

John H Jones

To: Cath Oglesby/e/POSTOFFICE
25/06/2004 09:40 cc:
Subject: Marine Drive Appeal

GRO

Cath

I would be grateful if you could answer a number of questions regarding the events pre appeal for the Marine Drive branch.

(i) What reasons did Mr Castleton give for not taking any preventative measures that you had advised him of when incurring such account discrepancies.

(ii) What reasons did Mr Castleton provide for the snapshot discrepancies in C/a 47 show a surplus all week except on the Wednesday when an exact match was declared.

(iii) When you asked Mr Castleton about making error notices good, what was his response.

many thanks

John

John Jones
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GRO

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Cath Oglesby

To: John H Jones/e/POSTOFFICE **GRO**
25/06/2004 17:14 cc:
Subject: Re: Marine Drive Appeal(Document link: Cath Oglesby)

John,

Answers to your questions:

(i) Mr Castleton said that individual balancing wouldn't work in his office as it was only two positions. I explained the benefits of doing this i.e. accountability, he didn't understand how to adapt the office into individual tills. I offered help. He said that as there was really only him and Chrissie (full time assistant) most of the time and Ruth a part timer and he trusted them, there wasn't much point. He also said towards the last few weeks that the staff were frightened of going in the safe to get cash out in case they were thought of taking it. When I suggested that he needed to look at all possibilities not just the computer he got very upset and said that he trusted the staff 100% and it couldn't be them taking the money. He said that all the Post Office think is that someone is taking the money.

He kept insisting that it was the computer and that when it all came to light "heads would roll" for all the sleepless nights and stress they had been under.

I suggested daily snapshots to check the cash against. This was done several weeks into the losses. When asked why he didn't do these earlier, he just said things like, we were checking transaction logs until eleven o'clock at night, we were under so much stress, we were sick with worry.

When he said it was the days when he remmed stock in that the cash seemed to go wrong, so it must be the software for that program, I suggested that he check the invoice during the day, but not enter anything onto the system. Then at close of business complete a snapshot and check the cash. Then enter the stock and repeat the snapshot. Just to prove or disprove his theory. He never did this. When asked why. He said that Chrissie had been on holiday after I suggested it and he never got chance.

(ii) I suggested to Lee that during that week he had a surplus and that what I thought had happened was, on the Wednesday he had produced a snapshot to see how much cash he should have had. I suggested that he then declared the exact amount of cash on that snapshot, to give him a "perfect" balance, he did not declare his actual cash on hand. He looked a bit puzzled at this and looked at the snapshots and cash decs. He could not explain it and said he couldn't remember. I asked him and Chrissie who had written on the cash decs, as they must have know about the surplus during the week. They both looked puzzled, Chrissie thought one might have been hers, they were not sure. I asked who would normally finish off and complete the days work. They said that Chrissie would.

(iii) It was more the losses making good rather than error notices we discussed. When the losses had been rolled for those first few weeks, I told him that this couldn't continue, and could he make them good? The amounts had reached £8k. Lee said that he couldn't afford to make these good, so I told him to contact the helpline and ask for a hardship form. He did do this, and the first amount was transferred into the suspense account. As the losses continued the hardship form that had been sent wasn't any good. At interview when I asked him about making the loss good and being his responsibility, he wouldn't answer directly but said let's see how this all comes out as the money must be in the system somewhere.