

POST OFFICE LTD CONFIDENTIAL: INVESTIGATION, LEGAL

POLTD/1011/0095

Theft & False Accounting

Name: Miss Alison Loraine HALL

Rank: Postmaster Identification Code: 1

Office: Hightown SPSO Branch Code 512 323

Age: 42 years Date of Birth: **GRO**

Service: 5 years 8 months Date Service Commenced: February 2005

Personnel Printout: At Appendix: C

Nat Ins No: **GRO**

Home Address: **GRO**

Contract for Services Suspended: 3rd September 2010 Mrs Karen Arnold

To be prosecuted by: Royal Mail Group (including Post Office Ltd)

Designated Prosecution Authority: Mr Iain Murphy, Fraud Strand Leader

Discipline Manager: Mrs Sue Muddeman, Contracts Manager

Corporate Security Criminal Law Team

The circumstances surrounding the suspension and subsequent interview of Miss Alison Hall are briefly as follows;

On 2nd September 2010 Ms Tracey Bedford, Migration Support Officer attended Hightown Post Office® prior to the branch being migrated to Horizon Online (HOL). When she counted the cash on hand against the Horizon Cash Declaration a shortage of £13,624.41 was discovered. The branch was closed and a full audit took place the following day, 3rd September, conducted by Mr Jeff Roper and Mr Richard Goss.

Hightown Post Office® branch is situated on the Halifax Road (A649). The premises consist of the Post Office® branch, Newsagent and small off licence. This building is attached the main house which stands behind.

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On Friday 17th September I wrote to Miss Hall and invited her to an interview and gave her details of her legal rights. The next day she telephoned me and I explained further the nature of the interview. She seemed a little confused but she said wished to have a Solicitor present. I advised her to speak to a Criminal Law Solicitor and we could arrange a time and location for the interview.

On Friday 24th September Mr Paul Normandale, Solicitor with Inesons of Cleckheaton telephoned me while Miss Hall was with him. We agreed to conduct the interview at his office.

On Tuesday 28th September in the company of Mr Paul Whitaker I attended the offices of Inesons Solicitors in Cleckheaton. At 11:37hrs a tape recorded interview with Miss Hall commenced. Mr Normandale was also present. Forms GS001 and GS003 were completed and are now at Appendix '.....' and '.....' respectively.

At the start of the interview Miss Hall said that she believed the shortage was due to problems with the Lottery Scratch cards. She went on to say that on a number of occasions she had to alter the stock shown on Horizon to match what was physically in the branch as there was a discrepancy. This would cause a shortage in the cash and this carried on. She added that these alterations were made because of the Transaction Correction (TCs) she was receiving.

She remained adamant throughout the interview that the problem was with the Lottery Scratchcards but she admitted that she had not managed the situation well as she had left it to build up hoping to be able to sort out the problem.

Miss Hall said that she had out in £640 of cash to cover a shortage, but when asked could not recall when that had occurred. She offered to look at her bank details to find the date. (18:30)

Miss Hall said she could not balance the Branch account in January 2010 but could recall how much by (20:46).

Miss admitted that since January 2010 she has been Falsifying the Branch trading statement by increasing the Cash On Hand figure to achieve a balance. When asked she agreed that she had gained an advantage of remaining in employment during this period when if she had raise the matter she may have reasonably expected to be suspended and be in the same position she is now (39:19) (41:50)

Miss Hall was informed that she may have rendered herself liable to prosecution. When asked if she anything further to say she said she was sorry for the all the mess she had caused herself and Post Office Ltd and should have asked for help sooner.

The interview concluded at 12:37hrs.

The tapes were sealed with seal numbers 065759 and 065760

A notebook entry was made of the interview details. A copy and typed copy are at Appendix

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