

From: Chambers Anne O
Sent: 14 March 2013 12:14
To: 'andrew.winn[REDACTED]'; Helen Love; 'Duty Manager'
Cc: Bansal Steve (BRA01); SSC Duty Manager; Parker Steve (PostOfficeAccount); Jenkins Gareth GI
Subject: Local suspense POL 238 - explanation
Attachments: lsproblem_2.xls; ls_timeline.pdf

Andrew,

As requested, a full explanation of the problem. I have also attached a spreadsheet that shows whether the original local suspense item was a loss or a gain, or a clearance of loss or gain, and also a timeline of a hypothetical example which may make the explanation easier to follow. I didn't use a genuine example because I couldn't be fully accurate about the dates.

The problem only affected branches that

- a) Were in TP 9 2010 by 10-Dec-2010
- b) Deleted a stock unit while in TP 9 or later, on or before 10-Dec-2010
- c) That stock unit had either transferred or resolved a discrepancy at the end of TP 8 or 9
- d) Had not rolled into TP 4 2011 by 03-Jul-2011

The root cause was the archiving strategy used to remove old data from various database tables.

- Old archiving strategy, as introduced Oct 2010, was meant to archive records, in various tables including BRDB_RX_BTS_DATA, belonging to all but the last three TPs. However it did not work as intended for deleted stock units, which (April 2011) caused a data centre problem with a different table, with no impact on branches. Hence the strategy was simplified and changed generally – but the potential risk of our current problem was not anticipated.
- New archiving strategy introduced 03-Jul-2011, which immediately archived records older than 62 days belonging to logically deleted stock units, so the problem no longer occurs.

A note on stock unit deletion:

- When a stock unit is deleted, initially it is logically deleted, by setting a flag in the stock unit record. After 205 days the stock unit record is removed completely from the database (physically deleted)

The following section assumes the problem data belongs to TP 9 – true for all except branch 011458, that the stock unit was deleted in TP 9 and that there was a single LS record for that stock unit. I have had to infer many of the dates and cannot prove it all ties in – I would need a set of Branch Trading Statements to do this.

- A stock unit had, at the end of TP 8 2010, written a loss or gain to Local Suspense(LS), or been used to clear LS. The attached spreadsheet shows what happened at each branch. An LS record was written into table BRDB_RX_BTS_DATA, carried forward into TP 9. Over all the stock units in the branch, these LS records would have netted to zero, and this is all 'business as usual'.
- This stock unit was logically deleted in TP 9 before 11-Dec-2010
- Under old archiving strategy, the LS record belonging to the stock unit was not eligible for archiving until the branch was in TP 4 2011 i.e. probably sometime after 23-Jun-2011.
- 205 days after the stock unit was logically deleted, it was permanently deleted. If this was before the branch had been rolled into TP 4 2011, the LS record belonging to the deleted stock unit was orphaned, and would never be archived.
- End of TP 8 2011: the old TP 9 2010 LS record was picked up, along with genuine LS data for 2011, during TP 8 BTS production, though there was no visible impact on the TP 8 BTS or balance. The non-zero LS balance was converted during branch rollover, to prod 6295 Gain to Local Suspense (sign could be positive or negative), and written as an opening figure for TP 9, stock unit DEF.
(I think we should consider raising an event if this happens since it is indicative of a system error).

- End of TP 9 2011: the opening figure was included when the amount to be cleared from Local Suspense was calculated, when the last stock unit was rolled over, so the branch was forced to clear it.
- This shows up on the TP 9 BTS, since the Discrepancy Transferred lines don't equal Discrepancy Resolved (*I said on the conf call that this shows just on the BTS Branch figures, not the stock unit; I was wrong, the stock unit in which LS was cleared will show the additional amount that had to be cleared*).
- And the same happened in TP8/9 2012.

Happy to try to answer any further questions!

Regards,

Anne.

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