

Claimant
K Baines
Second
Exhibits: -
Dated : August 2004

CLAIM NO CR101947

IN THE BLACKPOOL COUNTY COURT

B E T W E E N

POST OFFICE COUNTERS LIMITED

Claimant

AND

MRS JULIE WOLSTENHOLME

Defendant

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF KEITH BAINES

I, KEITH BAINES of Calthorpe House, 15 – 20 Phoenix Place, London, WC1X ODJ **STATE AS FOLLOWS:**

- 1 I refer to my first witness statement dated 14 October 2003 which sets out details of my position with Post Office Limited (“the Post Office”) as Contract Manager and my responsibilities in that position. I confirm that I am still employed by the Post Office as Contract Manager.
- 2 The facts and matters deposed to in this statement are within my own knowledge unless I say otherwise. Insofar as they are within my own knowledge, they are true. Insofar as they are derived from information provided to me by others, they are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
- 3 The Horizon system was developed as a managed service by Fujitsu Services Limited (Fujitsu), formerly ICL Pathway Limited who also provided the actual equipment. Notwithstanding this and as is the Post Office’s usual practice in contracts for the development of complex IT services, the Post Office put in place a

- formal acceptance process to satisfy itself that the service was fit for purpose before allowing it to be widely deployed.
- 4 The Post Offices' required specification of the service provided by Fujitsu included requirements relating to the ease of use of the system, the stability of the system and the integrity of the financial information which it produces.
 - 5 The acceptance process of the system used a mixture of technical reviews, testing by Fujitsu and by the Post Office and the operation of a live pilot stage in Post Office branches to confirm that each requirement was being met satisfactorily. I should state that this was not a "rubber stamping" exercise, and that significant problems were found and remedied before the main "roll out" was authorised.
 - 6 Whilst there were some problems with system stability during the early stages of the acceptance process, these were rectified, and a period of monitoring in pilot offices during October and November 1999 demonstrated that the rectification had been effective in reducing the incidents of re-boot and related problems to an average rate of less than 4 per counter position per annum. Subsequent improvements by Fujitsu during the year 2000 reduced this to less than 3 per counter position per annum.
 - 7 During the roll out of the Horizon system, all users of the system (including Sub Postmasters and their assistance) were trained in its use. The training courses were developed and delivered by Fujitsu having being based on an analysis of user needs carried out in conjunction with experienced Post Office trainers.
 - 8 The training courses provided took into account the profile of the users, namely that they were older and less experienced in the use of computers than would be the case in most IT projects but were already aware of the manual processes carried out in managing or working in a Post Office branch.
 - 9 The training was practically based, carried out in small groups and was concluded by an assessment to ensure that the trainees had acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to use the system. The standard course lasted for 1 day with a longer two day course for Branch Managers (including Sub Postmasters). Training was carried out shortly before the relevant branches went "live" with the system.

- 10 Further, the Post Office provided a number of reference guides which were provided to Sub Postmasters for use during the period while they were becoming familiar with the system.
- 11 Furthermore, Fujitsu provided a Help Desk service which was known as the Horizon System Help Desk to answer calls from Sub Postmasters regarding problems with the equipment or software and to provide advice and guidance on using the system, including its use in preparation of weekly cash accounts. This Help Desk was not required to answer general enquiries about the Post Offices' business processes, as a separate Help Desk operated by the Post Office was available for this.
- 12 The Post Offices's contract with Fujitsu set service levels for their Help Desk service to ensure that it was appropriate to the needs of the users of the Horizon system. In summary these were:
- i) Hours of service – a full service from 8.00 a.m. till 8.00 p.m. Monday to Saturday and a skeleton service from 5.00 a.m. to 8.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m. to midnight Monday to Saturday and from 7.00 a.m. to 10.00 p.m. on Sundays.
 - ii) Call Answering – 80% of calls were answered within 20 seconds and 99% of calls within 40 seconds.
 - iii) Calls Not Answered to be less than 1%.
 - iv) Help Desk to act as a gateway to first, second and third level services as follows:
 - a) First level – dealing with all simple and straight forward problems and with general enquiries. 95% of first level calls to be resolved within 5 minutes and 100% within 10 minutes.
 - b) Second level – providing a diagnostics and fixing service for more complex problems. 95% of second level calls to be resolved within 30 minutes and 100% within 45 minutes.
 - c) Third level – Analysing problems that cannot be dealt with at the first two levels and developing a remedy or “work-around” resolution of the problem or documenting the problem as requiring subsequent software changes.

- v) There were also more detailed service levels requiring the provision of accurate and timely advice and guidance on completion of cash accounts.
- 13 These service levels were much more demanding than is general in IT contracts due to the fact that the Post Office recognised the importance to its business of being able to serve customers in Post Office branches efficiently and this in turn required the effective and fast support of the staff serving them.
- 14 Performance against service levels was monitored in detail during the period 3 December 1999 to 13 January 2000. This confirmed that service was operating correctly ahead of the main National roll out of the Horizon system. Subsequently service levels were reported monthly and were generally satisfactory. Whilst, of course, problems were sometimes encountered in the operation of the computer systems, full support was provided both: to provide an immediate or quick resolution so that business would not be unduly affected; and also to ensure that problems that could not be fully resolved or that required system development were appropriately and quickly analysed, with the necessary software or hardware changes being developed and implemented as part of the support service

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed : **K Baines**

Dated : 11th August 2004

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SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF KEITH BAINES

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Witness Statement (Wolstenholme case)

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