



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview

LISA MARGARET BRENNAN

Exhibit No:
Number of pages

Signature of interviewing
officer producing exhibit

Person Interviewed

Interview room at Huyton Delivery Office

Place of Interview

13 June 2002
Date of Interview

Time commenced 1010 Hours

Time concluded 1052 Hours

Duration of interview 42 Minutes

Tape reference no 047855

Interviewing Officer(s) Stephen Bradshaw

Anthony Frank Gardner

Other persons present Stephen Owens (CWU Representative)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
0.00	SB	Introductions made and caution issued. The caution was explained to Ms Brennan. Legal rights explained and the presence of Legal representation was Declined. Form CS001 signed, timed and dated. The offer of a friend was accepted and Steve Owens (CWU Representative) attended. Form CS003 was signed, timed and dated.
7.30		Ms Brennan explained that she has been employed by the post office for approximately 13 years. She has worked at various post offices and been a permanent member of staff at Huyton for 7 years. She went on to explain that she performed the full range of counter duties. Ms Brennan attended work on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and she worked a total of 30 hours per week. She also attended on the occasional Saturday. Ms Brennan also worked on Friday 31 May 2002, but could not remember the last time she went on annual leave.



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
9.00		It was explained to Ms Brennan why we were at the office. She was asked to explain how she would pay out a pension and allowance voucher. She demonstrated that she had the knowledge to pay out correctly and she could explain the procedure when rectifying any mistakes. She would not clarify if she paid out the amount of money indicated on the horizon system or the amount on the voucher.
12.00	AG	I think what Steve is saying in the first instance is let's say you've got a pension at £50 and you mis-key the amount so it reads £250 on the screen, would you pay out the £250?
	LB	I don't know, maybe, maybe not, I don't know, it depends if I notice it. It's that fast and that busy in here, it depends if you notice it.
	AG	So what you're saying that it's quite possible that if you've accepted a pension docket or an allowance docket ...
	LB	If I haven't noticed it yeh.
	AG	You would pay out 200 and odd pounds too much.
	LB	Yeh. Ms Brennan was asked how many times did she think that might happen? She replied that she didn't have any idea. She was then asked what would she of a clerk that was making mistakes of £100 or £200 per week.
	LB	They were crap. Well not too much crap, I don't know. If you're saying it's me, I don't know. You're not gonna say I'm crap, I thought I was doing my job all right.
13.00	AG	So if it was you it wouldn't be because you're crap?
	LB	I don't know.
	AG	But if it was anyone else it would be because they're crap?
	LB	No, it wouldn't.
14.00		Ms Brennan was asked how often did she prepare her pensions and allowance vouchers for checking. She replied everyday if it's not busy. She went on to explain that she put them in a draw. The check she performed was to count the



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
		number of vouchers, then check if they tallied with the number on the horizon print off. Ms Brennan was then asked what the effect on her balance would be, if she paid out the correct amount of money, but the wrong amount had been entered on the horizon system. She understood that her balance would show a surplus. She also said that her balancing record was OK. The office uses the MUTE stock system. She explained that B stock was allocated to her and she would keep this stock until the Branch Manager changed them.
16.00	SB	How did you balance last week?
	LB	Dunno.
	SB	Yesterday.
	LB	Yesterday, oh. A couple of quid out.
	SB	How do you think your pensions were?
	LB	Before you just took them away.
	SB	To save messing around we'll go straight to the pensions. There's the pensions that you've done on the 6 th June.
	LB	Right.
	SB	Which was last Thursday. It's the group 5 we're concerned with.
	LB	Yeh.
	SB	Would you like to count, tell me how many group 5 vouchers there are.
	LB	I can't count it. 11.
17.00	SB	As there's only a few would you like to just check them against what you've declared.
	LB	It's not right. That one's not right.
	AG	Which one are you referring to there?
	LB	26.60
	SB	It's £26.30 and what's the amount that's been declared?
	LB	£226.30.
	SB	And that belongs to B stock.
	LB	Yeh.



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
18.00	SB	Have you got any explanation for that?
	LB	No.
	AG	You say you've been in B stock but do you have a date stamp which is ...
	LB	Is B stock as well.
	AG	So B stock date stamp stays with the stock.
	LB	No.
	AG	You keep the ...
	LB	I'm just B date stamp.
	AG	So if you were in a different stock you'd still use B date stamp?
	LB	Yeh.
	AG	Do you understand what I'm saying?
	LB	Yeh.
	AG	You float around the counter don't you so if you're in B stock ...
	LB	Very rare I do ... not very rare I don't, I don't float around.
	SB	I'll now show you, this is SB4, print out SB4, that shows the amount of £226.30 being paid out at 14:28. That's the user code there, whose user code is that.
	LB	That's me, that's my code.
	SB	Would you like to just repeat that code for me.
	LB	LBR001.
	SB	So would you be on duty at 14:28 on Thursday?
	LB	Yeh.
19.00	SB	And do you have an explanation of why £226.30 has been paid out?
	LB	No.
	SB	And your stock was only £2 out.
	LB	£2 out. I've give it away.
	SB	You've give it away.
	LB	I haven't got it.
	SB	OK. Do you think this has happened on any other occasions?
	LB	Yes, 'cos you've come for discrepancies.



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
20.00	SB	That's a discrepancy.
	LB	Yeh.
	SB	Do you think it's happened on any other occasions?
	LB	Not that I know of, no.
	AG	Just to clarify that then Lisa, what you're saying is that someone with the child benefit book which has the reference 973023610F with a docket payable on the 3 rd June has come in last Thursday. The value of the docket is £26.30, you've keyed in the wrong amount by £200 and you've paid this woman £226.30 instead of £26.30, is that what you're saying?
	LB	I must have done, yeh.
	AG	So if we find out who that person is and we go and get a statement from them....
	LB	See if they've got it.
	AG	What do you think they might say?
	LB	If they're honest they'll say yeh, if they're not they'll say no.
	AG	Right, so we're on a 50/50 there aren't we if we go and find this person and .. in fact we can almost read the signature, it looks like maybe Beaumorris or something like that, Beardwood, it certainly looks like B-E-A the first 3 letters so we could find out who that is and we could get a statement from them. And what do you think might happen if they say they were only paid out £26.30, what would you say to that?
	LB	I don't know. What can I say?
	AG	You're saying you paid £226.30.
	LB	I must have done, I didn't know, I haven't got it.
	SB	Can you just have a look through your pensions again, it's the group 5s for the 23 rd May 2000 and would you like to just check your group 5s. Take your time.
21.00	LB	No. ...?.. 100.
	AG	Just explain what's happened there then Lisa.
	LB	One's wrong by 100 again.
	AG	Just tell us which one it is.



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
22.00	LB	£15.75.
	AG	And that's been fed it as what?
	LB	£115.75.
	SB	How do you know it's the £15.75 that's been fed in wrong?
	LB	Cos there's 9 and there's 10, I've just gone to the back and there isn't one there. ..?.. an amount either.
	SB	Have you physically counted the £15.75s.
	LB	Yeh, I've just done it there.
	SB	OK. On that day here's a copy of the print out, the Horizon log, the SB6. Can you just explain there, the user code again ...
	LB	Same again, it's mine, LBR001.
	SB	At what time in the ...
	LB	Quarter to 10.
	SB	OK. Is there any explanation of why ..
	LB	No.
	SB	That's now 2 mistakes and you say ..?..
24.00		It was explained to Ms Brennan that in the case of child benefit, the amounts are static because the payments reflect the number of children. But in the case of retirement pensions or sickness benefit, the amount varies depending on the person. It was then re-iterated that a child benefit payment of £15.75 had been inputted as £115.75 and one for £26.30 had been inputted as £226.30
	AG	£26.30 fed in as £226.30 so you must have a bit of a nervous finger there because you've fed in 115 and 226. Now that's obviously a different payee because it's a different amount. If we were to go to that person and get a statement from them and they were to deny that they'd not been paid the £100 so that's 2 people. Again we're on a 50/50. Either we get 2 dishonest people and they both say, no we won't pay it out or we get 2 honest people and they say yes it was paid out, I was only waiting for you to come and collect it from me. So there's 2 examples, so they're 2 different people. It's not the same person every week, it's 2 different



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
25.00	SB	people. Steve'll show you a couple more examples I think.
	SB	Can you just sign the bottom of that to say that you've seen it. And that one as well. Just a couple more. Sign the bottom.. the top of that. OK. The last example we've just shown you, I'm now gonna show you part of the transaction log that was run off at quarter past 6 on the 5 th for that one for the 23 rd . And you see the highlighted bits, that'll be known as SB7. There's the £115.75 that'd been claimed at 9:42 but also what else has been paid out at the same time?
	LB	Invalidity benefit. What do you mean?
	SB	Well, that's all part of the same transaction so you haven't just paid the child benefit out at that time, a group 14 pension has also been paid out.
	LB	Right.
	SB	You see what we're getting at, it wasn't just a one transaction when you've been busy and you might have double pressed the key, you've actually keyed in 2 different ones haven't you, 2 different groups, pensions and that's the amount you paid out 'cos if you add them 2 together...
	LB	It comes to that.
	SB	It comes to that amount.
	LB	Right.
	SB	So we've now got a slight variation of what we've been speaking about of just paying out 1 voucher, we're now paying out 2 vouchers and still coming across mistakes. Could there be any explanation?
	LB	No.
27.00	SB	And that was the 31 st of May. Again do you think there's anything wrong with the pensions that day?
	LB	Oh God, don't tell me there are.
	SB	Well on that, if I show you SB8 and SB9 which is a print off of the transaction log, shows a group 7 for £250.60 that isn't there and the transaction log shows the same, paid out.
	LB	And it's not there?



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
30.00	SB	But we've now suddenly £500, now we're getting a bit away from just being genuine mistakes now aren't we.
	LB	I think it's a mistake.
	SB	You're losing 2 or 300 pound a week.
	LB	I'm not doing the job very good.
	SB	And that's on a day that you're not normally in. We're now, you know, £500 and we've only gone back a few weeks. We're only talking 2 or 3 weeks and I believe you were on leave the other week. You were on leave the other week?
	LB	I don't when I was on leave. I've had leave, I'm not ..
	SB	I've had it confirmed by your boss that you've been on leave and there were no discrepancies that week.
	LB	I can't believe it ...?...
31.00	SB	So you admit that you're making the discrepancies then?
	LB	Well I obviously have, haven't I? It's me who's logged on.
	SB	But don't you think a clerk with 13 years experience, it's a bit ... No, there's an explanation. I don't think it's just being careless and pressing the wrong key twice. It's happening too often. I'll show you this ... it's a print out .. you know the pensions go through Lisahally to be checked and sealed up and off in the pouch, well week 42 of the last cash account year 01/02, Lisahally have checked them and the group 13, one order value £35.05 has been claimed as £135.05. That was down to B stock, B date stamp, you were using B date stamp. Again the following week, group 13, £76.95 has been claimed as £176.95 and again B date stamp. You see where we're going.
	LB	Yeh. I haven't got it.
32.00	SB	It's not careless. Do you think somebody else is using your code?
	LB	No, no one can, no. I work fast, I'm not thinking but I work fast, try and get through the queue as quick as I can. The pressure's on and I try and work as fast as I can.
	SB	But if we look at these, the explanation was with the £15.75 that you'd pressed



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Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
	LB	the key twice for £115, that would be £335 not £135, wouldn't it?
	SB	Yeh.
	SB	And the same would be with that one, that would be £776, not £176 so the explanation of pressing the key twice doesn't quite work in these examples does it?
	LB	No.
33.00	SB	So you know ... week 44 which is the week after, again group 14 £115.50, that's been claimed as £215, again to use your explanation of the double press of the key, that would be £1115. Then week 45, £22.48 in group 13 claimed as £122, another £100 out.
	LB	God.
	SB	Group 5, £25.85 claimed as £125.85, another £100. Group 14, £140.55 claimed as £240.55. Another £100 out and that's just on the checks that have come back. So I don't think it's just an explanation of pressing the key, I don't think you're that poor a clerk, do you Lisa?
	LB	No, I don't think so, no.
	SB	If it's not carelessness and it's not somebody else doing it, what does that leave us with?
	LB	You think I'm taking it.
33.40	SB	Well are you?
	LB	No, I haven't got it. Not that that's an excuse, I'm having a bad time at home, not that it's an excuse. My head's up my arse most of the time, I'm sorry. I'm trying to work as fast as I can.
34.00		I t was said to Ms Brennan that she had depressed the key twice, the first figure on the pension voucher would be inputted twice and the examples show to her, showed that this was not the case. She agreed that an equal amount of either £100 or £200 had been used each time and the figures had not been transposed. She also agreed that none of her balances reflected these discrepancies.
35.00	SB	And I don't think you've paid out to all the customers for that much money. I'm



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
	LB	sure everybody pays ... I'm not saying that all your customers are honest ... I'd say half and half would come back. Am I losing it any other time during the day?
	SB	No. It's all on the pensions. All down to B date stamp
	LB	Yeh.
	AG	We've got a choice of 2 things haven't we Lisa, either you're totally incompetent and you're costing the Post Office 3 or 4 hundred pounds a week and therefore we can't afford to keep you...
	LB	Don't sack me.
	AG	Or you're fiddling the pensions deliberately and you're pocketing the money.
	LB	No, I haven't got it, I haven't got it, I haven't.
	AG	Someone's got it.
	LB	I haven't got it.
36.00	AG	All these customers being paid out too much, not one of them says at the time. If I was due for £25.60 or £26.30, whatever the amount is, and you gave me £125, I would say why are you giving me all that and I'm damn sure that you know as a reasonable counter clerk, you know that to pay out on the screen for a docket that's worth £25 means you've made a mistake.
	LB	Yeh.
	AG	Well this has been going on since... what's the date of this, January of this year so it took you 6 months and if it's £200 a week.
	LB	It's a lot of money.
	AG	How much is that?
	LB	A lot of money.
	SB	It equates to about £5000. No, I don't think it's carelessness. I don't think Tony thinks it's carelessness.
	LB	I haven't got it.
37.00		Ms Brennan explained her financial and personnel circumstances.
40.00	SB	So you actually earn a little bit more than £180. OK. If we just go off this, not



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape Counter Times	Person Speaking	Text
41.00		that you're saying that these are all mistakes, carelessness .. isn't it a bit strange that they're just happening in the pensions and not in your other work?
	LB	Like in what?
	SB	Well your giros have not been proved to be wrong, your savings bank has not been proved to be wrong. It's only pensions that have proved to be wrong by £100 or £200 at a time.
	LB	Dunno.
	AG	I think it's a question of not whether you've done it but why have you done it.
	LB	I haven't done it.
	AG	I think you've done it deliberately.
	LB	I haven't done it. I haven't done it. I've had pressures ..?.. , the work's been dead .. the work we were doing ...
	AG	No one else is making mistakes like you.
	LB	They don't work as fast as me. I've been working dead fast.
42.00	AG	I used to work fast on the counter. You're talking maybe over £1000 here in just a few weeks.
	LB	I haven't got nothing new, I haven't got fridges and freezers and whatever else have you, I've got nothing.
	AG	What other problems have you got then?
	LB	Nothing. The tape was coming to an end. Ms Brennan signed master tape seal 047855 and the tape was switched off at 1052 hours.



Summary Record of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape
Counter
Times

Person
Speaking

Text

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