So I would have said I was a bad placement into that
- 18 role.
- 19 Q. How did you acquire, if you did, any knowledge and
- 20 understanding of the operation of the Horizon System?
- 21 A. There were couple of members of the team who had some
- 22 knowledge, basically from working in branches, but it
- 23 was really a case of trying to figure it out as I went
- 24 along.
- 25 Q. So you weren't given any training at that stage?

- 1 A. No. I think at the time there was very few people
- 2 within the Post Office who'd got much IT knowledge, to
- 3 be frank
- 4 Q. Horizon had by this time, 2003, been up and running for
- 5 three years. In that time, had you acquired any
- 6 knowledge or understanding of the operation of the
- 7 system?
- 8 A. Some but very limited, I would say.
- 9  $\,$  **Q.** You said that you were a bad fit or words to that
- 10 effect.
- 11 A. I would have said so, yes.
- 12 Q. Why were you a bad fit?
- 13 A. Because I'm not a technically -- I find technology quite
- 14 difficult even now. I always felt as though I was
- 15 playing catch up with technology, kind of still do now.
- 16 So ideally somebody in that role would have had a good
- 17 understanding and been able to understand problems
- 18 easily, whereas I was -- forever seemed to be trying to
- 19 understand what it was that was meant.
- 20 Q. You said that an important part of the intended function
- of the problem management team was IT, information
- 22 technology, although the boundaries were stretched on
- 23 that.
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. An important part of that would have been Horizon
  - 9
- 1 A. To be honest, I kind of -- my memory of the time is
- 2 largely more about dealing with outages or breaks
- 3 between the different data houses that information flew
- 4 through. So it kind of feels more around checking that
- 5 the different data centres were talking to each other
- 6 and who was owning the problem and resolving it. There
- 7 obviously must have been issues on Horizon that came
- 8 through but that's my principal memory of the role.
- 9 Q. Looking at it globally -- I appreciate it may be
- 10 difficult to isolate a period of time given what you
- 11 then went on to do -- what would your view have been of
- 12 Horizon at that time, in this 18-month period before you
- 13 went on to the data management team?
- 14 A. I don't think I got a great view of the actual Horizon
- 15 System in branches. I think I was more looking at kind
- of Fujitsu into other data warehouses. So I'd not got
- 17 a strong view in any direct direction.
- 18 Q. What were you looking at in relation to the flow of data
- 19 into data warehouses involving Fujitsu?
- 20 A. Whether it's flowing as it was required.
- 21 Q. And was it?
- 22 A. Most of the time, yes, and occasionally, when a problem
- 23 arose, it wasn't.
- 24 Q. Did this experience tell you anything that you can now
- 25 remember about the way that Horizon was operating?

- 1 itself?
- 2 A. Yes.

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- 3 Q. Do you know why you were picked them if you were a bad
  - fit, bad with technology, and had no training to be
- 5 a team leader in the problem management team?
- 6 A. You'd have to ask the people who interviewed me but
- 7 I would guess that my competition were in a similar
- 8 situation.
- 9 **Q.** I'm sorry --
- 10 A. The competition for the role. There was -- I don't know
- 11 how many people were interviewed for the role but I got
- 12 the role on --
- 13 Q. You were all in the same boat?
- 14 A. I would say -- I don't particularly know the people who
- 15 were competing with me but that would be my
- 16 understanding, yes.
- 17 Q. You say in your witness statement that after about
- 18 18 months in the problem management team you moved to
- 19 a data management team, the name of which you can't
- 20 remember
- 21 A. Correct.
- 22 Q. In that 18-month period in the problem management team,
- 23 did you acquire any knowledge about the number and
- 24 nature of any bugs, errors and defects in the Horizon
- 25 System?

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- 1 A. With no experience of other systems of anything like
- 2 similar or really any other systems, I couldn't compare
- 3 it to say whether it was good, bad or indifferent. It
- 4 seemed to work most of the time fine, yes.
- 5 Q. Would that be your abiding memory, that Horizon at this
- 6 time seemed to work fine most of the time?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. So when you went into the role in the data management
- 9 team you wouldn't have gone into the team thinking this
- is a problematic system, Horizon?
- 11 **A.** No.
- 12 Q. So you moved into the data management team. What was
- 13 your job title in the data management team?
- 14 **A.** I can't remember. It was the database, whatever it was
- 15 called, manager.
- 16 Q. Where was that based?
- 17 A. Again that was in Dearne House.
- 18 **Q.** What was the function of that data management team?
- 19 A. There wasn't really a great function. It basically
- 20 compiled data and I can't remember what type of data it
- 21 was. It was only used by one team within POL, as far as
- I was aware. When I got into the role, there was
- a reorganisation and the problem management team and the
   risk team, I think, were combined into one team and the
- 25 risk manager took over management of the team. So I was

- 1 left in a situation where was I going to go, there was
- 2 a space there so I was kind of fitted in there.
- ${\bf 3} \quad {\bf Q}. \quad {\bf What \ data \ did \ it \ manage \ and \ for \ what \ purpose \ did \ it}$
- 4 manage it?
- 5 A. It seems -- I really -- it is a blur, that role. It
- 6 kind of felt like different product descriptions
- 7 perhaps, promotional information.
- 8 Q. Did your undertaking of that role require knowledge of
- 9 and understanding of the operation of the Horizon
- 10 System?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. In the course of that role, therefore, did you acquire
- any more knowledge of any errors, bugs and defects in
- 14 the operation of the Horizon System?
- 15 **A.** No
- 16 Q. So Horizon wasn't really on your horizon in that role.
- 17 A. Not at that point, no.
- 18 Q. In 2007, you moved to the Finance Reporting Team?
- 19 A. Yes
- 20 Q. What was your title in the Finance Reporting Team?
- 21 A. I can't remember that.
- 22 Q. What was the function of the Finance Reporting Team?
- 23 A. It was basically producing monthly reports for different
- 24 teams within the Post Office, financial management
- 25 reports.

- when Horizon Online went live, so I obviously got thosedates wrong.
- 3 Q. So the date that you have given us in your statement of
- 4 moving to the Product & Branch Accounting team in
- 5 2009 -- sorry, 2008, might that be wrong?
- 6 A. Yes, I think so.

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- 7 Q. We've certainly got documents from you in 2009,
  - ie before Horizon Online went live, with you in the
- 9 Product & Branch Accounting team. So you had certainly
- 10 moved by then.
- 11 A. Okay. There was certainly something -- my memory is
- that something had happened in terms of a major project
- 13 around Horizon during the period that I was not in
- 14 Product & Branch Accounting. So all I can say was I was
- aware that a major Horizon-related project had gone liveand there was lots of issues flying around there.
- 17 But I'd been in the same building as a lot of
- 18 people and knowing people who were involved. So, in
- 19 terms of my actual role, I wasn't involved at that point
- 20 but I was aware within the business of things happening.
- 21 Q. On that awareness, were you aware of anything
- 22 particularly problematic or difficult?
- 23 A. Yes, I was aware that the accounting in Product & Branch

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- 24 Accounting was causing a lot of problems in a lot of
- 25 areas -- not so much -- I wasn't particularly aware of

- 1 Q. Where were you based?
- 2 A. In Chesterfield.
- 3 Q. To whom did you report?
- 4 A. I can't the lady's name.
- 5 Q. Did you manage a team?
- 6 A. No.
- 7 Q. How many people were in the function of finance
- 8 reporting or in the Finance Reporting Team?
- 9 A. I would estimate about twelve.
- 10 Q. In that role, did you require knowledge and
- 11 understanding of the operation of the Horizon System?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. Does it follow that you didn't acquire any more
- 14 knowledge in that role of any errors, bugs and defects
- 15 in the Horizon System?
- 16 A. Yes. No, I would say not because I would have been
- 17 working there when Horizon Online went live. So I would
- 18 be in the same building.
- 19  $\,$  Q. Just think back. In your statement, you say that you
- 20 moved to the Finance Reporting Team in 2007 and I think
- that you're going to tell us in a moment that in 2008
- you moved to the Product & Branch Accounting team.
- 23 A. To my best memory.
- 24 Q. Horizon Online didn't go live, really, until 2010.
- 25 A. Okay. So I was certainly in the Finance Reporting Team

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- 1 issues impacting branches then because Product & Branch
- 2 Accounting was based in the same building as I was in.
- 3 I was aware that that there was a lot of stress coming
- 4 there that needed resolving.
- 5 Q. What was the stress that was coming there?
- 6 A. I think feeds from branch, right, whenever things were
- 7 falling into the wrong accounts and the accounts weren't
- 8 functioning as planned.
- 9 Q. How widely known was this? Even though it wasn't your
- 10 team, it was obviously being talked about?
- 11 A. Yes. So I would guess, if I was relatively new to
- the -- well, no I'd worked in the building before but
- 13 I wasn't particularly well-known person within Post
- 14 Office Limited, so I would guess other people would know
- more than me but that's a guess.
- 16 Q. Before you moved to the Product & Branch Accounting
- 17 team -- we'll try and establish the date with greater
- specificity in a moment -- were you aware of any bugs,
- 19 errors and defects in the Horizon System that affected
- 20 the integrity of the data that it produced?
- A. No. I think I was more aware that the mapping in
  preparation hadn't, in terms of how it fed into P&BA
- 23 accounts was the issue. I wasn't particularly aware of
- what was happening in branches.
- 25 Q. What do you mean the mapping of how it went into P&BA

1 accounts?

- 2 A. Part of the project planning would be to prepare data
- 3 flows. So you sell a stamp in a branch and cash is paid
- 4 for it and how that flows into the accounts within
- 5 Product & Branch Accounting, and things were running up
- 6 in unexpected areas, et cetera.
- 7 Q. So it was a mismatch between what was, in fact, going on
- 8 in the branches and what the data showed at
- 9 Chesterfield; is that a fair way of describing it?
- 10 A. Yes, I think so.
- 11 Q. Were you just picking this up before you moved to P&BA,
- in the noise, the conversations that you were hearing?
- 13 A. Yes
- 14 Q. At what level of seriousness was this being expressed?
- 15 A. Oh, it was serious.
- 16 Q. Can you remember before you moved into P&BA whether this
- 17 was being attributed to the way that the Horizon System
- 18 was operating?
- 19 A. No, I can't answer that one.
- 20 Q. So on a date you moved into Product & Branch Accounting,
- 21 which as we've discussed already was called P&BA; what
- 22 was your job title in P&BA?
- 23 A. Initially it was an analyst.
- 24 Q. You say in your statement that you were initially
- an analyst in the debt recovery team.

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- 1 Q. What was the function more broadly of the P&BA team?
- 2 A. To account for mainly branch activity, to consolidate it
- 3 and report it.
- 4 Q. What do you mean to account for branch activity?
- 5 A. I'm struggling to explain that. Effectively, data would
- 6 flow in from branches, it would flow in from clients, it
- 7 would flow in from other parts of the business from, for
- 8 example, cash centres, stock centres, all these data
- 9 flows would come in and they should get matched off one
- against the other and accounts cleared down to zero.
- 11 Q. Thank you. If we look at your witness statement,
- 12 please, WITN01090100 at page 2 -- it will come up on the
- 13 screen for you on the right-hand side. Look at
- 14 paragraph 3.
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. You are talking about the role that we're now
- 17 discussing. You say:
- 18 "The role initially focused on process
- 19 improvements and looking at accounting queries from
- 20 branches but over time concentrated almost entirely on
- 21 accounting problems in branches and as a single P&BA ...

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- point for both branches and other relevant teams..."
- 23 Yes?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25  $\,$  **Q.** Then you go on to list the other relevant teams.

- 1 A. Debt recovery, yes.
- 2 Q. Yes, I think that's what I said.
- 3 A. I heard "guess", sorry.
- 4 Q. Debt recovery team. Your post, you say, later became
- 5 described as relationship manager?
- 6 A. That's correct.
- 7 Q. Can you remember when that was?
- 8 **A.** No
- 9 Q. What was the debt recovery team?
- 10 A. It was the team -- so branches had -- one of the options
- 11 with their debt was to put it into an account called
- 12 "Settle centrally". So if you had a £100, let's say,
- debt at your balance period, you had a number of
- 14 choices: make good cash, put the cash in to make up the
- deficit; make good cheque, equally put the cheque in; or
- settle centrally, in which case the debt would flow
- 17 through to an account in Chesterfield and, hopefully, it
- would be a case where the debt would get balanced off
- against something else but, if the debt sat there, the
- 20 debt recovery team would then look to recover from the
- 21 subpostmaster.
- 22 Q. So the debt recovery team, would this be fair, its
- 23 function was to seek to recover debts that may be owed
- 24 by subpostmasters?
- 25 A. Yes.

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- 1 Starting with branches first, how would branches contact
- 2 the P&BA team that were performing this role?
- 3 A. My role or P&BA?
- 4 Q. Your role.
- 5 A. Ideally in writing, explaining what the problem was.
- 6 Q. More broadly, the P&BA team, how would branches contact
- 7 the P&BA team?
- 8 A. The P&BA team, broadly if -- a lot of the teams were
- 9 based in correcting -- managing accounts of products and
- 10 they would be looking to effectively get an input from
- the branch, and input from the client, match the two
- 12 off, clears down to nothing.
- 13 Branches might feel as though they need
- 14 a transaction correction, for example. They would
- 15 contact the NBSC, the helpline, who would then direct
- 16 them into the relevant team within P&BA.
- 17  $\,$  **Q**. How would that contact be made once they had spoken to
- 18 NBSC?
- 19 **A.** Normally by phone.
- 20 Q. Looking at the other relevant teams that would use P&BA
- as this single point of input you say "primarily
- 22 Network", just inside the brackets there.
- 23 **A.** Yes.
- 24 **Q.** Who or what do you mean by the word "Network"?
- 25 A. There was a Network team within POL at the time and that

- 1 would involve -- so it was primarily field support
- 2 advisers, people who were in contact with branches. So
- 3 it may well be that they had been in contact with the
- 4 branch who then said "I've got this problem, what do
- 5 I do?" They would direct them in towards P&BA.
- 6 Q. If Network were contacting P&BA, how would they do that:
- 7 by phone or in writing?
- 8 A. Oh, by phone normally or email.
- 9 Q. The next relevant team that you mention is "Helpline",
- 10 the NBSC.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Was that the only helpline that would get in contact
- 13 with P&BA?
- 14 A. As far as I'm aware, yes.
- 15 Q. How would people in the NBSC contact P&BA?
- 16 A. By phone -- again, possibly by email but more normally
- 17 by phone
- 18 Q. Then, lastly, you mention within the brackets there
- 19 "Product & Security". Who or what is/was Product &
- 20 Security"?
- 21 A. They would be separate teams. There would be a Product
- team who kind of, what it says on the can, would manage
- 23 the products in terms of the relationships with the
- 24 clients but also how the products are working with it at
- 25 branch level.

- 1 **A.** They would normally ring -- well, the contact would
- generally be to me, usually, by phone.
- 3 Q. Why would the NFSP usually come to you?
- 4 A. Because I'd built -- that was part of the defined role
- 5 when the job set up, to get a link into the network,
- 6 actually, rather than the POL network, the subpostmaster
- 7 network, to give them a direct line into P&BA.
- ${f 8}$   ${f Q}$ . Was there one person that you particularly engaged with
- 9 or was it a range of people?
- 10 A. There was one person who I dealt with, a paid officer,
- 11 within the NFSP, who was --
- 12 Q. Who was that?
- 13 A. Sorry, I can't remember. Oh, Stoddart ... someone --
- 14 something like Marie Stoddart.
- 15 Q. Marie Stoddart?
- 16 A. Yes, I think I've probably got the first name wrong --
- 17 **Q.** Okay.
- 18 A. -- which apologies to her because I knew her very well,
- 19 which is sad.
- 20 But also I used to go to a monthly meeting where
- 21 they get together and I'd go and join in with them, make
- 22 a presentation and also sit and listen to some of the
- 23 other issues going round. So we do have quite a close
- 24 relationship, I think.
- 25 Q. Thank you. That statement can come down from the screen

1 Q. So product could be, what, Lottery or --

- 2 A. Yes. So there would be a Lottery product manager who
- 3 would talk to Camelot and also be in contact during the
- 4 network into products. So when there were products --
- 5 that was a product where there was quite a lot of issues
- 6 that arose they would be in communication with Camelot
- 7 and different parts of POL to try and improve, smooth
- 8 out the process.
- 9 Q. How would Product get in contact with P&BA?
- 10 A. Same again: email or phone.
- 11 Q. And Security?
- 12 A. Security --
- 13 Q. Who or what are you describing by the word "Security"
- 14 there?
- 15 A. There was a Security team who were the ones who were
- 16 probably, I believe -- ultimately they bring
- 17 prosecutions against branches but also looking after the
- 18 integrity of the POL cash and products, the security of
- 19 it, and they would occasionally -- we'd occasionally
- 20 link up where need be, again email or phone.
- 21 Q. Then, lastly, outside the brackets you say:
- 22 "... along with the National Federation of
- 23 SubPostmasters (NFSP) ..."
- 24 **A.** Yes

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25 Q. How would the NFSP contact P&BA?

2

- 1 now, thank you.
  - To whom did you report?
- 3 A. A senior manager named Alison Bolsover.
- 4 Q. Say that more slowly?
- 5 **A.** A senior manager called Alison Bolsover.
- 6 Q. Was she one of four senior managers?
- 7 A. Correct.
- 8 Q. Who were the other three senior managers?
- 9 A. They changed during my time there.
- 10 Q. Can you give us names that you can remember?
- 11 A. Yes. (Pause)
- 12 You know, I can't remember a single name, sorry.
- 13 Q. You say in your witness statement that the four senior
- managers themselves reported in to the head of P&BA.
- 15 Who was the head of P&BA?
- 16 A. Rod Ismay for most of the time that I was there.
- 17 Q. What was his title?
- 18 A. I believe it was head of P&BA.
- 19 Q. He reported to the Finance Director; is that right?
- 20 A. Correct.
- 21 Q. Who was that?
- 22 A. Again, that changed during the time I was there and
- 23 I can't remember either of the names, I'm afraid.
- 24 Q. Did you manage a team?
- 25 A. Yes, one admin officer.

- O. What was the role of the admin officer? 1
- 2 A. It was largely to document the cases that came in and,
- 3 yes, that was the main part of the role.
- 4 Q. How would they document the cases that came in?
- 5 A. They would generally come by letter. They'd be opening
- 6 a letter, they'd be trying to work out what the case
- 7 related to and --
- 8 Q. Just stopping you there, you said earlier they would
- 9 generally come in by phone or email?
- 10 Not to me, from the branches. Α.
- Q. Okay. I was talking about the whole range of reporting 11
- from Product and Security, from the NFSP, from the NBSC, 12
- 13 from Network. We went through those and you said that
- 14 they generally came in through phone or email contact.
- 15 A. Yes, yes.
- 16 Q. How would the admin officer document those?
- 17 A. They wouldn't, unless I asked them to. It would be
- 18 usually a case of they'd raise an issue, perhaps which
- 19 might relate to a branch which may raise a case which
- 20 would then get documented.
- 21 But if the NFSP rang me and said, "What's going 22
- off with this product" or whatever, that wouldn't be 23 documented by the admin assistant.
- 24 You describe in your statement that this role Q.
- 25 concentrated almost entirely on problems in branches and
- 1 in terms of advance knowledge of the Horizon System but,
- 2 again, that's probably one for the people that were
- 3 interviewing, rather than -- in fact, I don't think
- 4 there was an interview for that. I think it was placed
- 5 in there. So that was more probably a case of Alison
- 6 Bolsover, who whoever within P&BA, talking to my manager
- 7 in the reporting team at the time and seeing how the fit
- 8 went, after -- I said I'd expressed an interest in the
- 9 role when I saw the reorganisation of P&BA.
- 10 Q. Now, we've got a document dating from 2009 suggesting
- 11 that you were in role in P&BA and that you undertook
- 12 a review. Can we look at that, please. It's
- POL00039029. 13
- 14 Do you see this appears to be a PowerPoint
- 15 presentation --
- 16 Α. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- and I think you have seen it before. There's some
- notes, when we get to the successive pages, underneath 18
- each slide. Maybe if we just look at an example of 19
- 20 those, if we go to page 5 -- and scroll down, please.
- 21 Thank you.
- 22 So the slide that's displayed is at the top and
- 23 then some notes at the bottom; is that right?
- 24 A.
- 25 So the people who are getting the presentation don't see Q.

- 1 was a single point of contact.
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Did your role therefore require knowledge of and
  - understanding of the operation of the Horizon System?
- 5 Α.

- 6 Q. Had you got any knowledge of the operation of the
- 7 Horizon System by the time you joined?
- It's possible that I did because managers were typically 8
- 9 given training to cover strike action and Christmas
- support and I think that would have happened before, so 10
- 11 I would have thought I'd have a basic understanding of
- how the Horizon System worked, yes. 12
- 13 In that sentence you used the word "basic
- 14 understanding". I take it you use that deliberately
- 15 because that would be your level of understanding as
- 16 an occasional end user?
- 17 A. That's correct, yes.
- 18 Q. Wasn't the role that you were performing a role that
- 19 required much more detailed knowledge of the operation
- 20 of Horizon than that?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Again, do you know why you were selected for the job if
- 23 you didn't have a detailed understanding of the way in
- 24 which Horizon worked?
- 25 Α. I would probably again point to the lack of competition

- 1 the notes. They are like a speaking note for yourself?
- That's right. 2 Δ
- Q. 3 Yes?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. So if we just go back to page 1, please, we'll see that
- 6 the title of the presentation is "Transaction
- 7 Corrections, Debt Reporting and Debt Recovery Review",
- 8 with your name and "January 2009" underneath it. Did
- 9 you write this document?
- 10 A.
- 11 Q. So this relates, is this right, to the period when you
- 12 were in P&BA?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. So it's a review conducted before the introduction of
- 15 Horizon Online?
- A. If --16
- 17 Q. If my date of 2010 is correct.
- 18 Yes, yes.
- 19 Q. Can we look at page 2 of the document, please. We'll
- 20 see the "Objectives":
- 21 "Review current ways of working and supporting 22 operating processes in the transaction correction, debt
- 23 reporting and debt recovery areas.
- 24 "Review the impact of the current ways of working 25

and current operating processes in the transaction

1 correction, debt reporting and debt recovery area on the 2 POL Network."

Then thirdly:

"Analyse and then recommend cost effective improvements to the way the correct end-to-end transaction correction, debt reporting and debt recovery operating processes work."

So it's focused, is this right, on looking at the way that the systems were working at that time?

- 10 A. Yes, it sounds very much as though that's -- I've been 11 put in a role, I've had conversations with my boss and probably other people within P&BA, and pulled together 12 13 a what do I think this role involves.
- 14 Q. Not just what does it involve, but look at ways in which 15 it could be changed, in order to make cost effective 16 improvements --
- 17 A. Yes.

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- 18 Q. -- to save money?
- 19 A. I think everything you do, you're looking at working as 20 efficiently as possible. I don't think it was 21 particularly a brief to come in and find ways of cutting 22 down our costs.
- 23 Q. Now, the Inquiry's heard some evidence from a previous 24 witness, Ms Susan Harding; do you remember her?

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- going to be trying to focus on and probably some things are going to become more important than others as we go along. But that's probably the list of to-dos that were being agreed.
- 5 Q. What did you mean by the second bullet point "Branch 6 Trading forces [transaction correction] acceptance"?
  - A. So every month a branch is required to carry out a branch trading process where effectively they pulled everything together, ideally everything balances, they have a nice zero at the bottom and we move on to the next trading period.

The transaction corrections can be issued at any time and there was a significant issue with the branches expressed particularly through the NFSP about -- well, sorry, just re-track a little bit. Branches used to, pre-Horizon days, used to balance weekly and it was still recommended to do a balance, not a complete balance but a kind of summary balance, to try and get a view of where they were, but the primary balance was held monthly.

There was a kind of half-hearted -- what seemed to be a half-hearted claim that you only issue transaction corrections on a Tuesday so we get it on a Wednesday morning when we've got to do the balancing, and I actually did a bit of exercise to disprove that and it

- Q. What do you remember her as, a role that she performed?
- 2 She was actually my -- for a while in the network
- 3 intervention team, we talked about earlier, the previous 4 team that I was in
- Q. She told the Chairman that subpostmasters were never 5 6 forced to settle centrally. Can we just look at page 3 7 of this document, please. You in the first bullet point 8 ask "What is 'Settle Centrally'?" and then say:

9 "Branch Trading forces [transaction correction] acceptance." 10

- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 "Inadequate [transaction correction] Q. 13 evidence/instructions.
- 14 "Unclear process.
- 15 "Non-conformance not addressed.
- 16 "New subpostmasters.
- 17 "Aged/High Value/High Volume [transaction 18 corrections]."

19 Overall, without coming to the detail of each 20 bullet point first, what are you speaking about? Can 21 you explain what is being said in this slide of yours?

22 A. I think I'm saying that I got into this role, I've had 23 a look at what areas we can make improvements on and 24 what is going to be priority ones, where it is a lack of 25 understanding, and these are the kind of things I'm

turned out we did issue the most transaction corrections on a Tuesday. There may -- it wasn't significantly relevant compared to Wednesday or Thursdays.

But on branch trading, on the monthly branch trading, everything kind of has to be cleaned up, so that would mean any transaction corrections that are outstanding needed to be accepted before you could roll into the next trading period.

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- Q. By "accepted", you mean accepted by the subpostmaster? 9
- 10 A. Yes.

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- 11 Q. So what is the bullet point is saying is that the action 12 of branch trading, the monthly reconciliation process,
- 13 is forcing subpostmasters to accept transaction
- 14 corrections that the centre is putting to them?
- 15 **A**.
- Q. Were you saying that's a good thing or a bad thing? 16
- 17 A. I was saying it was -- I don't think it was a good 18
- 19 Q. Why wasn't it a good thing?
- 20 Because branches would potentially walk in on
- 21 a Wednesday morning of balance day, turn the Horizon on,
- 22 first thing they see is a transaction correction come
- 23 through, they know they have got a balance on the night,
- 24 they've got to understand what the transaction
- 25 correction is and, if it's particularly one that's

- 1 a debt transaction correction that's going to
- 2 potentially cost them money, they need more time --
- 3 potentially need more time to review it and potentially
- 4 appeal against it.
- 5 But the system is forcing them to accept it --Q.
- 6 Α.
- 7 Q. -- in order to continue trading?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. This was an inbuilt feature of the system, is this
- 10 right, on a monthly basis, in order for a subpostmaster
- 11 to continue trading?
- 12 No. No, that was an operational requirement. But in Α.
- 13 practice if you didn't carry out a branch trading
- 14 rollover Horizon didn't mind. It was kind of quite
- 15 happy to go along with that to a point -- I can't
- 16 remember how far in the future when the whole thing
- 17 would start falling over but, effectively, if you didn't
- 18 do your branch trading, nobody cared. A lot of branches
- 19 actually did their branch trading on a Thursday for
- 20 operational reasons, particularly the multiple partners,
- 21 I think, if I remember correctly.
- 22 Q. But the point that you are making here is that this
- 23 monthly exercise is forcing subpostmasters to accept
- 24 transaction corrections without necessarily a proper
- 25 exploration of the merits of the correction?
- 1 ultimately say "No, you've accepted it, so you pay up".
- 2 Q. What the Federation were saying, would this be right,
- 3 was that there ought to be the facility to have
- 4 a dispute button, to say "I dispute that transaction
- 5 correction, I shouldn't be forced to accept it"?
- 6 A. They raised it as a possibility, as an idea. Certainly,
- 7 there would have been branches who were saying "We need
  - a dispute button" but they were throwing it in, let's
- 9 look at whether that makes sense to do that.
- 10 Q. Can we see your notes underneath, please, on "Dispute
- 11 Button". Can we see your notes, the first one if that
- 12 can be highlighted under "Dispute Button". You wrote:
- "... facility would be abused. POL believe they 13
- 14 have provided evidence to support validity on issue.
- 15 Dispute simply asks us to do it again. Robust dispute
- 16 process is answer."
- 17 Is that your reply, essentially, to the suggestion
  - that there should be a dispute facility; namely, no, it
- 19 would be abused?
- 20 A. I don't think I would put it quite as bluntly as that.
- 21 I think it was kind of looking at what the benefits and
- 22 risks might be.
- 23 Q. This doesn't say that.
- 24 A.

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25 Q. "Let's look at what the benefits and risks might be".

- A. That's correct. The system wasn't forcing you to do 1
- 2 that. It was the operational instructions that was
- 3 saying you need to do that, which for a conscientious
  - subpostmaster they would take it as I've got to do it on
- 5 a Wednesday night.
- 6 Q. Thank you. Can we go over to page 4 of your document, 7
  - please.

8 This seems to relate to issues seemingly raised by

- the National Federation of SubPostmasters. 9
- 10 A.

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- 11 Q. Including under the first bullet point "Dispute Button"
- 12 and other matters including, two bullet points from the
- 13 bottom, "Horizon [transaction correction] Receipt" and
- 14 "Core & Outreach Consolidated Statements".
  - Were the National Federation raising with you
- 16 concerns about the operation of the dispute process on
- 17 balancing?
- 18 That would be one of their issues, yes. A.
- 19 What did they say to you about it?
- 20 They were reflecting the views of the branches, which
- 21 I think I've probably already covered, that they felt
- 22 under pressure, that it was unfair to receive
- 23 a transaction correction which they weren't aware of,
- 24 they weren't expecting and potentially to have to be
- 25 forced to accept it with the risk that POL may then

  - It says in your speaking note "Dispute button --
- 2 facility would be abused".
- 3 A. Yes. Sorry, these aren't speaking notes. These are
- 4 notes to make me -- to lead me and don't forget to
- 5 mention this, this and this. That's not what I would
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- 7 Why wouldn't you put a note "Let's explore the merits,
  - the advantages and disadvantages of it? Why would you
- 9 make a note to, remind yourself to say "facility would
- 10 be abused"?
- 11 A. I can't answer that. That's the way I ...
- 12 Q. Is the truth of the matter that that note is there as
- 13 a prompt to remind you to say, "No, there won't be
- 14 a dispute button because the facility would be abused"?
  - 15 A. I was going into that discussion having thought through
- 16 the pros and cons and my view is that a dispute button
- 17 would not improve the process. So I guess, yes, but it
- 18 was a case of discussing the pros and cons and
- 19 explaining why I felt, on balance, it wasn't a good
- 20
- 21 Q. On what evidence did you conclude that the existence of
- 22 a dispute facility would be abused?
- 23 A. I think to say evidence would be pushing it; so I think 24 an assumption.
- 25 Q. Why would you assume --

Sorry, there would be examples in the past. For 1 Α. 2 example, lots of transaction corrections are effectively 3 equal and opposite. So you might have made an error in 4 this product set, which should have -- so the 5 transaction's been made here, it should have been made 6 over there, so two transactions equal and opposite value 7 need to be issued. In an ideal world, particularly if 8 they are in the same team, they could be issued at the 9 same time, so they are accepted at the same time, but it 10 might be kind of potentially a month apart from one another. 11

> Essentially, the two transaction corrections have no impact on a branch. If you accept the credit transaction correction and make good, then you can take the cash out of the till. If you dispute the debit transaction correction, then there's no requirement to return that cash back in there until the dispute has been resolved and, effectively, there is no dispute that we can see, it's perfectly clear they should accept them both, but how do we get to the point where that second transaction correction is accepted?

- 22 Q. In the answer before last you said you wouldn't say that 23 this view was based on evidence, you used the word 24 "assumption".
  - Why would you reject the idea of a dispute button
- 1 Α. Yes.

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2 Q. Your note continues:

> "POL believe they have provided evidence to support validity on issue."

Is that a note saying, "We've already explored the merits of the transaction correction. We have provided evidence already. Therefore, there's no need for a dispute button"?

- 9 A. Yes, that's -- the theory behind the issue of 10 transaction correction is that you have evidence to 11 support that. So if you don't have the evidence, you shouldn't be issuing the transaction correction. 12
- 13 Q. The note says POL believe they've provided evidence. 14 Does that mean provided evidence to the subpostmaster

15 already of the correction?

- A. Yes, although that evidence may and would normally just 16 17 be the narrative attached to the transaction correction.
- 18 Q. The note continues:

19 "Dispute simply asks us to do it again."

Is that another reason for rejecting the

21 suggestion of a dispute facility?

22 A. Yes. As our understanding was, you press a button and 23 the onus moves back to POL to prove the transaction 24 correction. If we've already provided the evidence that 25

we have, what are we supposed to do more to persuade the 39

1 not on the basis of evidence but on the basis of 2 assumption?

3 A. The question I guess I'd throw back: where's the 4 evidence that there would be any benefit in a dispute 5

6 **Q.** Haven't you explained to us what the benefit was 7 already, that subpostmasters were being forced into 8 accepting a transaction correction without a full and 9 proper exploration of the merits of the correction?

10 A. And that's why we introduced a procedure for branches 11 who were left in that situation, where they were able to effectively raise a dispute within POL or to raise the 12 13 fact that they were accepting a transaction correction 14 which they hadn't fully explored which, if it kind of 15 ended up further down the line in a debt recovery place, 16 they could use that to support their challenge.

17 So you make the subpostmaster accept the validity of 18 something before a proper exploration of the dispute 19 they wish to raise; is that the long and the short of

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21 A. Sorry can you repeat that?

22 Yes. You force the subpostmaster to accept the validity 23 of the transaction correction before a proper 24 exploration of the dispute that they wish to raise about

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1 subpostmaster that it is acceptable? That would be --2 really that would be the point where I'm saying a robust 3 dispute process is the answer, in that if the 4 subpostmaster doesn't accept the evidence, there will

5 always be -- a transaction correction will always have 6 a contact number, they could -- they would then contact 7

the team member who's issued the transaction correction

8 and they can talk it through. If they don't accept it,

9 then we've got a dispute process to follow through.

10 Q. On that last note you say:

11 "Robust dispute process is the answer."

12 Α.

13 Who was being robust or what was robust?

14 The aspiration for me to carry out -- well, to set up 15 the process to start with, so that it's available to 16 branches and the whole of POL to be able -- aware of it 17 and for how to kick off the process and then for me to 18 ensure that the process is done as robustly as I'm able.

19 Q. What does "robustly" mean in this context?

20 Fair, accurate, timely.

21 The notes continue, if we skip down to "TC receipt", so 22 three bullet points on, so "TC receipt", so transaction

23 correction receipt, remembering that there was a request

24 for, I think, a Horizon transaction correction receipt,

25 and it looks like your note-to-self is:

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"	. no clear benefit bar subpostmasters claiming
for losse	s"

Can you firstly explain, please, what the request was in relation to a transaction correction receipt.?

- A. I've a very, very vague memory of this one. I think it was subpostmasters wanted a separate piece of paper to put in their accounts, to give to their accountant at the end of the year, which I think would be to claim losses on their accounts. I can't remember exactly what they wanted, to be honest.
- This was, it seems, rejected too; is that right? 11 Q.
- 12 Α. Yes.

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13 Q. You said:

> "... no clear benefit bar subpostmasters claiming for losses."

Wouldn't a benefit be subpostmasters exist in that there would be a receipt in respect losses they didn't accept were genuine or a genuine debt? Wouldn't that be an important benefit to them?

- 20 A. It never occurred to me that.
- 21 Q. Okay. Can we go on to page 5, please. "Key Issues --22 P&BA". I think this is addressing the key issues for 23 the P&BA team; is that right?
- 24 A. Yes, it looks like it, yes.
- 25 Q. If we just expand a little, so we can see the notes

a batch, they might issue a consolidated transaction correction which showed the net effect of the bulk error

Both kind had kind of quite eloquently described their rationale behind what they were doing in terms of how the subpostmaster saw it, and I could totally understand -- it wasn't clear to me whether it was better for a subpostmaster to see everything on the one transaction correction or lots of different individual transaction corrections. So that was the issue with that one.

A better example might be the Lottery team where there was a big issue accurately recording the Lottery and a lot of that was around the fact that Lottery was typically sold a lot on the retail side, as opposed to the Post Office side, and there was the problem of getting the data across to the Post Office side in time to be reported before cut-off time, which I think was 7.00.

So it was fine for the branch offices that everyone shut up at 5.30, everything was accounted for. Branches that their retail side particularly would be up until 10.00 at night were missing the cut-off.

So what we found was that lots of branches were making lots of errors, which were really just timing

1 below, please. Thank you.

2 Looking at the notes below, these suggest that the 3 Post Office, I think, was concerned about its own 4 practices and the inconsistency of them towards transaction corrections, including the operation of back 5 6 office systems including IMPACT; is that right?

- 7 Yes, it looks like it.
- 8 Q. We can see in the first note:

"Varying [transaction correction] routines -- one of the clear ideals I had on setting out and from others who I spoke to was consistency."

But then you noted:

13 "But then most teams have completely different 14 approaches to identifying errors and resolving them --15 and for good reasons."

16 So was there an inconsistency of approach within 17 P&BA to identifying errors and resolving them at 18 Chesterfield?

19 A. I don't think it was so much identifying and resolving 20 them -- well, identifying them, I don't think was so 21 much of an issue. I think it was more about -- if I can 22 give one example, within I think it was the cheques team 23 at the time where one duty would issue a transaction 24 correction for every cheque error and another duty might 25 issue a consolidated -- so if there was a problem with

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1 errors and we could have been in a situation of issuing 2 every day a transaction correction and then the next day 3 a transaction correction would be coming back which

4 would compensate for the errors.

5 Q. So cutting through it, what were the good reasons for 6 the completely different approaches to identifying 7 errors and resolving them?

8 A. The different requirements and the different attributes 9 or problems of the products and how the team saw best to 10 deal with them.

11 Q. This suggests that there was a difference between teams; 12 is that right?

13 A. In their approach but, essentially, the difference --14 the teams were doing the same thing. They were looking

15 at an account, where there was -- where it wasn't 16 netting off to zero and their kind of goal in life,

17 I guess, was to get that account down to zero.

Q. Moving a bullet point on underneath: 18

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"POLFS -- space/access to reference data/different transactions used by different teams."

21 Can you shortly explain what POLFS was?

- 22 A. POLFS, I think, was a name for Product & Branch 23 Accounting.
- 24 Q. Were you concerned about the limitations of or within

25 Product & Branch Accounting, in being able to

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- 1 investigate errors and resolving them?
- 2 A. I think -- I can't remember exactly when this was but --
- 3 Q. January 2009?
- 4 A. Okay. So at that point, there would be, in many of the
- 5 teams, quite large backlogs and, clearly, if you have
- 6 got a large backlog of work, you'd like more resource to
- 7 help clear it but there were limitations.
- 8 Q. I think that might be a different issue. Isn't this
- 9 talking about the extent to which this back office team
- 10 had access to all of the data generated by both the POL
- 11 back office systems and by Horizon, for the purposes of
- 12 an investigation into the validity of a transaction
- 13 correction or a discrepancy?
- 14 A. Their checking a transaction correction would be about
- what there is in POLFS. Sorry, POLFS is the Finance
- 16 System, isn't it? Sorry, I do beg your pardon. It
- 17 would be about what's in the Finance System not
- 18 particularly what was on the Horizon System because the
- 19 Horizon System should -- if this has happened on
- 20 Horizon, then this data should then flow into this point
- 21 within POLFS.
- 22  $\,$  Q. You are speaking to the limitations of POLFS here. What
- 23 were the limitations of POLFS?
- 24  $\,$  A. I'm sorry, I can't recall what I was thinking of at that
- 25 point.

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1 A. Yes.

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- Q. -- by doing them; you have actually got to follow themup by debt recovery?
- 4 A. I think the first point is to make sure that they're
- 5 right and if we know that they're right then we can
- 6 focus on debt recovery where necessary.
- 7 Q. Was a focus on helping the bottom line, ie by generating
  - money for the Post Office through debt recovery from
- 9 subpostmasters?
- 10 A. I personally wasn't ever given that pressure, whether
- 11 somebody like Rod Ismay was, from his Finance Director,
- 12 I couldn't say.
- 13 Q. What was the purpose of mentioning whether clearing the
- 14 backlog helps actually depends on whether the debts are
- paid by the subpostmasters? Why were you mentioning
- 16 that?
- 17 A. I was trying to make sure that teams weren't just
- ramming out as many transaction corrections as possible.
- 19 The integrity of them was important -- well, more than
- 20 important, it was critical that things went out that
- 21 were correct, and that would ultimately save because it
- 22 would potentially just create a circle if we were
- disputing, reissuing, et cetera. We needed to be able
- 24 to deal with it once, make sure we dealt with it
- properly, so it then doesn't come back on us.

Q. Next, if we skip over debt levels, we go to "Ownership":

"Ownership -- main focus has been on clearing backlog. Whether that helps the bottom line depends on whether debts generated are paid. Equally there is no incentive to seek out compensating [transaction corrections]."

Does this reflect the fact that the Post Office, through P&BA, was most concerned about getting money back into the business, debt which it considered owing and outstanding?

A. I think that was my -- we talked before about me making
 assumptions about evidence and this is perhaps another
 example of that. But, certainly, the biggest focus was
 around getting these accounts down to a manageable
 format. So the teams were dealing with stuff in
 a timely manner rather than trying to pull something - work on something that was months old.

But the point I was trying to make was that, just to send out lots and lots of transaction corrections to move these values, if they all end up being disputed, and correctly so in many cases, then the stuff just still flows around within POLFS and isn't being cleared down.

Q. Aren't you emphasising by this that it's no good doing
 transaction corrections, just to help the bottom line --

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Q. The last sentence on this page:

"Equally there is no incentive to seek out compensating [transaction corrections]."

Were you suggesting there that there was no incentive within Chesterfield to seek out transaction corrections that would have the effect of the Post Office paying money to the subpostmasters?

A. Yes, I think one of the issues is, as I already mentioned, is different -- so we had different teams that dealt with different products. There was two ways that we could have looked at this and the alternative way had been in operation before, where team -- individuals looked after branches. So they would look after a branch across the board, which was great because they got a view of the branch but perhaps not so great in terms of knowledge of dealing with products, whereas the way we operated was, in terms of products, so teams became very knowledgeable about their products and hopefully dealt with them well. But they didn't get a view of the branch they were dealing with.

So whereas if you are looking at a branch as a whole it might be more obvious to pick up "Well, we've got an error here, we've got an error there. Oh, look, these actually match, we can sort this branch out fine". Whereas if you're just looking in a single line under

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1 a limited number of products, then you won't be aware of 2 what's going on there and if you're being told "Clear 3 this account down", then you're not going to trot off to 4 the other side of the room and have a conversation "Have 5 you got a matching item to this, because I think" --6 some people will do that anyway; other people wouldn't. 7 Q. In this sentence, were you reflecting the fact that in 8 the team as you saw it there was no incentive to seek 9 out corrections that had the effect of benefiting 10 subpostmasters?

I would say that's correct, yes. 11 Α.

12 Can we turn to page 6, please:

13 "Key Recommendations -- Existing Processes."

Under the third of them:

"Define 'settle centrally'."

Then scroll down to the notes, please, and the third point under your notes you say:

"Define Settle Centrally -- legally they have accepted the debt. But would a court wear it? Need some assurances around it."

Can you just explain what "settle centrally" was,

23 A. Settle centrally was an option where a discrepancy arose 24 either through accepting a transaction correction or as 25 a cash balance at the end of the branch trading.

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Q. -- secondly, pay up by cheque; or, thirdly, settle centrally?

3 A. Yes.

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4 Q. They were the only three options?

5 A. I think multiple branches might have had a different way

6 of doing it and, certainly, Crown Offices had

7 a different approach. But your bog standard

8 subpostmaster --

9 Q. They were the three options?

A. -- they were their options, yes. 10

11 Q. So the first two involved the payment or the promise of 12 payment of money through a cheque, yes?

13 Α. Yes.

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14 Q. The third option, settle centrally, you note:

> "... legally they [that's the subpostmasters] have accepted the debt."

17 A. That was -- I've got no legal training whatsoever so

that was my understanding of -- and also like the

NFSP -- I think everybody's understanding was, if you

20 accepted that TC, you have accepted it.

21 Where did you get that understanding; where did everyone 22 get that understanding from?

23 A. I couldn't specifically answer that.

24 If you had that understanding and everyone in P&BA had

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25 that understanding, did you communicate that to

1 I think there was a limit of £150, below which you 2 couldn't settle centrally but, if, say, you had a debt, 3 a loss of £200, at the end of branch trading, then you 4 had the choice of putting the cash in, which got rid of 5 the debt, making out a cheque, make good by cheque, 6 which sends a cheque off for £200 to clear off the debt,

or not to clear the debt at that point but to settle centrally, moves it onto a separate account within POL

8 9 and, if nothing subsequently would happen from that, the 10 team would then -- the debt recovery team would then 11 start to recover that £200.

> But it may well be that the subpostmaster is fully aware that they are due a credit transaction correction, which hopefully will arrive in the next trading period, they get that credit transaction correction, settle it centrally, the two net off and everyone's forgotten about it.

If there's no compensating transaction correction or compensating credit at the end of the next branch trading, at some point, defined point, the debt recovery team would start looking at recovering that debt.

22 So you have identified three options where there's 23 a discrepancy: firstly, pay up in cash by the 24 subpostmaster --

25 Α. Yes.

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1 subpostmasters or their representatives when they spoke

2 to you, "But hold on, by asking to settle centrally you

3 have legally accepted the debt"?

4 A. No, I would never say that.

5 Q. Why not, if that was your belief?

6 A. Because that wasn't my -- my approach was to make sure 7 that the subpostmasters and POL were treated correctly,

8 that things were done correctly.

Q. Why were you asking the question "would a court wear 9 10

11 A. Because of some of the problems that we've already

12 discussed. Branches are obliged to settle -- to accept

13 transaction corrections, which they may not think is

14 proper to them at the time, to get -- okay, they might

15 not want to pay the £200 straight away but they will

16 settle centrally, which defers and gives them a chance

17 to challenge. But my non-legal opinion is that, in

18 a court of law, if a subpostmaster went into a court

19 saying, "Look, I was forced to settle centrally, I had

20 to settle centrally, the Post Office is now trying to

21 recover this money, this is the evidence that I have

22 that says it's not correct", in my view, the court would

23 say, "Well, yeah, you're right, the Post Office is

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25 Q. You knew, I presume, that the IMPACT Programme had

- 1 removed the facility to put any disputed funds into
- 2 a suspense account where the disputed funds would be
- 3 identified before the subpostmaster accepted the cash
- account. You knew that that was the previous position? 4
- 5 A. Sorry, could you read that again for me.
- 6 Q. Yes. That before the IMPACT Programme -- did you know
- about the IMPACT Programme? 7
- 8 A. I recognise the name but I'm not quite sure what that 9 hih
- 10 Q. That previously there was a facility to put disputed
- 11 funds into a suspense account before the subpostmaster
- accepted the cash account? 12
- 13 A. All right. No, I wasn't aware of that or I can't
- 14 remember being aware of it.
- 15 Q. But the position from when you came into post was that
- 16 that wasn't possible on rollover on branch trading?
- 17 A. That's correct, yes.
- 18 Q. You had to either pay money or promise to pay money,
- 19 which you understood to mean that the subpostmaster had
- 20 accepted their liability to pay the debt?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. The fourth bullet point that top of the page, "Disputes
- 23 resolved prior to DFR", and then your notes, which are
- 24 the next paragraph on, at the bottom:
- 25 "Disputes pre-DFR -- should not happen but need to
- 1 Q. Let's take a different example. What about
  - a subpostmaster that suggested that a large transaction
- 3 that was shown by Horizon had, in fact, never taken
- 4 place.

- 5 A. Right. I don't think that that ever came up but, if
- 6 that did, then that would be a massive red flag.
- 7 Q. Put another way, what evidence did you have in mind when
- 8 they said "they need to present evidence"; what evidence
- 9 was sufficient?
- 10 **A.** Pretty much every case is different but they would lay
- out what their understanding of what happened, where 11
- 12 they thought the problem was. I would investigate that,
- I would look into Horizon records and try and understand 13
- 14 what's happened and be able to explain what's happened
- 15 and hopefully find a resolution or illustrate why this
- 16 has happened.
- 17 Q. Was there any formality brought to bear, any
- 18 description, on what evidence was sufficient to make
- 19 a dispute formal and, therefore, stop deductions from
- 20 remuneration?
- 21 A. No. The process was to write in to me. Once that
- 22 letter arrived, and it could be a very basic -- some
- 23 subpostmasters would write reams of pages, others
- 24 would -- half an A4 but that would create a formal
- 25 dispute. Any debt recovery would be paused at that 55

- 1 lay out their responsibilities as well as ours. How
- 2 does a dispute become formal? They need to present 3 evidence."
- 4 What does "dispute pre-DFR" mean, please?
- A. Branches having the opportunity -- DFR means "deduction 5
- 6 from remuneration". So we would start -- the debt
- 7 recovery team would start taking money from --
- 8 Q. From their pay?
- 9 A. From their pay, yes. So it was about no DFR should be
- 10 happening -- should start while a dispute is still live.
- So would a dispute only be treated as formal by the Post 11
- 12 Office after the presentation of evidence by
- 13 a subpostmaster?
- 14 A. Yes. Well, not necessarily evidence but, for example,
- 15 if a subpostmaster had written in to me, then we would
- 16 put a block on the debt recovery process until I'd
- 17 responded, backing up or accepting -- backing up POL's
- 18 position or accepting the subpostmaster's position.
- 19 Would a subpostmaster's statement that the figures that
- 20 were being produced by Horizon didn't tally with the 21
- records that they had kept in store be sufficient? 22 A. If you are talking about paper records or -- I'd
- 23 certainly look at Horizon records and -- well, I'd be
- 24 looking -- as part of my job, I'd be looking at Horizon
- 25 records to see what was in it.

- 1 point and not reinstated or started until I'd responded
- to the subpostmaster's concern. It may well be, if 2
- 3 there's just a short amount, I might we'll have to go
- 4 back to the subpostmaster and say, "Look, I need a bit
- 5 more what can you provide us", but then the dispute will
- 6 be myself and the subpostmaster trying to find the
- 7 evidence that supported the issue one way or the other.
- 8 Q. What if the subpostmaster said that, "The figures in
- 9 Horizon are just wrong, I can't tell you why they're
- 10 wrong"?

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- 11 A. Then I would look at it to try and work out what -- if
- 12 there was -- what I'd typically do, if we're saying that
- 13 a branch, for example, has got a cash shortage and we
- 14 knew -- we could see that on the previous evening that
- 15 they'd balanced, or whatever the discrepancy was, and
- 16 then at the end of the next day they'd got this
- particular cash shortage, then what I would typically do
- 18 is look at the transactions for that branch for that
- 19 day. There may be something that just jumps out at me
- 20 straight away, I can say "Oh, yes, I can seek what the
- 21 issue is". Most usually there wouldn't be.
- 22 But I would send -- potentially send an Excel 23 spreadsheet to branches where they could look at the 24 transactions in a better format than what Horizon

reporting would come up and they could have a look and

1 say if there's any transaction -- and I'd suggest "Look, 2 you know, there's this transaction, is that going to be 3 right; is this transaction going to be right? Have 4 a look at this one or -- but have a look at them all, 5 see if there's any transactions that you don't recognise 6 that you think is suspicious, where there might be 7 miskeying, have I missed anything?" 8

- You were working only from the data that Horizon itself 9 produced?
- 10 Α. Yes.
- Q. What if that data was wrong? 11
- Then I'd be looking for a branch to say something like, 12 Α. 13 "The butcher always comes in at 3.30 and makes a cash 14 deposit and there isn't one there". So we need to 15 understand did the butcher actually come in that day or 16 he did and there's no record of it on Horizon, or
- 17 there's a transaction here which I don't recognise, that 18 hasn't happened.

19 I can't recall that actually happening.

20 Q. Can we, just before the morning break, look at the last 21 page of this document, please, page 7. The first bullet 22 point:

> "Remove second reminder letter" and then look at the notes underneath:

> > "Recovery -- remove one letter in process -- not

1 right?

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- MR BEER: Yes, please. 2
- SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine. 3
- 4 (11.32 am)
- 5 (A short break)
- 6 (11.48 am)
- 7 MR BEER: Good morning, sir. Can you see and hear me okay.
- 8 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can thank you.
- 9 MR BEER: Thank you very much.

10 Mr Winn, I want to look at something called the 11 receipts/payments mismatch book. Can we start by 12 looking at POL00028838. Thank you very much.

> These appear to be notes about a meeting to discuss the receipts/payments mismatch bug. Can you see at the top "Receipts/Payments Mismatch issue notes"?

16 A. Yes.

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- 17 Q. We can see that the attendees at a meeting to discuss 18 the receipts and payments mismatch issue include you?
- 19 Α. Yes.
- 20 Q. "Andrew Winn (AW) POL Finance". We can also see that 21 Mr Jenkins from Fujitsu was there, yes?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Can I just deal with the date of this meeting first.
- 24 This document is not dated and does not itself identify
- 25 the date of the meeting but if we look at page 3 of the

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1 contractual and adds no value. People either pay up or 2 hang out to DFR -- may as well get there."

Were you by this saying that a step in the process should be removed so that you could get to debt recovery from the subpostmaster sooner rather than later?

6 A.

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- 7 Q. Is that a reflection of pressure to recover, from 8 subpostmasters, debts?
- 9 A. No. No, I would say it was more a case of we'd done 10 some analysis and found out that people paid the debts 11 straight away, or once we sent a letter, they paid the 12 debt. The second letter didn't make any difference.

They obviously didn't get the second letter if

14 they'd already paid. If they hadn't paid, they didn't 15 start paying. So there was no benefit in sending that 16 out. It saved resource within the team and, yes, it

17 would have had an impact on the bottom line but it would 18 have been pretty marginal.

19 Q. And the "may as well get there", you're saying you may 20 as well get to taking money from subpostmasters' wages 21 sooner rather than later?

22 A. Yes

23 MR BEER: Thank you very much. Can we take a break there 24 for 15 minutes, please?

25 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes. So that takes us to 11.45; is that

1 document, we can see in the second paragraph Fujitsu are

2 writing a code fix which will stop the discrepancy

3 disappearing, et cetera, et cetera, and then there are

4 some dates mentioned of 4 October, that's 2010, and then

5 a date of 11 October, 21 October, yes?

6 A. Yes.

- 7 Q. Then if we go to page 4, on this page and on the next 8 page there are a series of actions. Would these be 9 actions arising from the meeting?
- 10 A. That would seem sensible.
- 11 Q. You can see that there are target completion dates 12 ranging between 6 and 8 October.
- 13 A.
- 14 Q. Would it follow from this that the meeting is likely to 15 have taken place in September 2010 or early October 16 2010?
- 17 A. I'm not sure where the years come from. I'd say 18 September certainly but -- have we seen the year?
- 19 We haven't seen a year but we know that this bug was Q. 20 only discovered in that year and therefore I'm taking
- 21 that as the year.
- 22 **A.** I've got nothing to argue with there.
- 23 Q. Okay. Can we go back to page 1, please, and look at the 24 nature of the receipts and payments mismatch bug. If we
- 25 look at page 1, underneath the table, under the

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cross-heading "What is the issue?" it reads:

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"Discrepancies showing at the Horizon counter disappear when the branch follows certain process steps, but will still show within the back end branch account. This is currently impacting circa 40 Branches since migration onto Horizon Online, with an overall cash value of circa [£20,000] loss. This issue will only occur if a branch cancels the completion of the trading period, but within the same session continues to roll into a new balance period."

Then if we go on to page 2, please, in the middle in bold, I think it's in bold, anyway:

"Note the Branch will not get a prompt from the system to say there is a Receipts and Payments mismatch, therefore the Branch will believe they have balanced correctly."

Then under lastly "Impact" at the foot of the page, the first two bullet points:

"The branch has appeared to have balanced whereas in fact they could have a loss or a gain."

And:

"Our accounting systems will be out of sync with what is recorded at the branch."

Does all of the information in those three places accurately and fairly describe the nature of what was

"I'm fine, I've got nothing to put in, take out, whatever. I've balanced to the penny, that's great, press rollover", and then a statement will roll out but

whether it's actually reviewed in detail, I would say

I've got to apologise, I may be wrong on that, but that's my memory from the receipts and payments mismatch.

9 Q. Would you accept that the contemporaneous evidence 10 suggests that it was believed that there wouldn't be anything in branch to show the branch that they had not 11 12 balanced?

A. I think -- I'm surprised about that. I think the branch trading statements would show -- whether the branch would be able to interpret it as not balancing, I'm not sure. I couldn't say that. But I think branches would believe, from the branch trading process, they had balanced and I believe a lot of branches did not routinely check over their branch trading statements when it balanced. But that's --

Just one final point at this. We could look at another place at the top of this page:

"Note at this point nothing feeds into POLSAP and Credence, so in effect the POLSAP and Credence shows discrepancy whereas the Horizon System in the branch

then understood about the receipts and payments mismatch issue?

A. Yes, I think so, although my memory of the receipts and

4 payments mismatch would be that the branch trading 5 statements would show a compensating figure. I can't 6 remember where it would be. It's not something I would 7 expect branches to see and they would believe that 8 they'd balanced correctly but, if my memory serves 9 correct, on the branch trading statement there would be 10 a value showing.

11 Q. If that memory is correct, why does this say the 12 opposite?

13 A. That's a very good question, although it doesn't say 14 anything about the branch trading statement.

15 That would be the obvious place where a loss or a gain Q. 16 would be shown and this is saying that the branch won't 17 get a prompt and the branch will believe they have 18 balanced correctly and under "Impact:

19 "The branch appears to have balanced, whereas in 20 fact they could have a gain or a loss."

21 A. I think my memory as it is would be that when you get, 22 towards the end of your branch trading statements, your 23 final kind of thing before rolling is to say "This is 24 the balance" or "There is no balance". So I think that 25 is the point that subpostmasters would look at and say

doesn't. So the branch will then believe they have balanced."

Does that help you with some further -- a further contemporaneous record to suggest that the branch will believe they have balanced, whereas, in fact, they have

7 A. Yes, I would -- that does suggest it's not that I'm 8 mistaken, it wasn't shown on the branch trading 9 statement. My main recollection is that the balancing 10 amount showed in a discrepancy account within POLSAP. 11 So I would accept that it may not have shown, I'm 12 mistaken on my memory of that.

13 Q. I understand, thank you.

14 Can we look at the date of discovery of the 15 receipts and payments mismatch bug and can we look, 16 please -- well, can you remember when you attended this meeting for how long the payments and mismatch bug had 17 18 been discovered or was this the first that you became 19 aware of it?

20 A. I must have been. I wouldn't have just gone to 21 a meeting without knowing anything about it. So I must 22 have known something beforehand.

23 **Q**. Can you remember from whom you learnt that?

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25 Who would it be likely to be? 64

Α. Not sure. 1

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2 Q. Can we look at the third page of the document, please. 3 The top paragraph:

> "The Receipts and Payments mismatch will result in an error code being generated which will allow Fujitsu to isolate branches affected by this problem, although this is not seen by the branches. We have asked Fujitsu why it has taken so long to react to and escalate an issue which began in May. They will provide feedback in due course."

Can we firstly look at whether that's accurate, that the problem first began in May and then what response the Post Office got when it challenged Fujitsu on why did taken so long to react and escalate the issues.

So firstly the date on which the problem was discovered. If the problem was discovered in May, that would be just before Horizon Online was accepted in June 2010; would that be right or don't you remember when Horizon Online was accepted?

- 21 A. I don't remember exactly.
- 22 We know the acceptance of Horizon Online was June 2010.
- 23 This record here suggests that the problem was
- 24 discovered or it began in May. If it's correct that the
- 25 problem began in May, that would be about four months or

If that's right it's probably been around since day one and data is being dropped after 6 months, that would put the bug's existence before May 2010, wouldn't it?

- 5 A. Correct, yes.
- 6 Q. From an email being sent in September 2010. Were you
- 7 ever given that information by Fujitsu?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. How would it have affected your conduct and thinking if 10 you had been told that information, that the bug had 11 probably been around since day one?
- A. It would have been a little bit scary, I think. 12
- 13 Q. Turning to --
- 14 A. Sorry, can I just expand on that a little bit. Myself, 15 P&BA, were pretty much dependent on Fujitsu alerting us 16 to what branches were affected by a receipts and 17 payments mismatch. So if we weren't -- if my memory is 18 correct, the discrepancy would fall into the discrepancy 19 accounts within our team. My worry from that earlier 20 period is -- when I'm saying there's lots of things 21 flying around into the wrong accounts, and what have 22 you -- whether any values ended up getting written off 23 because we were -- my later memory of the receipts and 24 payments mismatch was that it sits there, they have

a discrepancy of 10 quid, 10 quid sat in the discrepancy

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- 1 so before this meeting, if we're right that this was
- 2 September/October time, yes?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Can we just look, please, at POL00029084. This is 5 an email exchange that you weren't copied into but 6 I want to ask you something about the content of it.
- 7 A. Sure.
- Q. If we look at the foot of the page, if we scroll down, 8
- 9 please, we can see this is an email from Gareth Jenkins,
- 10 on a date in September 2010, to Mark Wright. It's cut
- 11 off on the page but if we scroll up we can see the reply 12 from mark is Mark Wright. Now, we know that Mr Jenkins
- 13 attended the meeting that you attended, yes?
- 14 **A**.

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15 Q. Just if we look at the penultimate paragraph on this 16 page, at the foot of the page:

> "Jon is easily able to reproduce the problem in a development environment and we are planning to recreate the scenario and attempt a fix in that environment in the next couple of days. However it is probably worth starting on the data extraction to ascertain the full scope of the issue ... since it has probably been around since day one and data more than 6 months old is being dropped from BRSS, so the sooner we run the queries the better."

- 1 account, we just basically give that back to the branch 2 and away we go. If we haven't got the money in the
- 3 discrepancy account, we wouldn't know there was any
- 4 issue. So yes, that would worry me.
- Q. Can I go back to the second question then, what was done 5 6 within POL to guestion why Fujitsu hadn't reported the
- 7 problem sooner. If we just go back to the document we
- 8 were previously looking at, which was POL00028838, and
- go to page 3, please. It's that paragraph at the top, 9
- 10 again, in the second line:

"We have asked Fujitsu why it has taken so long to react and escalate an issue which began in May. They will provide feedback in due course."

14 What was done within POL to question why Fujitsu 15 had not reported the problem whenever it began?

- 16 A. I can't answer that. That wouldn't be me who was
- 17 raising that question. I would guess that was someone
- 18 from the IT team within POL.
- 19 Q. Just looking at the first page of the document, the list 20 of the people there, which of those people would be 21 doing the questioning of Fujitsu, why it had taken so
- 22 long to report the issue?
  - 24 Because he has "IT" written next to him?

A. I would guess Ian Trundell.

25 **A**. Yes. But also I think he's probably the most senior

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- 1 manager on that list.
- 2 The first six of you are from POL -- is that right --Q.
- 3 from Post Office --
- 4 A Yes
- 5 Q. -- and then the last four or from Fujitsu?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. He was the most senior person present?
- 8 A. I believe so.
- 9 Q. None of the people there appear to be from Legal; is
- 10 that right?
- A. No, but Security is probably quite close that would kind 11
- 12 of deal closely with Legal but, yes, you're correct,
- 13 nobody from Legal.
- 14 Q. Can you recall what the response was from Fujitsu, if it
- 15 was passed on to you: why has it taken so long to react
- 16 to and escalate this issue which, according to them,
- 17 began in May?
- 18 No, I've got no recollection, I'm afraid. Α.
- 19 Why would it be important to pursue that with Fujitsu or
- 20 would it be important to pursue that?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. Why would it be important?
- 23 A. Because we would need to know things in a timely manner
- to make sure that branches are properly supported if 24
- 25 there are issues impacting them.

- 1 Q. It's a note by Mr Jenkins. Can you remember whether
- 2 this was a document that was sent to you at the time or
- 3 tabled at the meeting that we're discussing?
- 4 A. No, I've got no memory of it, I'm afraid.
- 5 Q. Let's look at page 8, please. At the foot of the page,
- 6 in the last paragraph:

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"It should be noted that as Discrepancies are normally Losses, then a Lost Discrepancy would normally work in the Branch's favour and so there is no incentive for the Branch to report the problem. Also if we do amend the data to reintroduce the Discrepancy, this will

12 need to be carefully communicated to the Branches to

13 avoid questions about the system integrity."

> Why would anyone wish carefully to communicate information to branches to avoid questions about the integrity of the Horizon System?

- A. I would assume to illustrate -- to suggest that it's 17
- 18 a controlled issue rather than a kind of all-embracing,
- the system's bust, issue. 19
- 20 Q. Can I put it another way: this bug did raise questions
- 21 about the integrity of the Horizon System, didn't it?
- 22 Α. Yes.
- 23 Q. What proper or appropriate reason would there be for not

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- 24 telling people the existence of the bug and, therefore,
- 25 its impact on the integrity of the Horizon System?

Q. We're on page 1 of the document, can we look at the 1 2 second paragraph:

> "At this time we have not communicated with branches affected and we do not believe they are exploiting this bug intentionally."

Putting aside for one moment the cases in which data produced by Horizon was being relied on in the prosecution of subpostmasters, why wouldn't POL tell branches affected and, indeed, other branches that there may be a bug in the Horizon System that was affecting the balancing process?

- 12 I don't know. I think there would be a concern about A. 13 putting out a branch-wide notice but I think if we
- 14 identified a branch had been impacted by the problem
- 15 then they need to know about it as soon as possible and
- 16 told that we're sorting it out.
- 17 Q. Can we look at page 6, please. This is a document dated
- 18 29 September 2010, produced by Mr Gareth Jenkins. If we
- 19 just expand it, please, to look at the whole document
- 20 and just take a moment. You've seen this before. This
- 21 has been, I think, sent to you.
- 22 Α. No, it doesn't ring a bell. It might do.
- 23 Q. It's in the pack of documents that was sent to you but
- 24 it's about the same issue.
- 25 A. Okay.

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- I can't answer that.
- 2 Q. Wouldn't the reason be that care would need to be taken
- 3 because, if the full facts were revealed, it would raise
- 4 questions about the integrity of the Horizon System and
- 5 that might damage the business of Post Office and
- 6 Fujitsu?

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- 7 A. Yes, I think it would need to be presented in a way of
  - saying "We've identified this, this is the impact on
- 9 branches, this is what we're doing about it". I just
- 10 think it would need to be explained carefully.
- Q. Why would you want to avoid -- why would anyone want to 11
- 12 avoid questions about the system's integrity?
- It's difficult to put that into the correct words. I'm 13 A.
- 14 sorry, I'm struggling to find the right words.
- 15 Q. I can understand.

Can we go back to page 2, please. This is back to the note prepared, we think, following the meeting and so of the meeting. At the foot of the page, we looked at the first two bullet points under "Impact". Can I examine the remaining three, please, at the foot of the page. "Impact":

"If widely known could cause a loss of confidence in the Horizon System by branches."

Would you agree that a fairer and more balanced way of writing the sentiments behind that sentence would

- 1 be: if the bug was widely known, it could ensure that
- 2 branches are provided with accurate information about
- 3 a known fault in the system that they are required to
- 4 use?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. Why wasn't the discussion along those lines -- let's
- 7 provide accurate if to subpostmasters about the facts as
- 8 they are known -- rather than: if this bug is widely
- 9 known, it will cause or could cause a loss of confidence
- 10 in the system by branches?
- 11 A. Yes, I think it's a fair question. I think I was
- 12 certainly of the view that impacted branches should be
- 13 fully informed of what's happening. I don't think
- 14 I ever really considered a branch-wide communication.
- 15 Q. Would a fairer approach to have been to discuss and
- 16 conclude that the dissemination of such information
- would ensure that subpostmasters and those who were
- 18 investigating them do not proceed on the false basis
- 19 that the Horizon System is robust and that discrepancies
- 20 are always the responsibility of the subpostmaster?
- 21 A. Yes, yes.
- 22 Q. Does the fact that this note was not written in either
- 23 of those ways reflect the fact that that wasn't a view
- 24 expressed by anyone at the meeting?
- 25 A. I've not got a clear enough memory of the meeting.
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- 1 know where to go from there. It wasn't something where
- 2 I was able to sit there with Fujitsu and say, "I don't
- 3 believe you've told us about every branch".
- 4 Q. You can test their methodology, can't you: how have you
- 5 reached this; what investigations have you undertaken;
- 6 who's involved; how seriously are you considering this;
- 7 what effort have you put into it?
- 8 A. Yes, and I think that would be something that the IT --
- 9 ie Ian Trundell, that would be his area to investigate
- 10 that. I could ask a question similar to that and
- 11 basically not understand a word that comes back, I'm
- 12 afraid. I've already said before, my IT knowledge is
- very limited.

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- 14 Q. So the next bullet point:
  - "Potential impact upon ongoing legal cases where branches are disputing the integrity of Horizon Data."
- branches are disputing the integrity of Horizon Data."Did you or anyone else in the meeting, to your
  - Did you or anyone else in the meeting, to your knowledge, consider whether information about the bug
- 19 needed to go to POL Legal in order to make disclosures
- 20 in ongoing court cases?
- 21 A. That would seem sensible.
- 22 Q. Did anyone do that which seemed sensible?
- 23 A. I can't recall, I'm afraid. I wouldn't have.
- 24  $\,$  Q. Whose responsibility, on the POL side of the house, of
- 25 the people that we saw in the list -- do you want to go

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- 1 I can't remember anybody supporting that suggestion.
- 2 Q. Why would that be? Why would anyone not support the
- 3 suggestion that I've made: let's reveal a known fault in
- 4 the system so on that people don't proceed on a false
- 5 basis?

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- 6 A. Yes, I think in hindsight you're probably right.
  - I think what you need to be able to do is "This fault
- 8 has been identified, this is the impact of it, this is
- 9 how you can check to ensure that your branch has not
- 10 been affected. The vast majority of branches have not
- 11 been affected", but giving the branch the opportunity to
- 12 check that they haven't got that problem -- something
- 13 along that kind of line.
- 14  $\,$  Q. Was there a definitive list of those branches that were
- 15 affected?
- 16 A. I believe so but we depended on Fujitsu to identify
- 17 these branches.
- 18 **Q.** Given that they had seemingly delayed in the provision
- 19 of information to you promptly, was there confidence in
- 20 the definitive list that they produced?
- 21 A. I think there was -- personally, I think there was
- 22 a concern "Have they identified every branch", but kind
- of would have felt "Well, what can I do about it?"
- 24 Fujitsu have got the information. We don't have the
- 25 information to check that. I don't know -- I wouldn't
  - 74
- 1 back to the list -- would it be?
- 2 A. Can we go back to the list?
- 3 Q. Yes. It's page 1.
- 4 A. I would probably say Alan Simpson.
- 5 Q. Because he's from Security?
- 6 A. Yes.

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- 7 Q. So we should highlight Mr Simpson as being the person
  - responsible for making disclosures of this bug to POL
- 9 Legal, in order to potentially make a disclosure in
- 10 ongoing legal proceedings?
- 11 A. That seems sensible. I don't know if that was the
- 12 process that should or actually did take place but that
- 13 sounds a sensible summation or assumption.
- 14 Q. The notes for this meeting generally suggest that the
- 15 Post Office knew that knowledge of the bug should create
- 16 caution over the accuracy of some of the data that
- 17 Horizon was producing?
- 18 **A.** Yes.
- 19 Q. And that that could undermine confidence in Horizon?
- 20 A. That would be a concern, yes.
- 21 Q. You would know also, wouldn't you, that that information
- 22 would be relevant to subpostmasters who had been
- 23 prosecuted?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 Q. And those who might be prosecuted in the future?

1	Α	Yes.
	A	. 165.

- Q. And the information would be relevant to anyone who had 2 3 had proceedings brought against them by POL for the
- 4 recovery of debts, civil recovery?
- 5 Α.
- 6 Q. Or who had challenged POL --
- 7 A. Yes
- 8 Q. -- in the courts.

9 Did anyone in the meeting discuss handing that 10 information over to the defence teams?

- No, I cannot recall that being mentioned. 11 Α.
- When you attended this meeting in September/October 12
- 13 2010, I think you were already aware of the prosecution
- of Seema Misra, weren't you? 14
- A. It's a name that rings a bell. 15
- 16 Q. Can we look, please, at POL00055100. Can we look,
- 17 please, at the middle of the page. We can see this is
- an email sent to you by Jon Longman on 27 July 2010, 18
- 19 concerning the prosecution of Seema Misra at Guildford
- 20 Crown Court, yes?
- 21 A. Yes.

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- 22 Q. We're going to come to that in a moment but let's get
- 23 some context first. Can we look at page 2 of the
- 24 document, please, and then just scroll down. This is
- 25 an email from Issy Hogg, she is the defence solicitor,

below following our telephone conversation of today."

Then go back to page 1, please, the foot of the page, an email sent on behalf of Mr Singh to Jon Longman. Can you remember who Jon Longman was?

- 5 A. No, I can't, no.
- 6 Q. And Warwick Tatford, he was prosecution counsel in the 7 Seema Misra trial:

"I enclose a copy of an email received from Issy Hogg, the defence solicitors of 22 July 2010, the content of which is self-explanatory. Could you please be kind enough to let me have your urgent instructions as to the access and information she is requesting in respect of the system in the Midlands and the operation at Chesterfield and the errors logs. I will contact Gareth Jenkins to find out what transpired at the meeting with Charles McLachlan."

Then scroll up, please. We can see that on the same day, about an hour later, Mr Longman forwarded the email to you, yes?

- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Then we can see about 33 minutes later you reply, so at 22 12.13 that day, and you say:
- 23 "John

24 "Rod Ismay the head of P&BA is not happy at the 25 prospect of an open ended invite. He has asked the

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1 to Jarnail Singh. If we just scroll to the top of the 2 page, we can see on his signature block Jarnail Singh 3 was a senior officer in the Post Office's Criminal Law

4 Division, yes?

5 Α. Yes, yes.

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22 Α.

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6 If we scroll back down, please, Ms Hogg says:

"Jarnail.

"As a result of the meeting that took place 8 9 between Charles McLachlan and Gareth Jenkins as directed 10 by the judge, we now need to have:

11 "access to the system in the Midlands where it 12 appears there are live, reproducible errors.

13 "access to the operations at Chesterfield to 14 understand how reconciliation and transaction 15 corrections are dealt with.

"access to the system change requests, Known Error Log and new release documentation to understand what problems have had to be fixed.

19 "Please you contact me with regard to these 20 issues. Please you respond [to an email address]."

21 Yes? Yes.

- 23 Then if we go further up the page, we can see 24 a forwarding:
- 25 "... please advise on the three points raised

1 question of what are the legal parameters we are working 2 within. Simplistically if we refuse or impose 3 conditions do we lose the case? I think we need more 4 guidance on how something like this might reasonably 5 operate.

"I think Mark Burley would be the route into IT to identify who might be best placed to deal with that aspect."

This was a reply that was essentially your boss, 9 10 Rod Ismay, in P&BA, seeking to close down the disclosure 11 request as much as possible, wasn't it?

- 12 Α.
- 13 **Q.** What reasons did he give to close down the disclosure 14 request as much as possible?
- 15 A. I can't recall any more detail than what's shown there.
- 16 Q. What was the nature of his unhappiness about the 17 disclosure request?
- 18 A. I think he didn't feel as though it would produce
- 19 anything and create more questions than it would answer.
- 20 Q. What kind of questions would it create?
- 21 A. I can't recall. I don't think he specified. I think
- 22 that was probably a generic term or --
  - 23 Q. Was it a generic reply "Don't let them have access to 24 systems or data that would reveal issues or problems
- 25 with our system"?

- No, I don't think so. I don't think -- knowing Rod, 1 Α.
- 2 I don't think he would view it that way. I think he'd
- 3 just struggle to understand what it was that they would
- 4 want to see and where it might lead, and there's also
- 5 an issue of confidentiality in terms of the data we're
- 6 holding, financial information regarding other branches,
- 7 for example.
- 8 Q. Why wasn't the reply along those lines then: there are
- 9 some practical hurdles to this, rather than just closing
- 10 it down?
- A. Yes, I think it's the parameters that we're working 11
- with, so, for example, other subpostmaster information. 12
- 13 Why did you suggest Mark Burley would be a person who Q.
- 14 ought to be involved?
- A. I can't recall. I knew Mark, I worked in the product 15
- 16 process improvement team with him. Presumably the role
- 17 he was in at that point would seem the most appropriate
- 18 one. I think I possibly had spoken to him about it
- 19 beforehand.
- 20 Q. Can we turn, please, to POL00055225. This is an email
- 21 dated 13 September 2010 and you can see the subject
- 22 "West Byfleet", that was her post office
- 23 "Mrs Seema Misra". You can see who it's from and to,
- 24 not you, but we're going to see in a moment that it
- 25 references a conversation with you. It reads:
- 1 refusing access that was sought by the defence?
- 2 A. Sorry, I thought we covered that in the previous --
- 3 Q. Yes, the previous email was "We need to know what the
- 4 implications are. If we refuse access will we lose the
- 5 case?"
- 6 A. I didn't hear any more -- I don't believe I heard
- 7 anything more from that up to this point, apart from the
- 8 fact that Rod had -- no, I can't remember if there was
- 9 anything more that developed.
- 10 Q. Did the reasons include that because if such access is
- 11 given then the lack of integrity of the data that
- 12 Horizon produced may be discovered?
- 13 Α. That was never stated, no.
- 14 Q. Even though, by this time, you may have been aware that
- 15 there was a bug that was producing data that lacked
- 16 integrity?
- 17 A. Yes, but -- well, yes.
- Q. But even if you wouldn't allow a defence solicitor or 18
- 19 a defence expert into the building to examine P&BA
- 20 operations or P&BA equipment, you'd presumably have
- 21 discussed, wouldn't you, "Look, there's someone on trial
- 22 for a very serious crime here based on data produced by
- 23 Horizon. She's alleging that the data's not accurate.
- 24 We know that the data produced by Horizon may not be
- 25 accurate. We need to find out a way of ensuring that

- "Hi John 1
- 2 "The last update I had on the above was in July,
- 3 the defence solicitors had requested they had access to 4 the operations in Chesterfield."
- I think that's the email discussion we've just 5
- 6 seen.
- 7 Α. Yes
- 8 Q. "This was discussed by Andy Winn/Rod Ismay. I have
- 9 today spoken with Andy Winn and he has informed me that
- 10 Rod had made a decision to not allow this. Therefore
- 11 could you please update me with the latest progress on
- 12 the case."

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- Do you now recall any conversation with Mr Ismay?
- 14 A. Yes, I recall a conversation but the detail of it,
  - beyond "I don't think it's a good idea", and what
- 16 I stated in the previous email, I can't remember any
- 17 more detail than that, I'm afraid.
- 18 Q. The record here is that Mr Ismay had made a decision not
- 19 to allow it, so was bringing the shutters down on it?
- 20 A. I think that would be -- I can't remember what the
- 21 difference between -- in the timings was but, yes, that
- 22 would be fair summation. I don't know if anything more
- 23 had happened in between the first document that we
- 24 looked at and this one.
- 25 Q. What reasons were discussed between you and Ismay for

- 1 she knows what we know" -- wouldn't you?
- 2 Yes, I totally understand from their point of view, yes.
- 3 Q. You would agree that that would be the open thing to do.
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. You would agree that would be the honest thing to do?
- 6 A. I think, within the concerns about data protection for
- 7 other branches and issues like that, yes.
- 8 Q. You would agree that that would be the thing a person 9 with integrity would do?
- A. I'm not -- I think Rod laid out his reasons, his 10
- concerns about it. I don't know if there was any 11
- 12 comeback from that.
- 13 Q. Well, the comeback would have come from you, wouldn't
- 14 it, because this was a conversation between the pair of
- 15
- 16 A. We had the conversation I would have expected probably
- 17 to have said, "Yes, they can come in" but I've got to
- 18 say that I didn't put up any impassioned disagreement
- 19 with Rod. I accepted that he took a considered view of
- 20 things and he was my boss and, yes, I didn't put up
- 21 a fight.
- 22 Q. If it was the open and honest thing to do, if it was the
- 23 thing that a person with integrity would do, why did you
- 24 and Mr Ismay not do it?
- 25 A. Yes, I mean I've got to say -- refer to the previous

- 1 question. That was Rod's view. I didn't have a strong 2 enough view to argue against it.
- 3 Q. Were these requests by defence solicitors for access to 4 systems and data on your mind when considering whether 5 and how to communicate with affected subpostmasters and 6 others the discovery of the receipts and payments
- 7 mismatch bug in the September/October meeting?
- 8 A. No.

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Q. Can we go back, please to Fujitsu 00081584. That's an 10 errant reference. I'm going to stick with the version 11 of the document I've been using, POL00028838, the second 12 page, please. At the foot of the page under "impact", 13 the third bullet point:

> "If widely known, could cause a loss of confidence in the Horizon System by branches. Potential impact upon ongoing legal cases where branches are disputing the integrity of Horizon data."

This appears to be a record that those two things were brought into account at the meeting. Can I ask again: were the discussions over the defence requests for access to Horizon systems and data on your mind when considering whether to communicate with subpostmasters and others about the discovery of the receipts and payments mismatch bug?

25 Α. No.

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- 1 Not that I'm aware of.
- Q. If we just go on to page 6 of the document, this is the 3 Gareth Jenkins document that we mentioned earlier. We know that this was sent on to the solicitor with the conduct of the Seema Misra prosecution, Jarnail Singh, 6 on Friday, 8 October before her trial started on Monday, 11 October.

We can see that if we just go to the foot of the page, please. Do you see the file string at the foot of the page showing the presence of the document in a Jarnail Singh folder and that it was printed on 8 October?

- 12 Yes.
- 14 Q. I won't turn it up now but there's also an email. I'll 15 give the reference for the transcript, POL00055410, 16 which shows this document being sent to Mr Singh.

Was there discussion at the meeting of the need to disclose information that Mr Jenkins had to the prosecution solicitor in the Seema Misra case?

- 20 A. I don't recall. I don't recall that case being raised 21 in this meeting.
- 22 Q. We know that neither Mr Singh nor Mr Jenkins disclosed 23 information about the receipts and payments mismatch bug 24 to Ms Misra's defence team or indeed to the court. Was 25
  - that discussed in the course of the meeting, whether 87

- Q. What's this referring to then? 1
- 2 Sorry, I don't really understand which we're going.
- 3 We've seen that at two points, once in July and once in 4 September, you were involved in conversations over
- 5 defence access to systems and data on behalf of
- 6 a subpostmistress who said the data provided by Horizon
- 7 is not accurate. You're in a meeting about data
- 8 provided by Horizon not being accurate and there's
- 9 a record saying it has a potential impact upon ongoing
- 10 legal cases where branches are disputing the integrity
- 11 of the Horizon data.

12 I'm asking you were the requests that you received 13 for access on your mind when you were considering the 14 potential impact on legal cases that's recorded at this 15 meeting?

- 16 A. I would probably say no.
- 17 Q. Was the discussion at this meeting over whether 18 Mr Jenkins was going to give evidence in Seema Misra's 19 trial in October 2010?
- 20 A. I've no idea.
- 21 Q. Was anything said about the Seema Misra case in this 22 meeting?
- 23 A. I wouldn't have thought so.
- 24 Were any decisions made about the disclosure of the 25 existence of the bug to the defence team?

- 1 that information should be disclosed or not?
- 2 A. Again, I don't remember this ex-subpostmaster being 3 mentioned in the meeting.
- 4 Q. Can we go to page 2 of the document, please, and look at
- 5 the foot of the page. We've dealt with the first five 6 bullet points. Can I deal with the last -- sorry, we've
- 7 dead with the first four bullet points. Can we deal with the last, the fifth: 8

"It could provide branches ammunition to blame 9 10 Horizon for future discrepancies."

11 Was that a consideration?

- 12 Α.
- 13 So disclosure could provide branches with ammunition to 14 blame Horizon?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. It would be accurate ammunition, though, wouldn't it?
- 17 A. It would be accurate in terms of there is a Horizon
- 18 integrity impact which needs to be checked out before
- 19 going forward. I would say that's reasonable, yes.
- 20 Q. So if the ammunition was an arrow, it would fly true and 21 straight, wouldn't it?
- 22 A. If it was relevant to the branch, yes. I think if
- 23 a branch had a discrepancy, they would be entitled to
- 24 assume that before any type of prosecution, or anything
- like that, that it was checked that there were no error 25

1		impacts on their accounts, yes.	1		Can we look at solutions 1 and 3 first and then go
2	Q.	And it could be ammunition that hit the correct target;	2		to solution 2. So solution 1:
3		namely, a discrepancy is being caused by the Horizon	3		"Alter the Horizon branch figure at the counter to
4		System, not by the subpostmaster?	4		show the discrepancy. Fujitsu would have to manually
5	Α.	Yes.	5		write an entry value to the local branch account.
6	Q.	It wouldn't be information that damaged, hurt or injured	6		"Impact when the branch comes to complete next
7		any subpostmaster? It's not that kind of ammunition, is	7		trading period, they would have a discrepancy, which
8		it?	8		they would have to bring to account.
9	A.	It could end up working out the wrong way round because	9		"Risk this has significant data integrity
10		the receipts and payments mismatch could produce gains	10		concerns and could lead to questions of 'tampering' with
11		or losses but	11		the branch system and could generate questions around
12	Q.	That would be a good thing, though, wouldn't it, because	12		how the discrepancy was caused. The solution could have
13		it would mean recovery to the Post Office of debt that	13		moral implications of Post Office changing branch data
14		was truly owing?	14		without informing the branch."
15	A.	Yes.	15		So summing up solution 1 is: the branch never
16	Q.	But it wasn't seen in any of those ways, was it? It was	16		knows about this but there's a fix applied; is that
17		seen in the light of "we can't disclose material that	17		right?
18		might undermine our system, even if the system is in	18	A.	That's fair, yes.
19		fact faulty".	19	Q.	What were the moral implications?
20	A.	Yes, I think that's probably a fair summation.	20	A.	I don't understand where that came from.
21	Q.	Can we look over the page, please. Under "Proposal for	21	Q.	Can you try and help us?
22		affected branches", the document reads:	22	A.	It's just not a term I would use. I would certainly say
23		"There are three potential solutions to apply to	23		it was important that Fujitsu or well, presumably
24		the impacted branches. The group's recommendation is	24		Fujitsu, weren't changing figures willy-nilly without
25		that solution 2 should be progressed." 89	25		the branch being aware of it. That shouldn't happen. 90
1	Q.	So it reflects a belief is this right that	1		"Impact Post Office must absorb around £20,000
2		whenever Fujitsu changed branch data, the branch should	2		loss.
3		be informed?	3		"Risk huge moral implications to the integrity
4	A.	I think there's yes, in that kind of scenario	4		of the business, as there are agents that were
5		changing branch data is a very kind of wide thing. So	5		potentially due a cash gain on their system."
6		you change the price of a first class stamp every year.	6		So this is a write off. But what about the
7		You don't particularly ring the branch up and say we're	7		subpostmasters that were owed money? That's what that's
8		doing that. So in the scenario you're talking about	8		raising, isn't it?
9		here, then yes, very much so.	9	A.	That's right, yes.
10	Q.	And that wouldn't be moral in the language of the	10	Q.	
11		document here?	11		it?
12	A.	It just seems a strange terminology to me.	12	A.	I think that was probably one that we could do this but
13	Q.	Can you remember who made the suggestion?	13		we're never seriously going to do it.
14	A.	No.	14	Q.	
15	Q.	Can you remember who rejected it?	15	A.	
16	A.	I would have rejected it. Whether other and people	16	Q.	Who rejected it?
17		would have as well from my not particularly a memory	17		Well, I would have, along with other colleagues, I would
18		of that meeting but the type of thinking that NBSC	18		imagine.
19		tended to think in the same way as me, the Networks	19	Q.	-
20		tended to think in the same way as me.	20	Α.	
21	Q.	Can we look at solution 3 then, please, at the foot of	21		Fujitsu's suggestion for us to consider but that's
22		the page. It's decided:	22		a suggestion.
23		" not to correct the data in the branches	23	Q.	Solutions 1 and 3 keep subpostmasters in the dark, don't

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(ie Post Office would prefer to write off the 'lost'"

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and then it's missing.

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they?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Both those subpostmasters who are known to be affected 2 by the bug and the wider subpostmaster community?
- 3 A. Yes.

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4 Q. Solution 2 was the recommended solution, if we read 5 that, please:

> "P&BA will journal values from the discrepancy account into the customer account and recover/refund via normal processes. This will need to be supported by an approved POL communication. Unlike the branch POLSAP remains in, balance albeit with an account discrepancies that should be cleared.

"Impact -- POL will be required to explain the reason for a debt recovery/refund even though there is no discrepancy at the branch.

"Risk -- could potentially highlight to branches that Horizon can lose data."

The end of the first line/beginning of the second:

"This will need to be supported by an approved POL communication."

Would the approved communication leave out some of the facts?

- 22 A. I'd probably need to see the communication to comment on 23 that. I don't think that would be the intention of that 24 solution. It doesn't suggest let's do it. But I think 25
  - it would be -- what that would be saying is that it
- 1 position might have been. I wasn't at that kind of 2 level so.
- 3 Q. You're assuming it on the basis of some facts or 4 information, though, aren't you? You're not just 5 guessing?

everybody that this has happened?"

6 A. No, I think there was a feeling (and I use that term 7 carefully, a "feeling") that when we got on to these 8 issues calls, it was more the kind of ground roots, 9 people in the NBSC, Network and myself in finance, who 10 were, "This is what's happened, let's tell them, let's 11 tell them exactly what's gone off and this is what we've 12 done to resolve it". Whereas there seemed to be more --13 possibly more strategic, dare I say, view from more 14 senior managers of "should we really be telling

> Now, that's tarring every senior manager with a brush that's unfair, but there was a feeling that there was a bit more resistance to communication kind of the higher things went, which I don't know if there was a pressure that they were being given under or whether that was a more general way of just thinking rather than somebody else providing pressure. I don't know.

22 23 Q. But looking at senior management collectively, and 24 without identifying individuals, your clear 25 understanding was that senior management expected or 1 would probably need to be checked off at legal level

2 before we send it. That's my assumption. 3

- Q. Was there a feeling at this meeting that the principle of the less said, the soonest mended should be applied?
- A. No, I don't think so. I think the less said would be 5 6 the clean it up without telling the branches.
- 7 Q. The less that subpostmasters know, the better?
- 8 A. No. I think again it comes back to let's let the
- 9 subpostmasters that are impacted know what's happened
- 10 and what we've done to resolve an issue even if they
- 11 potentially didn't know they had an issue, but I don't
- 12 think it was ever suggested to do a branch-wide
- 13 communication.
- 14 Q. What would POL senior management have said if the 15 outcome of the receipts and payments mismatch meeting
- 16 was a recommendation that the whole of the network
- 17 should be warned of this potential problem?
- 18 A. I think they would have said no.
- 19 Q. Why is that?
- 20 A. Because they were keen to maintain the integrity of
- 21 Horizon as far as possible, but --
- 22 Q. When you say, "They were keen to maintain the integrity"
- 23 do you mean keen to maintain the appearance of
- 24 integrity?
- 25 A. Yes. But again I'm assuming what the manager's -- his

1 required you to stick to the message that Horizon had

integrity? 2

3 A. Yes.

- 4 MR BEER: Sir, I wonder whether we might take the lunch
- 5 break early?
- SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Certainly. 6
- 7 MR BEER: And come back at 1.45.
- 8 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, that's fine. See you then.
- MR BEER: Thank you very much, sir.
- (12.49 pm) 10
- 11 (Luncheon Adjournment)
- 12 (1.45 pm)
- 13 MR BEER: Good afternoon, sir. Can you see and hear me?
- 14 Sir, you are still on mute. I think that was a yes.
- 15 Can you see and hear us, sir? (Pause)
- 16 Sir, can you see and hear us? Can we just pause
- 17 while that's sorted out. (Pause)
- 18 We'll break for five minutes, if that's possible,
- 19 please, whilst we restore the link. So five minutes.
- 20 Thank you.
- 21 (1.47 pm)
- 22 (A short break)
- 23 (1.50 pm)
- 24 MR BEER: Thank you very much, Mr Winn.
- 25 A. Sorry to have delayed everyone.

1	MR	BEER: Can I just check, sir, that you can see and hear
2		me?
3	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Well, I can hear you. I now can't now
4		I can see you as well. So we're fine.
5	MR	BEER: Fantastic, thank you.
6		Mr Winn, when I was asking questions before lunch
7		about the date of the receipts and payments mismatch
8		bug, the meeting about that, and one of the actions
9		arising from it (namely, whose job it was, if anyone's,
10		to inform lawyers in ongoing or past prosecutions and
11		civil proceedings about the bug), I mentioned a document
12		that I gave the reference to but did not display. Can
13		I display the document for you, please. It's
14		POL00055410.
15		If we look at the lower email first, please,
16		you'll see that it's from Alan Simpson and it's dated
17		8 October 2010 and Alan Simpson, we can see from his
18		signature block, was the POL information security
19		incident senior. You can see that it's to Rob Wilson.
20		Mr Wilson was the head of criminal law in the Criminal
21		Law Division within Post Office at the time.
22		Did you know that
23	A.	No, I don't think I came across him at all.
24	Q.	It helps us on two things if we can just read it. It
25		says:
25		
	^	says: 97
1	A. 0	says: 97 Yes.
1 2	A. Q.	yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in
1 2 3	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?
1 2 3 4	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.
1 2 3 4 5	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or
1 2 3 4 5 6	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that? Yes, I can see that. "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future
1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."
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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to
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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	Q. A. Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	Q. A. Q. A.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?  No, I wouldn't be aware of that, no.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?  No, I wouldn't be aware of that, no.  Can you recall that being discussed in the meeting?
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	Q. A. Q. A. Q. A.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?  No, I wouldn't be aware of that, no.  Can you recall that being discussed in the meeting?  In this meeting?
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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	Q. A. Q. A. Q. A.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?  No, I wouldn't be aware of that, no.  Can you recall that being discussed in the meeting?  In this meeting?  Yes, in the meeting that we saw the notes of this morning.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	Q. A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?  No, I wouldn't be aware of that, no.  Can you recall that being discussed in the meeting?  In this meeting?  Yes, in the meeting that we saw the notes of this
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	Q. A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Yes.  It would appear that the meetings, plural, were held in the week ending Friday, 8 October. Do you see that?  Yes, I can see that.  "My concern is around the proposed solution/s, one or more of which may have repercussions in any future prosecution cases and on the integrity of the Horizon Online system."  So Mr Simpson is referring the issue to the head of criminal law about future prosecutions based on data produced by Horizon Online. Do you remember whether there was any discussion about disclosure of the bug to those conducting current prosecutions, based on data produced by Legacy Horizon?  No, I wouldn't be aware of that, no.  Can you recall that being discussed in the meeting?  In this meeting?  Yes, in the meeting that we saw the notes of this morning.  Not in detail but I would imagine it would be mentioned,

A. As far as I can recall, yes.

What exploration was there of whether this was a bug

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25 Q.

"I am forwarding you the attachments above in 1 2 relation to a series of incidents ..." 3 If we just scroll up, please, we can see that 4 under the attachments there are two that are mentioned, 5 "ReceiptsPayments notes[version]5". That appears to be 6 a version of the notes that we looked at earlier 7 concerning a meeting or meetings about the receipts and 8 payments mismatch bug. q Then "Lost Discrepancies [29 September 2010]", 10 that appears to be Mr Jenkins' document of 29 September 2010 that we looked at earlier. 11 12 Just going back down to the email: 13 "I am forwarding you the attachments above in 14 relation to a series of incidents, identified by Fujitsu this week, whereby it appears that when posting 15 16 discrepancies to the local suspense, these amounts 17 simply disappear at branch level, and a balance is 18 shown. 19 "The above includes Fujitsu's initial analysis 20 [that appears to be a reference to Mr Jenkins' 21 documents] and proposed solution/s, whilst the other 22 documents the outputs from various meetings held this 23 week." 24 That appears to be a reference, would you agree, 25 to the note of the meeting that we saw? that afflicted Legacy Horizon? I wasn't aware of any. 2 3 Thank you. That can come down. 4 Can we move forward, please, to December 2010 and 5 look at POL00029718. Can we start, please, on page 8 of 6 this collection and scroll down, please. This is 7 an email from Emma Langfield to a number of people, 8 including you and Mr Jenkins, dated 24 December 2010. 9 Can you see that? 10 A. Yes. Q. She's asking for help there as there are some branches 11 12 for whom values appear marooned in the P&BA discrepancy 13 account. If you just scroll down. It says: 14 "Morning 15 "Please see below from [P&BA]. They have identified some branches where values appear marooned in 16 17 the P&BA discrepancy account ..." 18 Yes? 19

20 Q. And that they:

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21 "... either appear not to align to the values and 22 last Fujitsu spreadsheet or have not been identified as 23 part of this issue."

> Then there are a number of emails exchanged as part of this collection of emails, with ultimately

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a response from Mr Jenkins on page 1 of this collection. We see this is an email from him to you moving forward a number of years to May 2012. He says:

"Sorry it has taken me so long to get back to you.

"I've had a trawl back through my old emails and what I've found is the following ..."

He sets out in his paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 what he's discovered in relation to two branches that were in the original list, associated with the lost discrepancy issue that had occurred in 2010. Then in paragraph 4 he says:

"I can also see that although [a branch number] was in the original list, it seems to know dropped off very early. This is because it wasn't in the original list from POL and also the precise symptoms in terms of [something] left behind were different. I can't find any trace of any further investigation of this in my emails.

"Given that the discrepancy amounts in both cases was very large, I'd be surprised if they weren't properly investigated at the time, but they don't seem to be included in the lists relating to the '[something] Discrepancy' investigation.

"If you want this followed up further I suggest you raise it with the POL Problem Management team (Emma

taken back in September/October 2010, we've seen the documents around that, may this suggest that the follow-up on the impact on branches was taken less seriously?

5 A. I can't really say.

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- 6 Q. Did the Post Office take seriously the need to 7 understand the full impact of this significant issue 8 and, in particular, the impact on individual branches 9 and subpostmasters and ensure that all affected branches 10 were identified and there was a proper investigation?
- 11 A. Yes, as far as I was aware.
- Q. Can we turn, please, to POL00098016. This continues the 12 13 thread of discussion on the two outstanding queries on 14 the receipts and payments mismatch bug and we're now 15 ahead to April 2013. Can we go, please, to page 4 of 16 the thread to begin it.

At the foot of the page, please, you will see an email from David Wright, who was I think an IT service adviser in service management, and it's an email to Andy Dunks and Penny Thomas, Steve Bansal, Scott Somerside and to you?

22 A. Yes.

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23 Q. It reads "Andy", and I don't think that's you, that's 24 the Andy Dunks that that was addressed to; is that 25 right?

Langfield), who can then get the Fujitsu Problem Management team to dig further."

So this is correspondence under two years after the problem was discovered and there appears, would you agree, to have been some doubt as between Fujitsu and 6 POL over which branches had been investigated as possibly impacted and which had not?

- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. At the very least, no shared understanding of what had 10 happened?
- 11 Yes. Α.
- 12 Q. Who was responsible for investigating and understanding 13 the extent of the problem and updating the branches 14 affected?
- 15 A. In terms of updating the branches, I would probably 16 suggest that that was P&BA. In terms of investigating, 17 I would imagine that would be the IT team.
- 18 Q. But you have got in 2012 here Mr Jenkins saying that, 19 according to the documents that he can access, there's 20 a branch with a very large discrepancy -- two branches 21 with a very large discrepancy and they don't seem to be 22 included in the list. Would you regard that as 23 problematic?
- 24 Α. Yes

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25 Given the seriousness with which the mismatch bug was 102

I would think so, yes.

2 Q. "Andrew Winn (Relationship Manager, Financial Service Centre) has requested Service Management assistance in reopening Fujitsu investigations for two outstanding enquiries he has been dealing with for our branches.

> "At our recent service review meeting held with Leighton Machin he suggested your names as the appropriate contacts. Gareth Jenkins has also been approached in the past.

"I have attached some information previously sharing via email but if you need more detail to help you resolve these incidents, please approach Andy Winn direct."

Then they give your details.

Then if we go up the chain, please, to page 3 we'll see that a chaser is sent on 22 February. Just scroll down, please. Keep going, please. Yes, that's it, 22 February:

"Hi Leighton,

"I've just picked up a reply from an enquiry I made to Andy Winn in our Finance Service Centre (he has been on leave) and disappointingly he has not heard anything from the contracts you suggested last month.

> "Can you escalate the enquiry on our behalf?" So that's essentially a chaser, would that be 104

1		right, from somebody that worked to you, David Wright?
2	A.	I think I remember David vaguely, I think he might have
3		been working in NBSC at that time but I'm not sure he
4		wasn't in P&BA Or Finance Service Centre, as it was
5		then.
6	Q.	You can see his signature block there and he appears to
7		be based in Dearne House in Barnsley?
8	Α.	Right, okay.
9	Q.	Does that mean he was working for you or not?
10	Α.	No.
11	Q.	Anyway it's a chaser, and then if we go back to page 3,
12	α.	please, at the foot of the page, another chaser a month
13		later on 5 March. It's not month later, it's the
14		following month:
15		"Hi Leighton
16		"Were you able to escalate this on our behalf?"
17		Then a reply from Fujitsu:
18		"Apologies It seems it was not cascaded at the
19		point of your last request (I will cascade it now!)
20		"A response in one form or another will be
21		provided by [close of play] Thursday."
22		Then up to the bottom of page 2, please,
23		Mr Wright:
24		"Hi Leighton
25		"Did a response get issued on Thursday? I have 105
1		"I need to be clear that there is no unresolved
2		problem in case either branch appears in the ongoing
3		Horizon integrity review.
4		"I know you have previously stated that a work
5		plan was set up to do some further analysis on [one of
		the branches] but [the Post Office] requested this not
6		
7		to proceed but I need to understand why they disappeared from the resolved spreadsheet."
8		ı
9		So what you were doing, you were saying that
10		there's an issue that's now two to three years old
11	Α.	Yes.
12	Q.	and there are two branches that are maybe affected in
13		different ways but I want a resolution?
14	A.	Yes, I think from what I remember is that they were on
15		an initial list, a kind of quite big list at the time,
16		and Fujitsu said these have got an issue but they're not
17		the same as the receipts and payments, so we need to
18	_	separate them, if I remember correctly.
19	Q.	For one of them, you had made a deduction the Post
20		Office had made a deduction from the SPM's remuneration?
21	Α.	Yes. Well, that's what it reads there.
22	Q.	You say:

not received it -- did it just go to Andy?" 1 2 Then up to the bottom of page 1, please, thank 3 you. Steve Bansal to a collection of people including you: 4 "... accept my apologies thought as I thought I'd 5 6 sent this mail some weeks ago." 7 He answers a query about Paystation transactions. 8 Do you see that in his third paragraph? 9 A. Yes 10 "So to answer the question very Paystation 11 transactions", which is something else, yes? 12 A. 13 Q. Then you reply that top of the page, if we go to the top 14 of the page. On 16 April 2013, you say: "Hi Steve 15 16 Yes it does ... 17 "However I'm far more concerned about the 18 outstanding enquiry relating to the receipts & payments 19 problem back in 2010 where we have two branches [and you 20 identify them] who appeared [to be] on the initial list 21 of branches but not on the list of those resolved. We 22 still have a large unexplained credit on one branch 23 whilst we have recovered money from pay on the other 24 despite them recording a significant surplus at the 25 time. 106

1 Why would you need to be clear that there's no
2 unresolved problem for that purpose, rather than because
3 in one case the subpostmaster might owe money and in the
4 other case the subpostmaster is owed money.

5 A. There would be no difference between the two. The issue6 needs to be resolved.

Q. But why was it important in case either branch appears
 in the ongoing integrity review? Wouldn't it be a good
 enough reason that we've taken some money out of
 a subpostmaster's wages, perhaps wrongfully, that I need

11 an answer?

12 A. I would say any branch that we know has got a problem we13 need to resolve it as quickly as possible.

14 Q. But we're two or three years on now?

15 A. Yes

16 Q. Was it because the decks needed to be cleared becauseyou didn't want cases like this showing up in the

18 integrity review, as you call it?

A. I don't think it was anything to do with debts, I think
 it was to do with branches like that shouldn't have
 issues that need resolving three weeks old, never mind

three years.

23 Q. So the bug was a significant issue for the Post Office?

24 **A.** Yes.

25 **Q.** It was covered in 2010 at some point. Was it causing 108

Horizon integrity review."

problem in case either branch appears in the ongoing

"I need to be clear that there is no unresolved

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you some considerable concern, even aside from the integrity review, that by 2013 you still didn't have a clear picture as to who was affected and how?

A. No, because my belief was that if there was a discrepancy -- if the receipts and payments impacted a branch, then the balancing amount would land in our discrepancy account and we'd got the discrepancy account cleared down so that we could see any figure that was -- because normally in a discrepancy account you would do your branch trading, money would go into the discrepancy account, the subpostmaster would pay it or we'd repay the postmaster, and that amount would clear down to zero. So basically the account, at that kind of time, in 2013, was very clean.

So if any branch had a receipts and payments mismatch, we would see it eventually, not in a particularly timely manner, but we start seeing figures rolling forward.

**Q.** Can I turn to a different issue. That document can come down, please.

Can we look -- and this is to do with remote access -- at POL00023432. Can we look at the second page first, please. Just to explain, the reason I'm asking you these questions is because they concern your engagement with subpostmasters and your knowledge about 109

"I have attached notes of the interview should you want to refer to them although they are rather long. There are two issues which the suspended subpostmaster, Graham Ward, raised ..."

So just some context here, stopping at that point, Graham Ward was a subpostmaster at that branch, the Rivenhall branch, whose contract was terminated, we know whose appeal against contract termination was dismissed, who became one of the 555 Claimants in the Group Litigation and who is a Core Participant in this Inquiry. His evidence was read to the Chairman in the course of the Human Impact hearings last year.

In short, he's a subpostmaster who lost his job, whose marriage broke down and who was left in debt with four young children.

Now, Mr Lusher encloses the interview transcript and gives a summary. Let's read the summary together:

"1. He claims that on a number of occasions figures have appeared in the cheques line of his account. He suspects these have been input into his account electronically without his knowledge or consent. He is certain that he has cleared and remmed out cheques in the correct way and tells me that cheques must be properly cleared on the system to progress to a new account."

remote access. So the chain starts, and it's only a two email chain, from Mr Lusher -- can you see that at the foot of the page -- who is a contracts adviser in the network support team in Norwich.

5 A. Yes

6 Q. Just explain shortly what that role involved.

**A.** They are responsible for making sure that the contracts
8 were applied to subpostmasters and for -- by the
9 subpostmasters. They would be, if I remember right,
10 responsible for signing off any debt recoveries, major
11 debt recoveries. I never really saw a job description.
12 But contracts managers, we were regularly -- they would
13 be involved in becoming aware of debt and so there would

be involved in becoming aware of debt and so there would be quite a lot of conversation, communication between
 contract managers and myself, some more than others.

16 Q. If we go to the top of the page, we can see it's
17 an email from Mr Lusher to you of 15 October 2008, and
18 he says:

"Hi Andrew

"I spoke to you a few days ago about a suspension at Rivenhall. From our conversation, I believe that you had a good understanding of the problem and I would be grateful for further guidance. Rivenhall is a one position rural branch -- the only abnormal product being an ATM.

Just stopping there, can you explain what you
 understand from what is being described there from
 Mr Ward's account?

- 4 A. What he's saying is that he's seeing cheques appear on
   5 his cheque line that he doesn't believe he has taken and
   6 input to the Horizon System.
- 7 Q. What does he seeing checks appearing on his cheque line8 mean?
- 9 A. You can pull up a cheque holdings at any point which
  10 will show the values that have been input there and that
  11 will be what he's seeing.
- 12 Q. He is saying that he has cleared and remmed the cheques.13 What does he mean by that?
- A. So at end of day you would -- well, not necessarily at the end of the day, when the postman arrives for, say, 4.00, just before then you will look to see what cheques you've got, check them against your cheque line, make any adjustments if need be because people will make mistakes of pressing cash, like they do every time. So you need to introduce a cheque there. Rem out the cheques. I can't remember the order of it but basically you rem out the cheques which means you're dispatching them --
- **Q.** You handed the cheque over?
- 25 A. That's what you're telling the system. That wouldn't --

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1 you'd do that at the same time but not precisely the 2 same time and you would need to clear the cheque line, 3 cheque account. 4 Q. le l've received a cheque from somebody l've now passed 5 the cheque on? 6 Α. That's right. 7 Q. In physically pass the cheque on? 8 A. Yes, that's what he's telling Horizon. There is a bit 9 and I'm afraid I can't describe it properly but there is 10 two elements to the process. One is the remming out of the cheques and the other one is to clear the cheque 11 12 line. It sounds -- now it sounds -- there was some 13 logic to it but, at the moment, I can't explain why rem 14 out isn't there. But it did cause problems in terms of 15 if you get distracted and you forget you are doing it 16 and that can result in cheques appearing when you don't 17 expect them to be. 18 Q. What he is saying is that he's certain he has cleared 19 and remmed out the cheques and yet there are some 20 cheques appearing on his cheque line which suggests that 21 he is still sitting on cheques? 22 A. Yes. 23 Q. He paragraph 2: 24 "He has made good about £10,000 and not made good 25 about £11,000 of the shortages which arise from these 1 £200 example. 2 Α. Yes. 3 Q. You would agree, I think, that this is a very serious 4 issue being raised? 5 A. Yes, if it's backed up, yes. 6 Q. It's serious for the subpostmaster, would you agree, 7 because on his account he's lost £10,000 of his own 8 money, yes? 9 A. Yes. Oh, yes. The system is showing that he owes a further £11,000. 10 Q. It's serious for that reason, would you agree? 11 12 Α. 13 **Q.** It's serious for him because he's been suspended? 14 Α. Q. And it's serious for him because his contract might be 15 16 terminated and he would lose his job and his livelihood? 17 A. Yes. Q. It's serious, would you agree, for the Post Office 18 because if a subpostmaster's saying that the system 19 20 that's used across the country has introduced a phantom

1 figures. He claims that because of the abnormal nature 2 of these entries, the shortages have not just rolled 3 over from one branch trading statement to the next, but have accumulated -- each being added to the last (eg if 4 the account in period one showed a shortage of £100 5 6 which was not made good, then the shortage shown in period 2 would be £200)." 7 8 Then just scroll down a little bit: "The subpostmaster's contract remain suspended. 9 10 I would be very grateful for your expert comment and 11 advice." 12 You would agree that the account summarised by 13 Mr Lusher of what Mr Ward was saying was a clear and 14 coherent one? 15 A. It appears it, yes. 16 Q. He's saying he has put £10,000 of his own money in 17 already but he's not made good another £11,000 of 18 loss --19 A. Yes. 20 Q. -- and he's saying that the system's magnifying the 21 loss, even without him doing anything by simply moving 22 from one trading period to the next. 23 A. Well, more than that. It's doubling up every trading 24 Q. Yes it's magnifying, doubling up. He uses the £100 to 25 114 1 A. Yes. 2 **Q.** Can we turn to yourresponse, please, page 1. You 3 respond on 23 October, so his email was the 15th, this 4 is 23 October 2008, and you say: 5 "1. The only way POL can impact branch accounts 6 remotely is via the transaction correction process." 7 Reading a couple of sentences on -- sorry I will 8 read the next sentence: "These have to be seared by the branch in the same 9 10 way that in/out remittances are I guess. If we were 11 able to do this, the integrity of the system would be 12 flawed. Fujitsu have the ability to impact branch 13 records via the message store but have extremely 14 rigorous procedures in place to prevent adjustments 15 being made without prior authorisation -- within POL and 16 Fujitsu." 17 Now, in your witness statement, you say that you 18 were aware that Fujitsu had what you describe as remote 19 access and this is an email suggesting you knew at least 20 by 2008, yes? 21 **A**. Yes. 22 **Q**. And --23 A. I would say that my response there was a repetition of

sum into his cheque line of account, that's very

Q. If it's correct, it's a serious issue with the Horizon

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serious?

System?

A. Yes.

a -- I would imagine from this point I went to someone

in Fujitsu or our IT side, asked them that question that

- 1 Alan had posed and repeated it back there. I don't
- 2 think that kind of would have come just from me.
- 3 Q. Well, I was going to suggest this first part of
- 4 paragraph 1 suggests some familiarity by you with
- 5 Fujitsu's access controls, doesn't it?
- 6 A. As a result of me -- Alan posed the question "Can we
- get -- can there be remote access" and I will have asked 7
- 8 the question based on that question.
- 9 Q. How had you satisfied yourself as to the security of the
- 10 Fujitsu access controls?
- I don't think I did. 11 Α.
- How could you be satisfied that they were being 12 Q.
- 13 monitored effectively by Fujitsu?
- A. I couldn't. 14
- Q. We know from some evidence that a man called Richard 15
- 16 Roll gave in the Group Litigation and indeed from
- 17 documents disclosed by Fujitsu to us in this Inquiry,
- that Fujitsu's third line of support were routinely 18
- 19 using their ability to go into the system in a way that
- 20 was described by them as "off piste". Did you know
- 21 about that?
- 22 A.
- 23 Q. That wasn't in accordance with the regularisation
- 24 controls and protocols that were in place?
- 25 Α. Yes, I wasn't aware of that.

- 1 A. I'm saying that from -- without any legal background to
- 2 give me the authority to say that.
- 3 Q. You say that Mr Ward made a "casual accusation". In
- 4 what respect was it casual?
- 5 A. He didn't present any evidence to support his claim.
- 6 Q. Casual means free and easy, doesn't it?
- 7 A. Bad choice of words, sorry.
- 8 Q. Sorry?
- 9 A. A bad choice of wording at the time.
- Q. Is that what this is? I mean, "casual" means without 10
- 11 thought, free and easy, something just falls from the
- 12 lips without any real thought being given to it. How
- 13 did you know it was a casual observation, a casual
- 14 accusation?
- A. As I say, I cannot recall what investigation I carried 15
- out at the time. 16
- Q. Whether you carried out an investigation or not doesn't 17
- tell us why you suggested to Mr Lusher that this 18
- subpostmaster was making a casual accusation, does it? 19
- 20 A. I've already acknowledged that the term "casual" wasn't
- 21
- 22 Q. You didn't know whether it was a casual accusation or
- 23 not, did you?
- 24 Α. I'm sorry, I feel as though we're going round in
- 25 circles. I would have carried out an investigation.

- 1 Q. So what evidence did you have to believe that Fujitsu
- 2 were following protocol?
- 3 Just what I'd been told. Α.
- 4 Q. Who had told you that?
- 5 A. I don't know.
- 6 But you had been told something by the subpostmaster?
- 7 Yes
- Q. Why did you accept what Fujitsu were telling you rather 8
- 9 than what the subpostmaster was telling you?
- 10 I'm not sure if I did. I'm not sure what research
- 11 I did, investigation into the branch.
- Q. Anyway, you continue: 12

13 "These controls form the core of our court defence

14 if we get to that stage. He makes a casual accusation

15 that is extremely serious to the business. As usual he

16 should either produce the evidence for this or withdraw

17 the accusation."

18

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By saying these controls form the core of our court defence, you were indicating to Mr Lusher, weren't you, that it was okay to say to Mr Graham Ward that the

21 Post Office was prepared to go all the way here "We're

22 willing to stand up in court and defend Horizon and its

- 23 operation by Fujitsu", weren't you?
- Yes, I think so, yes. 24
- 25 Q. You say that --

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- 1 I assume I would have carried out an investigation.
- Q. There's no reference to an investigation in this email 2
- 3 by you.
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 Q. Is there?
- 6 A. I don't know. I can't see the full email.
- 7 Q. Have a look at the full email. (Pause)
- 8 Can we move it down a little bit?
- 9 Yes, yes, please do.
- There's no reference in that to you carrying out 10
- an investigation at all, is there? 11
- A. That's correct. 12
- Q. So I'll ask again: how did you know that this was 13
- 14 a casual accusation by Mr Ward?
- 15 A. Reading that, I should have done an investigation.
- Q. You say that that accusation, if we just go back up to paragraph 1, and in the second part of paragraph 1, 17
- 18 starting "These controls", in the second sentence:
- 19 "He makes a casual accusation that is extremely 20 serious to the business."
- 21 Can you see that?
- 22 A. Yes.

16

- 23 Why was it extremely serious to the business? Q.
- 24 Because if the accusation was correct, then that would
- 25 support the lack of integrity into the system.

- Q. Why was the seriousness of the business seemingly your 1
- 2 principal concern, rather than the merits of the issue
- 3 that had been raised by this subpostmaster?
- 4 A. I think the nature of the business at -- the state of
- 5 play within the business at that time, with the concern
- 6 about Horizon integrity.
- Q. This is 2008. This is before the Computer Weekly 7
- 8 article had broken.
- 9 A. Okay.
- 10 Q. Was the integrity of the business your principal concern
- 11 rather than the actual merits of an issue that had been
- raised by a subpostmaster? 12
- 13 A. No, I would say exactly the opposite and I'm not happy
- about this. 14
- Q. You're not happy about? 15
- 16 Α. About my actions on this one --
- 17 Q. You continue --
- A. -- or lack of action. 18
- 19 You continue:
- 20 "As usual he should either produce the evidence

21 for this or withdraw the accusation."

> This was a subpostmaster saying that the system was introducing phantom figures information his cheque

24 line

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25 A. Yes.

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- 1 Q. Who had determined that it was for subpostmasters to
- 2 prove that what they were saying was true, rather than
- 3 raising an issue and it being investigated by P&BA?
- 4 A. The --
- 5 Q. le before we'll start an investigation, you've got to
- 6 prove what you say is true, otherwise we won't start
- 7 an investigation.
- 8 A. No. No, I think -- I think this probably suggests that
- 9 this was done in the very early days of me taking on the
- 10 role. Would that tie up with dates? I would say that
- 11 I got significantly better it my job as I gained
- 12 experience on doing it and I'm not happy looking at
- 13 this.

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- 14 Q. You commenced that sentence:
  - "As usual he should ..."
- 16 That suggests a stock line, doesn't it?
- A. Well, so the bulk of what you are looking at is 17
- probably the bulk of my work. So if a subpostmaster 19

disputing transaction corrections, that was at that time

- 20 said "This transaction correction isn't correct", we'd
- 21 ask them why they're saying that. So "we provided the
- 22 evidence for the transaction correction, what are you
- producing to suggest it's not correct?" I think I would 24 have -- if this would have been three or four years
- 25 later, I think I would have dealt with it in

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- Q. How could he possibly produce evidence of that? 1
- 2 You can print the cheque listing reports. It can be
- printed out. So he could have done before and afters 3
  - with the remming out of cheques. So if he remmed out
- 5 £100 of cheques and then it reappears again, then those
- 6 receipts --
- 7 Q. So why didn't you say that? "Just show us these". You
- 8 are being very combative here, aren't you? "He makes
- 9 a casual accusation" --
- 10 A. Yes.

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- 11 Q. -- "that is extremely serious to the business ... he
- should either produce evidence or withdraw it." 12
- 13 Yes, I would agree that this is not the kind of letter
- 14 I would typically write.
- 15 Q. You seem concerned that he was slandering the business,
- 16 don't you?
- 17 A. Not really.
- 18 Q. Produce evidence or withdraw that accusation, is what
- 19 you're saying here, aren't you?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. Would you put the reputation of the business ahead of
- 22 investigating the merits of what was being said by
- 23 a subpostmaster?
- 24 A. No, that would not be the way I would like to think
- 25 I approached a job.

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- 1 a completely different way.
- 2 Q. In paragraph 2, you say:
  - "What 'the abnormal nature of these entries'
- 4 means, I assume no-one knows."
  - He was saying that figures appeared in his cheque
- 6 line of account without his knowledge or consent.
- 7 That's pretty abnormal, isn't it?
- 8 A. Mm-hm.

3

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- 9 Q. Why were you saying "What" -- quoting back to him, to
- Mr Lusher -- "'the abnormal nature of these entries' 10
- 11 means, I assume no-one knows", when it was perfectly
- 12 obvious that they were abnormal, they were phantom
- 13 figures appearing in the cheque line? Why were you
- 14 taking that point when it was perfectly clear what this
- 15 subpostmaster was saying?
- I can't respond to that, sorry. 16 Α.
- 17 Q. You continue:
- 18 "The implication is that he acknowledges that when
- 19 he 'made good' at branch trading he did not and
- 20 falsified his branch trading statement and rolled the
- 21 loss forward."
- 22 You were being told by Mr Lusher that the 23 subpostmaster had put £10,000 of his own money in,
- 24 weren't you, in the previous email?
- 25 **A**. Yes.

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- 1 Q. And you here appear to be criticising the subpostmaster
- 2 for doing so, saying that he's guilty of falsification,
- 3 aren't you? When he made good, ie that's putting the
- 4 £10,000 in --
- 5 A. I think what I was saying is he's told Horizon that he's
- 6 put £10,000 in but then immediately the -- so he does
- 7 his cash declaration at branch trading, £10,000 short,
- 8 he makes good cash 10,000, so it balances. The next day
- 9 the £10,000 shortage reappears again, which would
- 10 suggest he's not physically put the £10,000 into the
- 11 till.
- 12 Q. That's not what you are saying there at all.
- 13 A. Isn't it?
- 14 Q. You are saying that the system is showing a £20,000 debt
- on the cheque line, he acknowledges some of that debt
- when he's made good at branch, by putting £10,000 in,
- and he's, therefore, falsified his branch trading
- 18 statements, aren't you?
- 19 A. No, I don't think so. I mean, we're not talking about
- 20 the cheque line anyway here. We're talking about the
- 21 cash position. So what I'm saying is that the derived
- 22 cash position was £20,000 that should be cash. He only
- 23 physically had £10,000 in the till. He's then told --
- 24 he's then increased his cash declaration to 20,000. The
- 25 system is rolled forward in a balanced state but because 125
- 1 A. I don't -- "guilty" doesn't sound a --
- 2 Q. It's not a nice word, is it?
- 3 A. No, no.
- 4 Q. But it's accurate.
- 5 A. No, I don't think it is.
- 6 Q. You assume that --
- 7 A. I believed that the loss was proper to the branch.
- 8 I think guiltiness is not something that I was -- would
- 9 be thinking.
- 10 Q. You assume that he's culpable for wrongdoing --
- 11 A. I believed he was --
- 12 Q. -- unless he prove otherwise?
- 13 A. -- culpable for the loss, yes, unless he can give me any
- 14 indication he was not.
- 15 Q. Where he was saying that the problem is due to an error
- in Horizon, its programming, a bug or some such in the
- 17 code or in the data, how was he to prove that?
- 18 A. I guess I can't answer that.
- 19 Q. We've heard evidence from many subpostmasters that once
- 20 they were suspended they were locked out of their
- 21 offices. You knew that, didn't you?
- 22 A. Probably. It wasn't --
- 23  $\,$  Q.  $\,$  This subpostmaster was suspended. If he was locked out
- of his office, how would he prove it?
- 25 A. Yes, fair point.

- the £10,000 didn't physically go into the till, when he did his next cash declaration the £10,000 shortage was
- 3 still there again.
- 4 Q. Moving on at the foot of the page, two paragraphs up,5 you say:

"If that does not satisfy him he would need to establish that his trial balance actually balances. If it does (and it will) he would need to demonstrate where balancing [£10,000] element of the loss is.

"These are all things for him to prove. If he can support any of his allegations we will investigate -- and be extremely worried whilst doing so."

In the course of these paragraphs you say, I think four times, that it's down to the subpostmaster to prove; for the subpostmaster to establish; for the subpostmaster to demonstrate; for the subpostmaster to support what he's saying.

Was the assumption by you that, if there was no obvious answer or cause for a discrepancy, it was assumed to be the fault of the subpostmaster unless they proved otherwise?

- 22 A. I think that's probably a fair comment.
- Q. And, therefore, you are applying an approach of assuming
   that the subpostmaster's guilty until he proves he's
- 25 innocent?

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- Q. What is the answer to it?
- 2 A. I don't know.
- 3 Q. Is this email a reflection of the fact that it was
- 4 important for you to maintain the position that Horizon
- 5 was infallible, was foolproof, and that if he could
- 6 support any of his allegations that would unfortunately
- 7 undermine that position?
- 8 A. I think it's a reflection of me being new to a role and
- 9 not doing it very well at that point and, as I said, if
- 10 I was doing it a couple of years later I would have
- 11 approached it a lot better. So I think I was probably
- following the company line to some extent at that point.
- 13 Q. You say, at the foot of the page, in the last line:

"If he can support any of his allegations we will investigating -- and be extremely worried whilst doing so."

17 Is that because it would undermine the 18 infallibility of Horizon, the line that the Post Office 19 took?

- A. Yes, I think if cheques were -- phantom cheques were
   appearing on a branch's account, then I would be
   extremely worried and I've kind of agonised over that
   concept for quite a while and I still cannot understand
- 24 how that would happen. But if it does, it does.

Wouldn't it cause an extreme worry that a man suspended 128

- from his job, about to lose his livelihood, career and marriage was, in fact, innocent of any wrongdoing?
- 3 A. Yes.
- Q. Was the attitude of mind that we see displayed in this
   email reflective of a culture in which you worked and at
   this time?
- 7 A. Possibly.
- Q. Put it another way: if others in your department had
  been asked to respond to Mr Lusher's email, would they
  have responded broadly as you did on the key issues or
  are you the outlier that took a particularly hard line
- 12 on subpostmasters?
- 13 A. No, I think the former.
- 14 Q. The former?
- 15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Can I turn to a related email exchange concerning
 17 Mr Ward, POL00002268. Just forgive me whilst I catch up
 18 with my hard copy papers.

Can we turn to page 2, please. Just scroll down just so we can see the signature block, please. This is an email dated 1 February 2010 from Hayley Fowell, external relations manager at the Royal Mail Group, and it concerns Mr Ward, the man we have been looking at. It's to David Smith, Michele Graves and Dave Hulbert:

"Hi all

"Andy [I think that's you now copied into this chain], you also asked me for an update on Mr Ward recently -- if you have any new info, can you please let Hayley know."

Then at the top of the page, you reply:

"Hi Hayley, we're due to restart our former agent debt recovery process. I just wanted to check the recent communications to ensure there was nothing there to suggest we should not do these. Let me know if we should not pursue at this stage."

In this email chain, there's a reference to the "stock line", the stock line which states that Horizon is robust. Is that something that you were aware of?

- **A.** Yes.
- 15 Q. Would you agree that a stock line is a standard16 response, a hackneyed response --
- **A.** Yes
- 18 Q. -- to which no real thought or attention has been given?
- **A.** No.
- Q. Does that not reflect then your understanding of the useof the phrase "stock line"?
- A. I would say my understanding is that it's used byeverybody, but I don't think it undermines the integrity
- 24 behind that belief.
- **Q.** You say you wanted to:

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

"I am providing our stock line which states the system is robust but in case we get more questions on this please can you advise if you have any record of an investigation for this individual and any relevant details -- Graham Ward, Rivenhall Oak Stores & Post Office in Witham."

Can we go back over the page to page 1, please -the bottom half of the page, please. Michele Graves,
the Executive Correspondence Manager for the Executive
Correspondence Team, replies:

"I have been corresponding with Mr Ward for a while. You may recall he is on the spreadsheet I pulled together. I'll send over what I have. The issue is basically the same -- Horizon is at fault -- and he has focused on some cheques despatched from his branch that [I think that's] then showed up on his cheque line. The termination went to appeal and the decision to terminate was upheld. Mr Ward's MP is Brooks Newmark who I believe has raised Parliamentary questions re Horizon integrity.

"... check recent communications don't suggest
 that we shouldn't restart the debt recovery process."

restarting of the debt recovery process?
 A. It depends what the communications have been and whether

Why would the recent communications affect the

- the business approach had been changed.

  This was now some time on from your response in 2008
- Q. This was now some time on from your response in 2008
   that there would be no further investigation by the Post
   Office, unless Mr Ward could prove what he was saying,
   and asserting your confidence in Fujitsu's security
   procedures.

Were you concerned at all that Mr Ward was continuing to protest his innocence and to seek answers about why there had been unexplained entries in his accounts?

- A. I was conscious that he was obviously still protesting
   his innocence, but I wasn't doing anything about it
   because there was nothing I could do about it.
- 19 Q. Why was there nothing you could do about it?
- 20 A. Because there would be no access to Horizon information21 at that point.
- **Q.** Why?
- 23 A. You'd have to ask Fujitsu and our IT department that.
- 24 You can only -- you could only go back so far.
- 25 Q. How at that stage could Mr Ward establish his innocence?

Α.	I can't say.	1		Now, let's just remind ourselves of what Solution
MR	BEER: Yes, thank you very much, Mr Winn. Those are the	2		One referred to, Mr Winn. Solution one was:
	only questions I ask at the moment.	3		"Alter the Horizon Branch figure at the counter to
	I wonder whether we might take a 15-minute break	4		show the discrepancy. Fujitsu would have to manually
	and then the questions for the Core Participants can	5		write an entry value to the local branch account."
	commence at 3 pm?	6		Then it says:
SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, that's fine.	7		"IMPACT when the branch comes to complete next
MR	BEER: Thank you very much, sir.	8		Trading Period they would have a discrepancy, which they
(2.4	7 pm)	9		would have to bring to account."
	(A short break)	10		Now under "RISK":
(3.0	0 pm)	11		"This has significant data integrity concerns and
		12		could lead to questions of 'tampering' with the branch
	questions first.	13		system and could generate questions around how the
	Questioned by MR STEIN	14		discrepancy was caused. This solution could have moral
MR	-	15		implications of Post Office changing branch data without
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	16		informing the branch."
	mistresses.	17		Now, you've just been asked before the short
	I am going to take you back, first of all, to the	18		break, a few minutes ago, a number of questions about
				Rivenhall Post Office and about questions that related
				to interference with the data that was being seen by the
				postmaster there, Mr Ward, yes? At this particular
				meeting you are being told it is possible to tamper with
	•			branch office accounts and, indeed, the conclusion is,
				as regards that, that that could have moral implications
	Solution One, please, in yellow thank you.	25		of Post Office changing branch data without informing 134
	the branch.	1		after the luncheon adjournment today, the one that is
	Was this the first time that you'd learnt that	2		dated 8 October 2010 and Mr Beer took you to this and
	Fujitsu could alter branch accounts?	3		dealt with particular points.
A.	I don't know.	4		Can I take you to the second paragraph. So this
Q.	Well, it's a fairly significant issue to have come up in	5		is about the mismatch meeting notes:
		6		"The above includes Fujitsu's initial analysis and
		7		proposed solution/s."
Α.	Yes.	8		Can we scroll up to the above bit please, Frankie.
Q.	As an example did you say to yourself that we'd better	9		So the attachments in relation to this email are
	do something about Rivenhall because this appears to be	10		the "ReceiptsPayments notes[version]5", which we believe
	-	11		are the mismatch notes that you have been asked a number
		12		of questions about and then, after the colon,
Α.	_	13		highlighted there, "Lost Discrepancies", that's
	_	14		a document drafted by Mr Jenkins, okay.
		15		Let's go back to what we're seeing in the middle
				of this email. You said in your evidence today to the
Q.				Chair of this Inquiry that you thought that Fujitsu had
-				proposed the three solutions in the mismatch meeting
				notes?
Δ			Δ	Yes.
_				Now, this particular email from Alan Simpson who
_			٠.	attended that meeting is saying the above the above
	I will take you to another document, please, which is	23		attachments includes Fujitsu's initial analysis and
٠.				
	POL00055410. Thank you. Further down the page please,	24		proposed solutions. Does that help you in your
	MR SIR MR (2.4 (3.0 MR MR A. Q. A. Q	I wonder whether we might take a 15-minute break and then the questions for the Core Participants can commence at 3 pm?  SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, that's fine.  MR BEER: Thank you very much, sir.  (2.47 pm)  (A short break)  (3.00 pm)  MR BEER: Sir, thank you. I think Mr Stein is going to ask questions first.  Questioned by MR STEIN  MR STEIN: Good afternoon, Mr Winn, my name is Sam Stein.  I represent a large number of subpostmasters and mistresses.  I am going to take you back, first of all, to the mismatch document, which I hope I've got the correct reference number to, which is POL00028838.  Can we go to page 3, please. Mr Winn, you were taken to this document earlier on by Mr Beer who highlighted with you the various solutions that were discussed on this page. Frankie, can you highlight Solution One, please, in yellow thank you.  133  the branch.  Was this the first time that you'd learnt that Fujitsu could alter branch accounts?  A. I don't know.  Q. Well, it's a fairly significant issue to have come up in this particular meeting, bearing in mind you are dealing with Rivenhall; do you agree?  A. Yes.  Q. As an example did you say to yourself that we'd better do something about Rivenhall because this appears to be show that Mr Ward there may be right, that data there could be interfered with without his knowledge?  A. I think there's a difference between entering data to resolve a problem rather than what implication was for Mr Ward of somebody introducing cheques for no apparent reason.  Q. I see. Did you, in any way, investigate the issue that comes from this when you thought about Mr Ward's situation?  A. No.  Q. You understand the link, don't you?  A. I do now, yes. I probably wouldn't have at that point.	MR BEER: Yes, thank you very much, Mr Winn. Those are the only questions I ask at the moment.  I wonder whether we might take a 15-minute break and then the questions for the Core Participants can 5 commence at 3 pm? 6  SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, that's fine. 7  MR BEER: Thank you very much, sir. (2.47 pm) 99  (A short break) 10  (3.00 pm) (A short break) 10  (3.00 pm) 11  MR BEER: Sir, thank you. I think Mr Stein is going to ask questions first. 13  Questioned by MR STEIN 14  MR STEIN: Good afternoon, Mr Winn, my name is Sam Stein. 15  I represent a large number of subpostmasters and mistresses. 17  I am going to take you back, first of all, to the mismatch document, which I hope I've got the correct 19  reference number to, which is POL00028838. 20  Can we go to page 3, please. Mr Winn, you were 21  taken to this document earlier on by Mr Beer who 22  highlighted with you the various solutions that were 23  discussed on this page. Frankie, can you highlight 24  Solution One, please, in yellow thank you. 25  133  the branch. 21  Was this the first time that you'd learnt that 2  Fujitsu could after branch accounts? 3  A. I don't know. 4  Q. Well, it's a fairly significant issue to have come up in 55  this particular meeting, bearing in mind you are dealing 36  with Rivenhall; do you agree? 7  A. Yes. 8  Q. As an example did you say to yourself that we'd better 99  do something about Rivenhall because this appears to be 50  show that Mr Ward there may be right, that data there 11  could be interfered with without his knowledge? 12  A. I think there's a difference between entering data to 7  resolve a problem rather than what implication was for 14  Mr Ward of somebody introducing cheques for no apparent 15  resolve a problem rather than what implication was for 14  Mr Ward of somebody introducing cheques for no apparent 15  resolve a problem rather than what implication was for 14  Mr Ward of somebody introducing cheques for no apparent 15  resolve a problem rather than what implication was for 14  Mr Ward of som	MR BEER: Yes, thank you very much, Mr Winn. Those are the only questions I ask at the moment.  I wonder whether we might take a 15-minute break and then the questions for the Core Participants can commence at 3 pm?  SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, that's fine.  RR BEER: Thank you very much, sir.  (2.47 pm)  (A short break)  (3.00 pm)  MR BEER: Sir, thank you. I think Mr Stein is going to ask questions first.  Questioned by MR STEIN  MR STEIN: Good afternoon, Mr Winn, my name is Sam Stein.  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I think there's a difference between entering data to resolve a problem rather than what implication was for Mr Ward of somebody introducing cheques for no apparent reason.  Q. I see. Did you, in any way, investigate the issue that comes from this when you thought about Mr Ward's situation?  A. I do now, yes. I probably wouldn't have at that point.

- 1 the solutions that you have been taken to today?
- 2 A. It supports what we were saying, yes.
- 3 Q. Now, as regards those solutions, did anybody consider at
- 4 the meetings in relation to the mismatch bug and
- 5 software error, did anybody consider the legal
- 6 implications of keeping information back from
- 7 subpostmasters being prosecuted?
- 8 A. I can't remember that being discussed, no.
- 9 Q. As an example, did anybody suggest that might be
- 10 a criminal offence of keeping that information back?
- 11 Α.
- 12 Q. No?
- 13 A. No.
- Lastly in relation to this, the email is referring to: 14 Q.
- "The above includes Fujitsu's initial analysis and 15 16 proposed solution/s, whilst the other documents the
- 17 outputs from various meetings held this week."
- 18 Let's take that apart into two bits. So it looks
- 19 as though, regarding the mismatch discussions, that
- 20 there were various meetings. Is that your recollection?
- 21 A. I don't remember attending various meetings -- it may
- 22 have been phone conferences rather than meetings.
- 23 **Q.** Would it be normal for these meetings to have notes
- 24 taken?
- 25 A. Well, somebody would have been responsible, yes,
- 1 there has been no re-occurrence to the phantom
- 2 transactions but there still may be problems."
- 3 Let's unpick what this all means. Romec the Royal
- 4 Mail or Post Office engineers; is that correct?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. This is referring to phantom transactions coming up on
- 7 the screen; do you agree?
- 8 Α.
- 9 Q. Phantom transactions in relation to the date of this
- particular entry seems to have gone back to quite early 10
- 11 days of Legacy Horizon; do you agree?
- 12 A.
- 13 Q. Were you aware of phantom transactions as being
- 14 a problem?
- 15 A. No.
- Do you remember speaking to Colleen Ingham, we think, in 16 Q.
- 17 about 2004 about phantom or ghost transactions?
- 18 Α. No, sorry, no.
- So help us a little bit further in relation to this. 19 Q.
- 20 Bearing in mind that we're talking about phantom or
- 21 ghost transactions appearing on a subpostmaster's
- 22 screen, was this some information that would have been

- 23 useful for your consideration in handling postmaster
- 24
- 25 A. Yes, I think it would be fair to say that when I left

- 1 I believe so, yes.
- 2 Q. Presumably, the end result of such meetings would be 3 notes and minutes?
- 4 Yes. Δ
- 5 Q. I am going to take you, please, to then a different
- 6 document, which is POL00029224, page 5.
- 7 If you can scroll down the page. This document,
- 8 I am afraid, is difficult. We might be able to improve
- 9 it by expanding it slightly, Frankie. Go further down
- 10 the page, please, and again a little bit further down
- 11 again. You will see at the bottom of that page, if we 12 can highlight from "Information: Ki Barnes has called
- 13 in", can we zero on that and expand and highlight.
- 14 Now, this particular document, as you can see,
- 15 it's 2001, it looks like, and the reference is to
- 16 phantom transactions, okay?
- 17 A. Mm-hm.
- Q. So I'll read what we have here. This is a record of 18
- 19 this matter being dealt with as a PEAK, which is part of
- 20 the system being used by Fujitsu:
- 21 "I am unsure as to what to do with this call now.
- 22 Romec have been to site and state that they have
- 23 actually seen the phantom transactions, so it is not
- 24 just the PM's word now. They have fitted suppressors to
- the kit but the PM is still having problems. As yet 25
  - 138
- 1 the business I didn't accept the concept of phantom
- 2 transactions and that was in 2016.
- 3 Q. Right. Now, in your evidence earlier on, when you were
- 4 discussing matters with Mr Beer, you appeared to be
- 5 familiar with the concept of phantom transactions being
- 6 raised. You weren't saying to him "I don't know what
- 7 you're talking about, Mr Beer". So when did you start
- 8 to become aware of the topic of phantom transactions?
- 9 A. I would have said it would be when Second Sight started
- their investigation but thatkind of feels a bit too 10
- late, to be honest. So I probably heard the term before 11
- 12 but I struggled with the concept of it.
- 13 Q. Ms Ingham, who ran the Cockfield Post Office in County
- 14 Durham recalls you speaking to her about ghost
- 15 transactions in around 2004?
- A. 2004, okay. 16
- 17 Q. Thinking back, do you think that's possible?
- 18 A. I'm trying to think what role I'd be in in 2004.
- I guess that was in problem management, was it? 19
- 20 Q. Very early days of that, we think.
- 21 A. No, I don't know if I was in problem management then or
- 22 in the Transaction Improvement Team, Network Improvement
  - 23 Team.
  - 24 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: If it helps, I think early on in your
- 25 evidence you were referred to paragraph 1 of your

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1		witness statement where you suggested that you'd gone to
2		the problem management team in 2005 but, in fact, there
3		was a document which showed that you were there in 2003.
4	Δ	Okay

A. Okay.

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MR STEIN: So it seems likely this had been once you moved into the problem management role. Do you think then, looking back and looking at the collection of information you now have, that there was an awareness within the Post Office of phantom transactions?

A client of mine recalls speaking to you about ghost transactions, that at that time in 2004 you probably did know something about the topic of phantom transactions.

14 A. Obviously, it had been raised. I wouldn't argue with 15 your client's recollections. I don't recall it myself.

16 Q. Now I will ask you about a different document, please, 17 POL00029719.

> Now, this is an email, Mr Winn, from Rod Ismay. You can see the date of this. This is 3 July 2013, sent to you and the subject matter is "Branches affected by Receipts Payments and Discrepancies issue", okay. So it's a follow-on from such matters. If you go further down, you can see that it says:

"1 of 2 emails re the 2 branches on the other list

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"The branch was included in investigations into receipts payments problems at the beginning of October, and was found to be a different problem from the others also under investigation at the time, so was not included in the later spreadsheets sent to POL."

Mr Winn, you have been asked various questions about what happened in the mismatch payments issues and about the different solutions that were proposed to the mismatch difficulties and problems. You've been asked questions about whether the postmasters should have been informed that "Here's a problem, here's a bug", that can affect their accounts.

What happened regarding this? Did you tell postmaster branches that "There's another problem, another bug, that can affect your figures?"

- A. I cannot remember what the outcome from these was. 16
- 17 Q. Do you recall whether there were similar discussions to 18 perhaps keep this buried and not tip off the subpostmasters? 19
- 20 A. No, I'm sorry. Do we know what the name of the branches 21 are, see if that rings any bells with me.
- 22 Q. I'm not sure I do. If I have the information I will 23 come back to you.
- 24 A.
- 25 Next document, please, POL00004694, pages 1 and 2. I'm Q. 143

"Thanks, Rod."

So you are being referred then to the further information.

If we just go down, we'll see therefore the connected email, which says from Pete Newsome to Rod Ismay:

"Rod

"Looks like this branch had a different problem so was removed from the original list. The email below explains what happened and how we advised Post Office on the situation. Have an answer on second branch as well, will send that through shortly."

Again, if we can go further down the page then to the second email, headed from Mark Wright. Then that one from Mark Wright to Pete Newsome, Gareth Jenkins, involving also Steve Parker, Steve Bansal and John Simpkins:

"We've unearthed the following email ..."

Then there's some figures given "122946", and then go to the second page, please, Frankie. It's probably easiest to look at the second paragraph:

"Branch 122946 rolled from TP4 to TP5 on 11 August. They accepted a gain of £34,330.88 which was settled centrally. The BTS shows a trading position of £22,021.65.

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1 grateful.

> So this email dated 10 May 2010 from Nigel Allen to you, and you will see the reference to "Barkham" and then the number appropriate for Barkham "Outstanding losses". This is from Nigel Allen, who was he?

- 6 A. I believe he was a contract manager.
- 7 Right. To you:

"Andy

"What is this [£25,000] of returned cash on 5 Jan? 10 "Has this been properly recorded on the Horizon 11 System?

12 "Was it received back at the Cash Centre?"

13 If we go down to the second page, please, I think 14 a little bit further down, please, thank you. Now, this 15 particular branch concerns Pam Stubbs. Does that name 16 ring a bell?

17 A. It doesn't. I'm afraid.

18 Q. Ms Stubbs was blamed for a shortfall of £28,000. She 19 lost her business and was pursued by the Post Office for 20 settlement of eventually £36,000. She had been told by 21 Fujitsu engineers that the movement of terminals, the 22 putting in and taking out of terminals, without proper 23 safeguards could cause faults. Were you aware of that?

24 That doesn't ring any bells. No.

Q. If we can go further down to the bottom of this 25

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1	particular email and then the starting point for the
2	reference that I'm about to make is "If there is
3	anything specific to investigate". Thank you.
4	So the email is saying:
5	"We are aware of the problems at the bran
6	letter suggests she has done all the checks we (a

"We are aware of the problems at the branch. The letter suggests she has done all the checks we (and NBSC) would have suggested. There is not a lot of value I can add as there is nothing recorded that would account for the different losses

"There are no transaction corrections that account for the losses or that should have compensated for them. She has already checked her transactional records and can see nothing so it is unlikely that customers are suddenly going to start alerting us to strange deposits into their accounts.

"What may or may not be interesting is a [£1,000 transaction correction] issued recently for a cash shortage in a rem to the cash centre. One would have thought that with the issues involved that a mistake like this would not have been made that realising. It is possible they did realise once the rem had gone but smacks of carelessness at least."

Now, that level of judgement in relation to an investigation as regards this branch, which is suggesting that it's careless, is that in the same line 145

1 investigation.

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Q. Then, lastly for my part, and I take you to another
 document POL00090726. Page 15 of this document first.
 Go a little bit further down the page so we can see the
 letter at the bottom, please.

So we can see, Mr Winn, there's a letter from you to Mr Afzal?

8 A. Yes.

Q. So we're going back to the start of this letter and the
date of it, please, if we just show that: 11 October
2011.

"Dear Mr Afzal

"Re Branch Discrepancy

"I'm sorry to learn that your branch has experienced connectivity problems in September. I'm afraid I don't think I am going to be able to help you."

You go on to say this:

"Some transactions will never be recoverable, eg stamp sales whilst others, eg card account withdrawals will be recoverable dependent upon the point at which the communications broke down. I appreciate it is difficult to know where you are if communications are lost."

So Mr Winn, can we establish that in at least 11 October 2011 your knowledge about connectivity 147

as your views earlier, that this is a general view of
 the Post Office, that it's likely to be down to
 subpostmaster fault where there are issues?

4 A. I don't think it particularly states that.

5 Q. Then it goes on to say this:

"If there is anything specific to investigate I am happy to. It may be worth getting something in writing from Fujitsu to confirm there is nothing that could have failed to have polled/software anomalies that will come back to bite us."

Signed "Andy".

12 Is that the right approach, Mr Winn?

13 A. It feels sensible.

14 Q. Does it?

15 A. To me, yes.

16 Q. What about a deeper investigation as to polling issues?

17 A. Well, that would be Fujitsu who would do that.

18 Q. Given at this stage, this is after the other issues that19 you had been made aware of, after the mismatch bug, such

20 discussions in relation to that, you didn't think at

this stage that the best thing to do would be to, in

22 fact, properly investigate this?

23 A. I thought it was -- obviously thought it was worth going

24 back to Fujitsu to get a report on the polling issues

but apart from that I couldn't see any other route for

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1 problems was that it could lose data?

2 A. Yes.

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3 Q. Keep reading:

"However there is a general principle that if a transaction receipt has not been produced by Horizon, the transaction has not completed and cash should not change hands until you are certain of the transaction status. Clearly if recovery takes a period of time, the customer may have left. If the transaction is seen to be recoverable, the option not to proceed with recovery should be chosen."

Then you go on to say this:

"Unfortunately I am not able to offer any relief to branches who may not have followed recovery procedures in full."

So this is clearly a discussion about connectivity issues that may have caused a branch transaction difficulty; do you agree?

19 **A.** Yes.

20 **Q.** Why here are you saying that you are not able to help:

"I'm sorry to learn your branch has experienced
 connectivity problems in September. I'm afraid I don't
 think I'm going to be able to help you."

Why is that the attitude of the Post Office?

25 A. I think there was a recovery process to follow. Quite

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1		why the if it wasn't followed properly, it could
2		cause issues. That must have been a business decision
3		that we're unable to resolve. I can't really remember
4		it well enough, I'm afraid.
5	Q.	Let's be as generous as we can to the Post Office at
6		this juncture. We've got connectivity issues being
7		caused by the system that the Post Office branches have
8		to use, okay. That's at least a large part of this
9		problem. Why isn't the Post Office saying "Sorry to
10		hear about that problem, obviously this at the very
11		least is partly our fault, we will help come sort it out
12		and repay your losses". Why isn't that happening?
13	A.	That sounds reasonable.
14	Q.	It does. Why wasn't it happening, Mr Winn?
15	A.	I can't say.
16	Q.	Can we go then to the page 14, please. Society
17		14 October 2011 to Mr Afzal, Ferry Road Post Office.
18		"Dear Mr Afzal.
19		"Re Branch Discrepancy
20		"I'm sorry doubt I don't think I can assist you
21		any further. The process for disputing losses is via
22		the helpline. As far as I can see there is no evidence

24 an investigation."25 Then:

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manage any losses of connectivity. This does not represent Horizon failure and the business has been very clear that it will not compensate losses due to connectivity break down."

of Horizon failure been presented which would generate

Let's take that apart. What are the processes that were in place for branches to manage any losses of connectivity this way?

8 A. I can't remember but they would be -- on the Horizon
9 Help you would be able to put -- but once you got
10 connectivity back, you could refer to them if you hadn't
11 already got the knowledge of what to do.

12 Q. Those processes clearly don't involve compensation, do13 they?

14 **A.** No.

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15 Q. Because you clear that one up:

"This does not represent Horizon failure and the business has been very clear that it will not compensate losses due to connectivity breakdown."

Let's just understand what you mean by this. Why would the Post Office not compensate subpostmasters for issues caused by connection problems of the Horizon equipment?

A. I cannot recall the process and how it was managed. I'msorry.

25  $\,$  **Q.** As an example, was this directive from the Post Office?

"There are processes in place for branches to manage any losses of connectivity. This does not represent Horizon failure and the business has been very clear that it will not compensate losses [due] to connectivity breakdown.

"As such I cannot suggest who in Post Office Limited might take a different view and be able to help you."

Then if we scroll down to the bottom, we will see it's signing my you:

11 "Yours sincerely

12 "Andrew Winn."

So let's have a look at what you said then to
Mr Afzal:

"I'm sorry but I don't think I can assist you any
further. The process for disputing losses is via the
helpline."

18 Which helpline did you mean?

19 A. NBSC.

Q. NBSC. So via the Post Office helpline, that's the only
 way that Mr Afzal should be able to dispute these
 matters?

23 A. That was the designated route for IT problems, yes.

24 Q. Then it goes on to say -- or you go on to say:

25 "There are processes in place for branches to 150

A. From the wording in my letter I've obviously been up and
 checked the business position at the time and reiterated
 what I've been told.

Q. Is this you -- you were talking earlier about you
 settling into your job and getting better at it after
 a few years. Is this you having settled into the job
 and having got better at it after a few years, Mr Winn?

8 A. That was the business rules which I'm following.

9 Q. Which you are enforcing.

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10 A. Yes, I'm sorry the business rules weren't correct but --

11 Q. Why do connection issues not represent Horizon failure?

12 A. I would regard loss of connectivity as being like losing

Wifi connection, the equivalent, as I understand

14 nowadays. So I wouldn't understand it as Horizon being

at fault. I'd understand it as the first links which

16 you know, a lot of rural branches did suffer from

17 connectivity issues. I mean, my interpretation was that

18 that was not Horizon at fault but it might --

19 Q. So it is just hard luck on subpostmasters; is that20 right, Mr Winn?

A. Well, there's a process -- there was a process to followto recover the transactions.

Q. But to make sure that you are finished with the problem,you finish off by saying:

"As such I cannot suggest who in Post Office might 152

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1 take a different view and be able to help you." 2 So you're saying "That's it"? 3 A. That would imply that I checked with the people who 4 I think might have a different view and already got 5 their opinion. 6 Q. Excuse me one moment. 7 Thank you, Mr Winn. 8 Thank you, sir. 9 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr Stein. 10 Anyone else? Questioned by MS PAGE 11 12 MS PAGE: Yes, please, sir. 13 If I can take us to a document which helps 14 a little bit on the subject of phantom transactions. 15 It's POL00093133. This is an email chain, which you're 16 not actually copied in on but which is makes a reference 17 to you, which may assist. Could we start at the bottom, 18 please, the last page in this so that we read up 19 chronologically. 20 Do you know either of these names Bethany or Sally 21 Buchanan? They seem to be from Customer Service, if 22 that means anything? 23 A. I can't remember --What we've got here is Bethany saying: 24 25 "Are you able to help me with this office or let

> and one or more customers have been given money they were not entitled to and have just kept it."

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So that is the start and if we go up then to response, there's a blank page so we need to go a little buyer thank you, and we can see that this is 27 June 2003 from Terry Rudd in customer relations:

"Thanks for raising this matter with us. An investigation has taken place with Julie Welsh, our contact at Fujitsu, and she accepts that the PM did call the Helpdesk to state that transactions were appearing on the sales stack, but kit was swapped out and the problem did not reoccur. As no further problems were reported, she thought that was the end of the matter.

"As the losses occurred back in January, information relating to this branch has now been archived but your concerns have today been raise with the Problem Management Team who have more experience in dealing with phantom transactions. I am unsure which member of the team will be assigned to the case, but if you have any further questions, the Line Manager for the team is Andy Winn."

Then it sets out a reference code for queries regarding this issue and signs off:

"... Customer Relations [can't help] but I am sure Andy and his team will do their best to resolve this." 155

me know who can help.

"The office had a major software problem back in week 41 (January 2003). After numerous phone calls to NBSC and engineer visits to change cables, monitor et cetera, a software problem was identified and the processor changed. Apparently the screen would take on a mind of its own, jump screens, add items to the sales stack, et cetera. The office balanced £422.74 short that week, which is very unusual for the office -- they are normally within £20 each week.

"The subpostmistress has waited for an error notice to come back, nothing has been received yet and I've checked with Chesterfield several times -- nothing so far. I have also checked the paperwork in the office for week 41, along with week 40 and week 42 and I can't find anything. Is there anything you can do at Dearne

Is that the place where your premises were when you were in problem management?

20 Yes, that's correct. A.

21 Q. "... to have that week's work checked on the system to 22 see if this has been caused by a systems fault. The 23 only other thing I can think of is that if the system 24 was going daft and putting things onto the sales stack, 25 this wasn't picked up every time by the person serving

> So what we have there is an indication that phantom transactions were something sufficiently well known in your team that this was being specifically referred to you and your team?

5 Α. Yes.

6 Q. Yes?

7 Yes

8 Q. Which ties, doesn't it, with what Mr Stein told us, that 9 his Core Participant had spoken to somebody about 10 phantom transactions. So clearly this was a known 11 problem right the way back to this early date.

12 What would you have done about a query like this? 13 A. Would have allocated it to a team member to raise it 14 with Fujitsu.

15 Q. What sort of response might you have got from Fujitsu?

A. A review of their -- I don't really know what they would 16 17 have done. I would have hoped they'd have looked at 18 the -- identified the times and looked to see if there's 19 any problems arising from there and reported them back 20

21 So following that report, let's say they come back to 22 you and say "Yes, we've identified there are phantom 23 transactions in this particular branch or in this 24 particular group of branches, potentially", what would 25 your team have done about that?

- 1 A. Well, we'd have escalated it probably to our IT team and
- 2 said what we're going to do about it, how we're going to
- 3 resolve it.
- 4 Q. What would you have done in terms of the branches?
- 5 A. Resolved any financial accounting discrepancies.
- 6 Q. How did you go about that?
- 7 A. That would have been done through a P&BA or whatever it
- 8 was called at that time.
- 9 Q. So there would have been quite a lot of communication,
- 10 wouldn't there, between your team and people at Fujitsu,
- 11 people in P&BA --
- 12 A. I would have thought so, yes.
- 13 Q. -- people in the groups, the POL or perhaps the group,
- 14 at that stage, IT directorate -- was it one or the
- 15 other, do you know?
- 16 A. I wouldn't know.
- 17 Q. Did your team escalate the issue of phantom
- 18 transactions?
- 19 A. I would have thought so from -- I presume that that was
- 20 raised to our team. I can't remember it.
- 21 Q. Do you have no memory of escalating this issue of
- 22 phantom transactions when you were the team leader at
- 23 this time?
- 24 A. No.
- 25 **Q.** Wouldn't it have been a matter of concern to you?
- 1 problem management? You don't know who it was above
- 2 your team leader or your boss or whoever that may have
- 3 been?
- 4 A. No, I can't remember.
- 5 Q. You gave us the name of one of your bosses earlier,
- 6 didn't you. Do you remember what she was the boss of?
- 7 **A.** Marie Cochate. Yes, that was when I was in Chesterfield
- 8 at the process improvement team.
- 9 Q. I think you gave us a name for somebody at --
- 10 A. Actually, I think she was my boss in problem management
- 11 as well, initially.
- 12 Q. So that was something in accounting, was it?
- 13 A. I think she moved as well. I think she moved from the
- 14 accounting -- from the process improvement team into the
- 15 same kind of team areas as I was in within problem
- 16 management, if I remember correctly.
- 17 Q. Have you listened to the evidence from witnesses over
- the last week or so?
- 19 **A.** No.
- 20 Q. Because, collectively, they've given evidence that
- 21 problem management really was the way that Post Office
- 22 monitored the performance of Horizon and indeed the
- 23 performance of Fujitsu in running and maintaining the
- 24 performance of Horizon. Is that how you understood the
- 25 role?

- 1 **A.** Yes.
- 2 Q. Wouldn't it have been a matter of great concern to the
- 3 business generally?
- 4 A. I don't know how easily it was -- what the Fujitsu
- 5 findings were. I can't comment.
- 6 Q. If Fujitsu had come back and said "No such thing,
- 7 there's no phantom transactions, it doesn't exist",
- 8 would you have left it there?
- 9 A. I don't know where else I could have gone; so, yes,
- 10 I think I would have.
- 11 Q. So never mind that your team evidently has, according to
- this email, more experience in dealing with phantom
- transactions, never mind that this isn't just a one-off,
- this is clearly something that's happened on a few
- 15 occasions, you would have just taken Fujitsu's word?
- 16 A. I wouldn't have known where else to go.
- 17 Q. You wouldn't have taken it to anyone in IT at POL?
- 18 A. If it was -- yes, quite possibly. I would have imagined
- that the enquiry would have gone to Fujitsu and our IT
- 20 teams
- 21 Q. When you were at problem management, what was the
- 22 directorate that your team sat in?
- 23 A. I would imagine the IT directorate. I can't actually
- 24 remember.
- 25 **Q**. So you don't know who the director was in charge of
- 1 A. No, not really.
- 2 Q. Well, what did you understand it to be then?
- 3 A. To be resolving problems, making sure the appropriate
- 4 people were resolving problems. I don't think there was
- 5 a -- particularly a reporting schedule. I don't
- 6 remember that coming out of problem management when
- 7 I was there.
- 8 Q. Was this the business as usual way to resolve bugs,
- 9 errors and defects that arose in Horizon?
- 10 A. It was the way it should be recorded, yes.
- 11 Q. We know that by 2010 -- and I'm only going forward just
- 12 to kind of come back, if you like -- by 2010, it was
- people in problem management that were the interface
- 14 with Fujitsu over the receipts and payments mismatch
- 15 bug, weren't they?
- 16 **A.** Yes.
- 17 Q. So the role was to be the interface on bugs and defects,
- 18 and so forth, yes?
- 19 **A.** Yes.
- 20 Q. So it was a crucial IT role, wasn't it?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. What interested you in that role when you applied to
- 23 manage that team?
- 24 **A.** To be brutally honest, a promotion.
- 25 Q. What grade were you as a manager of that team of 12?

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- 1 **A.** CM1.
- 2 **Q.** TM1?
- 3 **A.** CM1.
- 4 Q. Where did that place you in the grades at the time?
- 5 A. That was the highest grade of middle manager before you
- 6 became a senior manager and from there -- so there's
- 7 different grades of senior manager and then directorate
- 8 level.
- 9 Q. How busy was your team of 12?
- 10 A. I would say the team were not desperately busy and I wasvery busy.
- 12  $\,$  **Q.** Right. Perhaps you can pull that apart for us. Why
- 13 were you busy and they weren't?
- 14 A. There were plenty of problems coming in. The problem
- with, in my opinion, the problem management setup was
- that if, effectively, a member of the product team,
- 17 which is nothing to do with IT, but a guy from the
- 18 product team who I knew very well said to me "You know,
- we're told to report any problems into your team", you
- 20 make a note of it, say "Thanks very much, let us know
- when you've resolved it" which -- so the team, bear in
- 22 mind I've got 12 people, seemed really to be employed
- just to record something and wait for it to be told it
- 24 was cleared

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- So when you went across the team "How are you 161
- 1 A. A routine business as usual review of the departments,
  - as a whole. It wasn't my decision but there was kind of
- a lot of change and it was decided to merge the two
- 4 teams together. They were quite similar in the
- 5 understanding, et cetera, et cetera. So I could
- 6 understand why it was done.
- 7 Q. Was there any strategic thinking at all about the
- 8 business as usual management of problems, defects, bugs
- 9 in Horizon?
- 10 A. Not that I was made aware of, no.
- 11 Q. Just lastly on this topic, what we have here the one
- 12 remaining, as far as we can tell document, from this
- period of time when you were team leader of this crucial
- team that had to interface on bugs, errors and defects
- is one email from a different team, customer relations.
- We have no emails from problem management itself, no
   records at all from your time at problem management and
- nothing at all about the problem of phantom or ghost
- 19 transactions, which apparently your team knew about.
- 20 Can you give us any understanding or explanation 21 for why there's so little information about your team at
- 22 that time?
- A. No, I'm surprised there was -- as far as I'm aware
  everything that we did was logged, so I'm quite
- 25 astonished at you saying that.
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- 1 doing on this one?" It was always "I'm waiting for",
- 2 "I'm waiting for", "I'm waiting for", and it was kind of
- 3 "Oh, can you chase them", et cetera, et cetera.
  - It didn't seem to -- I was quite uncomfortable with that. I kind of expected it to be much more proactive. I'd say to the teams, you know, "We need an article to resolve a product issue".
    - "Well, they haven't got time to do it".
  - "Well, have a go at doing it yourself, submit it to them and they'll probably be that horrified at what
- 11 you are doing, they'll do it themselves", and I was
- trying to work on that basis of being more proactive.
- On the IT side we wouldn't be able to do because we
- 14 wouldn't have had the knowledge obviously, but I found
- 15 it a difficult role.
- 16 **Q.** Yes, and one that you have already admitted you weren't
- 17 really qualified for.
- 18 A. Correct.
- 19 Q. Given that it was a role that was crucial for the
- 20 handling of the defects, bugs, errors and that that's
- 21 central to the work of this Inquiry, why didn't you say
- 22 anything about it in your witness statement?
- 23 A. I did make reference to it, didn't I?
- 24 Q. Why did the team get taken over by Risk, as you
- 25 described to us earlier?

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- 1 Q. Can we perhaps turn then a little ahead to POL00045457.
- Now, this is a document which seeks to define the
- 3 process of settling centrally and it says at the bottom
- 4 that it's been a contribution from you. So it looks
  - perhaps as if it might be something that's to go into
- 6 a manual or something. Does that look familiar?
- 7 A. Yes, yes.
- 8 Q. If we just go back up again, it looks to be -- it's
- 9 expressed explicitly as a clarification?
- 10 **A.** Yes.

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- 11 Q. It says:
- "A recent audit has highlighted that many branchesare unclear on how to deal with losses and gains,
- 14 particularly around 'Settling Centrally'."
- Do you think that audit might have been what you did before you did those slides in January 2009?
- 17 A. I wouldn't have done the audit. I don't think. I think
- that would have been feedback from network auditors.
- 19 I was out in branches.
- 20  $\,$  Q. The reason I ask is because one of the slides that you
- 21 had created in January '09 sort of set the task of
- defining the process of settling centrally and this
- 23 document appears to do that?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 Q. So do you think this document comes then from that

- 1 process in January --
- 2 A. Quite possibly, without knowing the date of the
- 3 document.
- 4 Q. The document doesn't appear to bear a date and --
- 5 A. It sounds sensible.
- 6 Q. All right. Well let's assume then that it's part of
- 7 that January 2009 reappraisal, shall we say. When we
- 8 asked our client subpostmasters who had experience of
- 9 running post offices before January 2009, when we asked
- 10 them to have a look at this, none of them recognised
- this process at all and, indeed, Janet Skinner said that 11
- 12 she was not aware that there was any dispute resolution
- 13 process whatsoever. Is it right that, prior to
- 14 January 2009, there really wasn't a recognised dispute
- 15 process at all?
- 16 A. Well, prior to me starting in the role, then that would
- 17 be correct, yes.
- 18 **Q.** So do you know why that role came up?
- 19 A. I think when I -- I should say, we had a reorganisation
- 20 in P&BA and the different teams were created and I went
- 21 into the debt team and my boss Alison said, "Look, we've
- 22 got people trying to contact teams and they're not
- 23 responding to, and we need a central point, we think it
- 24 should be you, have a look at it", and so the role kind
- 25 of evolved from there.

- 1 another one, I'd just like to ask you a little bit about
- 2 Mr Lee Castleton. Is that a name that rings any bells
- 3 for you?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Did you know about his case at the time?
- 6 A. I think his case was -- I think his case was very
- 7 topical when I first joined the team.
- 8 Q. Right.
- 9 A. So it would be very much in my early days. I don't
- think I was involved in any of the decisions around 10
- 11 suspension or anything.
- 12 Q. But it was known about, was it, in your team, quite well
- 13 known?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. All right. So you'll have been aware then, won't you,
- 16 that in -- you won't necessarily remember the date but
- 17 it was in early 2007 that the judge awarded Post Office
- 18 damages of approximately £26,000 but costs of £321,000
- 19 which you might imagine bankrupted Mr Castleton. He
- 20 lost everything he'd invested in his branch, he lost his
- 21 living, his family were treated like thieves and they
- 22 endured years of hardship.
- 23 What we now know from documents in this Inquiry, 24 which haven't yet been sort of picked over but which
- 25 I can quote to you briefly from -- I don't know if we 167

- 1 Q. You told us earlier that you didn't have to apply or
  - interview for this job. Was it a job that was, in
- 3 effect, one that you sort of created yourself once in
- 4

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- A. Yes. Yes, I think when I first got there Alison and Rod 5
- 6 Ismay's view, they had some ideas about the role but,
- 7 effectively, it was me who kind of developed it to what 8
- 9 Q. At this stage, were you still a sort of top middle
- 10 management or had you entered the realms of senior
- 11 management by this stage?
- 12 A. No, still the same grade.
- 13 Q. Why do you think you were qualified to adjudicate on
- 14 disputes?
- 15 A. I don't think I was particularly qualified, but
- 16 I probably felt that it was the role that I was best
- 17 suited to working within the whole Royal Mail Group.
- 18 Q. Why?

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- 19 A. Because I think I investigated things and was prepared
- 20 to look outside the box and I had a bit of an empathy
- 21 with the subpostmasters, I think.
  - 22 Q. Do you still think that having looked back at some of
  - 23 your correspondence?
- 24 I'm disappointed with some of the things I wrote, yes. Α.
- 25 We can take that document down and before I turn to 166

necessarily need to put it on the screen -- is that

- 2 there was a clear intent on the part of the Post Office,
- 3 with legal advice, to pursue the claim:

"... not to make a net financial recovery but to 5 defend the Horizon System and hopefully send a clear

- 6 message to other SPMs that the PO will take a firm line
- 7 and to deter others from raising similar allegations."
- 8 So that was the purpose. It was not ever
- envisaged that the Post Office would actually get that 9 10 costs order back. That was loss leader, if you like.
- 11
- But the purpose was to send a firm line and a clear
- 12 message to deter others.
  - Now, is that how the case was understood at the
- 14 time? Is that something that your team would have been
- 15 aware of, that it was a sort of flagship case, if you
- 16 like, to try to deter others?
- 17 A. No, I don't think so. I was conscious that it was
- 18 probably the most high profile case at that time but
- I don't think I would have picked up that message. 19
- 20 Q. We can also see from documentation that the lawyers in 21 charge of the case were also conscious of other cases,
- 22 including one which --
  - 23 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Hang on a minute.
- 24 Do you have any direct knowledge of Mr Castleton's 25 case at all, Mr Winn?

1	Α.	Nο	I don't.
	Α.	INO,	ı uonı.

- 2 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I mean, I'm conscious that this is a very
- 3 sensitive case, Ms Page, but don't think it's
- 4 appropriate to use the witness just for you to read
- 5 extracts of other documents.
- 6 MS PAGE: I was just to about to come to the documents which
- 7 he is involved with, sir. So I hope that's.
- 8 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: That's fine.
- 9 MS PAGE: That was a scene setting, if you like.
- The related case, if you like, which you were
- 11 involved with was a Mr Bilkhu. Does that ring any
- 12 bells?
- 13 **A.** No.
- 14 Q. So Mr Bilkhu issued a claim against POL but then
- 15 withdrew it because he was threatened with costs of
- 16 instructing an expert in the region of £1 million and he
- 17 told you about that. Do you remember?
- 18 A. No.
- 19 Q. Well we can perhaps then have a look at POL00001304 at
- 20 page 29, bottom of the page. This is from him to you.
- We can perhaps go to the top of the page, just so that
- you can see that. He was writing from Bowburn Post
- Office and you can see there at the top, "Dear Mr Wynn",
- 24 he has obviously misspelt your name but the
- 25 correspondence shows that he had written to you and this 169
  - the case can we resumed subject to legal niceties.
- 2 "In summary, the case was withdrawn [he is talking
  - about his case] because POL's legal team demanded that
  - Horizon accounts at Bowburn [Post Office] for the last
- 5 4 years be examined by a forensic accountant. The cost
- 6 (estimated at £1 million) be borne by me."
  - Reading that letter, does that not ring any bells?
- 8 **A.** No.

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- 9 Q. The idea that the legal department would threaten
- 10 somebody with costs estimated at £1 million?
- 11 A. No.
- 12 Q. Looking back, do you think this is part of a culture of
- using legal process to threaten subpostmasters?
- 14 A. It's quite possible, yes.
- 15 Q. Is that perhaps part of the sort of setting of what
- 16 we've seen in your own correspondence of this sort of
- 17 putting the burden of proof on the subpostmasters --
- 18 A. No, I don't think so.
- 19 Q. -- of using the law against them?
- 20 A. No, I don't think I've ever threatened anything like
- 21 that. I've tried to -- where I can see a way of
- 22 investigating/helping, I've tried to do that.
- 23  $\,$  Q. Some very brief questions, if I may, on the document
- 24 which we've looked at quite a lot, the receipts and
- 25 payments mismatch meeting. I just want to look at the

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- was part of a bit of a back and forth between the two of you.
- There's one thing that I'd like to just ask you
  - about before we go to the bottom. We see the reference to -- he says:
- 6 "Your letter is ... a repeat of ... previous
- 7 letter and is similar in style to those I have received
- 8 from Michele Graves and Philippa Wright (Flag Case
- 9 Managers for Adam Crozier/Alan Cook)."
- 10 Do you know what a "flag case manager" was?
- 11 **A.** No.

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- 12 Q. Do you know those names?
- 13 A. Alan Crozier and Alan Cook, yes. The two ladies, no.
- 14 I can't remember them.
- 15 Q. What about the two gentlemen?
- 16 A. They were heads of Post Office.
- 17 Q. They were seniors?
- 18 A. Well, they were executive directors.
- 19  $\,$  Q. So you don't recall what the flag case managers did for
- 20 them?
- 21 **A.** No.
- 22 Q. If we go a bit further down, we see that Mr Bilkhu tells
- you, "In summary", it says:
- "... POL may consider the matter closed [that's
- 25 his complaint] but I do not. According to my legal team 170
- 1 first page of it again, if I may. It's POL00028838. If
- 2 we just look at those Post Office names, who would you
- 3 say was the most senior person there?
- 4 A. Ian Trundell, although Alan Simpson I don't know what
  - grade he was at.
- 6 Q. Ian Trundell and Alan -- sorry, did you say?
- 7 A. Alan Simpson.
- 8 Q. All right.

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- 9 A. Well, I'm guessing there. I don't actually know what
- 10 grade anyone was at.
- 11 Q. But your first reaction was that those were the two
- 12 senior people that meeting?
- 13 **A.** Yes
- 14 Q. Who would you have reported back to about this?
- 15 Presumably Mr Ismay?
- 16 **A.** Yes.
- 17 Q. And did you report back to Mr Ismay about this bug?
- 18 A. I'm -- whether I've talked directly to Mr Ismay or
- 19 Mrs Bolsover, I'm not certain, but I would certainly
- 20 have fed back as part of normal communications.
- 21 Q. Thank you. The document can be taken down.
- So you are saying you would have reported back to
  - 23 Mr Ismay and Ms Bolsover; is that right?
  - 24 **A.** Yes.
  - 25 MS PAGE: There's just two more issues I would like to look

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at, sir, if I may? 1 2 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Is anyone else intending to ask 3 questions? MR BEER: Sir, no, they're not. 4 5 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Fine. Off you go then. Five minutes, 6 Ms Page.

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MS PAGE: Thank you. If I can look then, please, at POL00105280. If we could look at page 3 -- and I won't take you through the whole history up to page 3. Page 3 sort of dives in.

This is in the summer of 2013, so this is post receipts and payments mismatch bug and around the time when Second Sight's work is pretty well known within about Post Office, yes, and you're asking a contracts manager -- this is a discussion with a contracts manager having been in touch with a branch about a loss that dates back ten years, and this is your putting three possibilities for how to deal with it to the contracts manager. You say:

"Hi Nigel, I don't actually disbelieve the branch here but the claim that two sets of auditors have recorded missing stock as being present is a bit scary. Stamps are just pieces of paper at Swindon so there would not have been a surplus at another branch.

"I can see three options. Pay up - we don't 173

what's quite interesting is that the response from the network manager says in paragraph 3 here:

"As you say, none of the options are particularly appealing. I think the first option, making the SPMR pay up, could open up a can of worms. I'm not sure that the SPMR is a member of the NFSP but, given that the amount involved represents a significant percentage of his salary, I feel sure he would take this further. This could put us in a position of trying to defend ourselves against a charge that the auditors didn't do their job properly and could potentially give the NFSP or an MP some useful ammunition."

So it's again this idea really, isn't it, that it's about the ammunition, it's about MPs, it's not really about doing the right thing?

- 16 A. No, I don't think so. I think we were aiming to do the 17 right thing.
- Q. Well, you did do the right thing but, rather than just 18 19 doing the right thing, you're discounting other options 20 not on the grounds that they're wrong or because you 21 actually believe the branch but because it could 22 potentially give the NFSP or an MP some useful 23 ammunition?
- 24 And I think that would be true if we're saying that two 25 sets of audits were both incorrect. That's not the kind

believe you. Create a phantom rem out, branches can now invent ten year old errors that we have to let them off on because we do not have any information about. Plus Swindon will not pick up a phantom rem, so I can rem stamps out and just sell them on my retail side."

6 I think that seems to be a suggestion that you're making for a way to sort of balance it off. Is that how 8 I should read that?

- 9 A. Yes, that's how it could have done been done remotely, 10 ves
- 11 Q. And then network write off:

"We believe you and we're making a gesture in recognition of long years of accurate accounting and his TC rate is excellent. However, this does leave huge question marks over the audit process. None are particularly appearing. Thoughts?"

17 First of all, it's a bit striking, isn't it, that 18 one of the options is "we don't believe you" when you've 19 actually said at the start of the email, "I don't 20 actually disbelieve the branch here"?

- 21 A. I think what I'm trying to do there is make the first 22 two look at what they were, totally unappealing options, 23 and the third one is where we're going.
- 24 Q. Well, the third one is indeed where you go. 25 If we go up to the next response, though, page 2,

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- 1 of thing you want to advertise particularly when you 2 don't know if that's the case.
- 3 Q. Well, you do know it's the case. That's the 4 investigation. That's what's happened.
- 5 A. Well, no, we don't. That was the problem with this 6 case, that we could understand what the guy was saying 7 but he's saying that two sets of auditors have come in, 8 audited the branch. He said there's an issue with these which is going to get -- needs resolving. So the 9 10 auditors have said, "Okay, we'll assume that they're there". If they weren't there, I mean, that's what an 11
- 12 auditor's job is -- to identify discrepancies. So for
- two of them to go in and not, would suggest that any 13 14 audit cannot be relied upon.
- 15 Q. So although you believe the SPMR, although you --
- A. I don't disbelieve the postmaster but I don't believe 16 17 that two auditors have not done their job properly. So 18 I'm left a little bit I don't know where we are anyway.
- 19 Just one last, if I may, because this brings us up Q. 20 a little bit more to date and it's POL00092640 and this 21 dates from 2015.

This seems to relate to what we've come to understand were weekly Horizon meetings. These were regular calls -- is that right -- with lawyers involved as well, people from the security team. Do you remember

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- a weekly Horizon meeting being instituted in around 2013and carrying on for some time apparently?
- A. I don't particularly remember it being a weekly meeting,
   though I accept that it could have been.
- 5 Q. You do remember the Horizon meetings, do you?
- A. I remember being on Horizon meetings. Whether I was on
   the weekly ones or not I'm not certain.
- Well, certainly in relation to this one, it's referring
  to one that's taken place in August of 2015 and it says:

"As you will see there were numerous issues raised on the last call which are of concern."

First of all, it says:

"Andy Winn is still receiving requests toauthorise FJ to correct problems."

Presumably that's Fujitsu?

16 A. Mm-hm.

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- 17 Q. And what I understand that to mean -- and you correct me
  18 if I'm wrong -- is that that's Fujitsu asking to go into
  19 Horizon to correct problems and you're authorising them
  20 to do so. Is that what's going on there? Is that the
  21 process?
- A. I'm not sure what Fujitsu wanted to do but, yes, it's
   asking me to authorise them to do something. I don't
   know what from here.
- 25 **Q.** Well, we've actually got three issues that come up. The

of joined up with that, but certainly as far as I was concerned that wouldn't be the case.

Q. Then the paragraph below, just to finish off on this:

"Andy Winn also raised the issue of a computer problem with Camelot for which a fix had been issued but pointed out that branches would encounter unexplained losses that Wednesday when they conducted their BTS procedure. He went on to explain that he had received an email from Fujitsu about an incident which had occurred in June. It was termed a 'major incident report' and related to a branch which had an incorrect discrepancy at the time of conducting a branch trading statement. The email suggested that information had been sent to POL. Andy Winn had not previously known about this issue and so asked to whom the information had been sent. He had no response.

"Andy went on to say that he did not fully understand the issue and that a maximum of 247 branches would have been affected. 118 of those would have generated reports based on corrupted data. There was only one account in connection with which POL could have held someone responsible for the shortfall."

So in 2015, following the receipts and payments mismatch bug, following the fact that Second Sight have become involved, following the fact that that means that 179

first one is that they asked to do this when kit is removed from branches which can cause issues and then, secondly, there's the discontinued sessions issue which has gone on to explain further, and it talks about two new products which caused the system to disconnect and recovery scripts are failing.

So these are two different things which seemingly they're having to go into the system to correct and you're having to sign off on the process. Is that something you recall doing?

- A. I would imagine -- I could see myself being the voice
   that would give POL approval, yes, if that makes sense.
- 13 Q. It says in the latter part of that paragraph:

"This is apparently standard business as usual and
FJ seek authorisation to correct it. It is unclear at
the present time whether or not there is process
assurance and documentation. I do not know whether POL
have full visibility of the actions of Fujitsu and the
ways in which they correct the branch data."

Does that ring a bell?

- 21 A. It doesn't ring a bell but it makes sense to me.
- Q. That there wasn't really a process that was beingfollowed?
- A. And that I was -- I think I, possibly naively, assumed
   that the IT department were the ones who would be kind
   178
- 1 it became apparent that the receipts and payments
- 2 mismatch bug still hadn't been followed up properly,
- 3 you're still having problems, aren't you, at POL with
- actually getting on top of and dealing with bugs thataffect corrupted data?
- 6 A. Is this a receipts and payments mismatch issue?
- 7 Q. I don't believe it is. I believe it seems to be
  8 a different issue. But this is evidence, is not, that
  9 POL and Fujitsu are still not working through proper
- 10 procedures --
- 11 A. Yes, I think so, yes.
- 12 Q. All right.
- 13 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Are you going to end on a high note,
- 14 Ms Page?
- 15 MS PAGE: Thank you, sir.
- 16 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Is that it, Mr Beer?
- 17 MR BEER: Yes, sir. That concludes the questioning of
- 18 Mr Winn.
- 19 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr Winn, for coming to give20 evidence. It's been a long day clearly.
- 21 A. It certainly has.
- SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I'm grateful to you that you came to give
   the answers to very many questions.
- 24 A. I hope I could be some help.
- 25 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you.

1	MR BEER: Sir, thank you. I think that's us done now until	1	INDEX	
2	Tuesday, 7 March when we will hear evidence from Liz	2	ANDREW FRANK WINN (affirmed)	1
3	Evans-Jones.	3	Questioned by MR BEER	1
4	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, all right. Thanks very much.	4	Questioned by MR STEIN	133
5	MR BEER: Thank you, sir.	5	Questioned by MS PAGE	153
6	(4.10 pm)	6		
7	(Adjourned until Tuesday, 7 March 2023 at 10.00 am)	7		
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