

POST OFFICE LTD CONFIDENTIAL: INVESTIGATION, PERSONNEL  
POLTD/0506/ 0061OFFENCE  
THEFT & FALSE ACCOUNTING

Name: Tahir MAHMOOD

Rank: Subpostmaster Identification Code: IC4

Office: Ten Acre Street FAD Code 383.201.5  
Selly Oak  
Birmingham  
B30 2XN

Age: 30 Date of Birth: **GRO**

Service: 6 years Date Service Commenced: 20.05.1999

Nat Ins No:

Home Address:

**GRO**

Contract for Services  
Suspended: 30.04.2005 on the authority of Colin Price

Handed into custody: N/A

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

Designated Prosecution  
Authority: Tony Utting , National Investigation Manager

Discipline Manager: Sue Muddeman

## POST OFFICE LTD CONFIDENTIAL: INVESTIGATION, PERSONNEL

Sue Muddeman  
Contracts Manager

Subject: Mr Tahir Mahmood – Sub Postmaster Ten Acre Street Post Office FAD 383.215.5.

The facts of this case are as follows. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2005 I attended Ten Acre Street Branch with my colleagues Mr Michael Cooksey and Mr Paul Dawkins and members of the post office audit team, Miss Alison Edwards and Mr Guru Aubby. On our arrival we were met by Mr Mohammed Hanif, the Sub postmaster's father. Tahir Mahmood arrived approximately thirty minutes later.

When Mr Mahmood arrived at the office the audit had already commenced and Miss Edwards asked Mr Mahmood if there was any more cash on hand other than what she had retrieved from the safe. Mr Mahmood replied that 'there were some differences'. At this point Miss Edwards and Mr Mahmood left the secure area and approached Mr Dawkins, Mr Cooksey and myself. Mr Mahmood informed Mr Dawkins that the post office would be about £25,000 short. Just before 10:30 Miss Edwards informed me that the audit had been completed and there was a shortage in the post office accounts of £33,437.39. I then cautioned Mr Mahmood and recorded the caution in my notebook. Miss Edwards then informed Mr Mahmood of the audit result and Mr Mahmood said that he agreed with the audit figure. I informed Mr Mahmood that I would need to speak to him formally. I explained the interview process in detail and the right to have a solicitor and/or a friend present at the interview. An interview was arranged for 10:00 on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2005 at the post office premises in 86 Lionel St, Birmingham B3 1HQ.

Mr Mahmood attended Lionel Street on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> of May for interview and was accompanied by his Federation Representative, Mr Jitesh Chavda. I reminded Mr Mahmood of the reason for the interview and recapped on the events of Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2005 and I began questioning Mr Mahmood. Mr Mahmood said that he worked in the post office full time and that he had not taken a holiday in the six years he has been sub postmaster. He said that he has one assistant, his father, who usually opens the post office on a Saturday morning and helps out on the odd occasion. Mr Mahmood said that he completed all the daily and weekly documentation himself and that he would thoroughly check everything before despatch, explaining in detail how he would complete those checks. Mr Mahmood added that he completes the weekly balance and receives no assistance in doing so.

When questioned on the audit shortage Mr Mahmood said that following his last audit (10 March 2003) he has been incurring large losses on a regular basis. That he did not know how to pay the money back and had panicked and inflated the cash account. When questioned further Mr Mahmood said that his first large loss, following that audit, was in the region of £400 to £500. He added that he had not declared the loss but had hidden it by inflating the cash on hand figure in the weekly office balance and that he had continued to falsify his cash account each week since April 2003, as the loss figure grew larger. When informed that by his actions he was false accounting an official document Mr Mahmood said that he was aware of that fact.

Mr Mahmood said that he was aware, that by hiding the losses and falsifying the weekly office balance, that he had gained financially and also maintained his position as

| To:                                          | From:                            | cc:                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sue Muddeman<br>Contract and Service Manager | Alison Edwards<br>Branch Auditor | Colin Price<br>Investigation Manager<br>Martin Ferlinc<br>National Branch Audit Manager<br>Glyn Burrows<br>Data Analyst<br>John Jenkinson<br>Operations Manager - Branch<br>Audit Team |

Date: 03 May 2005

#### Audit of Post Office @ Ten Acre Street branch, FAD 3832015

An audit of accounts was undertaken at the above branch on Saturday 30 April 2005. The audit was performed at the request of Internal Crime. The audit commenced at 0845 and concluded at 1430 revealing a shortage of £33437.39. I was the Lead Auditor and was accompanied by Branch Auditor Guru Aubby. Internal Crime Managers, Colin Price, Paul Dawkins and Mike Cooksey were present throughout the audit.

The audit shortage was made up as follows:

|                 |                              |           |      |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|------|
|                 | Inflated cash                | £33575.72 | *    |
| <i>subtract</i> | Cheque on hand difference    | £200.37   | **   |
| <i>add</i>      | Difference at audit          | £66.83    | ***  |
| <i>subtract</i> | Previous week balance result | £4.79     | **** |

\* The previous nights declared cash on hand was obtained and compared to the cash counted on audit.

\*\* The cheque on hand figure was understated by £200.37; this is made up of two cheques (one cheque for a BT phone bill payment totalling £73.87 and a second cheque for TV licence payment totalling £126.50)

\*\*\* This figure is made up of stock on hand differences (TVLSS overstated by £20.00, Philatelic items overstated by £2.04, Postage overstated by £34.79 and Branded Post Office Phonecards overstated by £10.00.

\*\*\*\* This was the result of week 05 Cash Account not cleared.

At the outset of the audit Mr Tahir Mahmood Subpostmaster was not present, his father Mohammed Hanif was present and was setting up the branch ready for trading. Mohammed Hanif contacted his son to advise of an audit and to ask him to come to the branch as soon as possible.

When Tahir Mahmood arrived at the branch I ask him if any more Post Office cash was on hand. Tahir Mahmood replied 'no there will be some differences'. When Tahir Mahmood said this I referred him to Colin Price. Colin Price took details of what Tahir Mahmood said.

Tahir Mahmood was precautionary suspended by Colin Price. The branch had not been open on the day of the audit and was defunded. The shortage was sent to Late Account.

The Post Office Card Account cards were forwarded to Selly Oak Branch via Royal Mail Special delivery.

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Subpostmaster. Whereby if he had informed the RLM of the losses, and the fact that he could not make good those amounts, it was most probable that his contract with the post office would have been terminated.

Mr Mahmood explained that he had informed his father in January of 2005 that his post office was £25,000 short and that his father had agreed to take a loan to pay the post office. Mr Mahmood was to say later in the interview that his father was only willing to pay the money if the Ten Acre Street Post Office was kept in the family, otherwise he would not pay it. Mr Mahmood continued throughout the interview to say that all the losses were genuine and denied taking money from the post office. He said that he believed that all of the cash loss had been created by giving it to customers by mistake and that he had inflated his cash account every week to cover the increasing loss figure.

Mr Mahmood's father financed the purchase of Ten Acre Post Office in 1999 by way of re-mortgaging his house. Mr Mahmood receives on average £2,500 per month for remuneration of which he keeps £200 and the rest is handed over to his father. Mr Mahmood, his wife and two children, live in the family home with his parents and other members of the family. All household bills, including food bills, are paid for by the father.

Further enquiries are ongoing and I will keep you updated as and when information is received. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to call me on the number listed below.

CR Price  
Investigation Manager

**GRO**