| ICL Pathway | Service Management - Release 1C | Ref: | CS/REP/012 |
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| | | Version: | 1.0 |
| | Operations Report - March 1998 | Date: | 13 Mar 1998 |

Document Title:                 Release 1C Operations Report - March 1998

Abstract:                         This is one of a series of documents which presents a monthly
                                  report on the status of the Horizon Service and any operational
                                  problems or issues experienced.

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## 1. Summary

The improvement in the Horizon service noted in the previous report has been maintained over the last month with very few new problems being experienced.

Major tasks now are to progress, in partnership with PDA, POCL and BA, further beneficial changes to the service operation - cases in point include
- review of the CAPS trigger point for card ordering and the card expiry time
- improvements across the CAPS/Pathway interface
- card batch reconciliation procedure at post offices

## 2. New Problem Reports

## 2.1 Corrupt data against a single transaction

Date information relating to the encashment details of a single transaction at a single Post Office has become corrupt. There is no impact on beneficiary or postmaster, but the corruption must be investigated and rectified. Forecast closure - March 1998

## 3. WIP Update

## 3.1 CAPS/Pathway Interface

This continues to receive much attention from CAPS and Pathway and good progress and joint understanding is being maintained. The document entitled 'An Operational Review of the CAPS / Pathway Interface' was presented to the CAPS Board on 6th March. A programme of work was identified and a joint (BA/EDS/Pathway/CFM) working group will follow this through. It is anticipated that the majority of activities will be complete by June.

## 3.2 Authentication of Users to Helpdesks - One Shot Passwords

A draft procedure was produced and given to PDA for discussion and agreement. Comment was received back on 26 January to which Pathway responded. Verbal agreement was received from David McLaughlin (PDA Operations) on 12 February but subsequently concerns were raised by PDA Security (Dave King). Discussions between Pathway and PDA Security have brought agreement closer and Dave King has requested that a formal Change Proposal be raised to cover the process. Forecast closure - April 1998.

## 3.3 Marooned Stop Payments

The software fix that was implemented on 17 January 1998 has fixed at least 95% of the problem. There are two outstanding incidents which are under investigation with Oracle, but there have been no instances of "marooned" Stop Confirmations in the last couple of weeks. Forecast closure - March 1998.

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## 3.4 ABED Issues - Increase in cash account errors

Because it can take several weeks or indeed months for information to feed through from POCL Chesterfield, it will be still be some time before the results of implementing the 'lost transaction' fix can be assessed in respect of the cash account errors. Forecast closure - April 1998.

## 3.5 Maestro Scheduler Failure

A further incident of this problem had been experienced on 7 February which led to a number of payments not being available at the counter. A total of 5 payments were made by the Payment Card Help Line and a further 20 payments were successfully downloaded to the counters in advance of their earliest encashment date. No other payments were affected. Pending successful testing of a software script to monitor Maestro jobs, CFM have written a manual script to check that Maestro jobs are running and raising an alert if not.   Forecast closure - March 1998.

## 3.6 Cards expiring at Post Offices before being collected

Existing beneficiaries are being nominated for new cards long before their current order books expire. In cases where benefit is paid four-weekly, the trigger point used by CAPS is 8 weeks in advance of the last foil being used. The system is required to expire uncollected cards after 56 days (8 weeks) and so in many cases the card expires as soon as it is received at the post office. As a temporary measure in order to reduce unnecessary cost and inconvenience to customers and post masters the card expiry time has been set to 90 days.

A review of the CAPS trigger point for ordering cards and the card expiry time was held on 10th March  between CAPS, POCL and Pathway.  A number of proposals for consideration were formulated and these are to be examined at the Horizon Service Review Forum on 18th March.

## 3.7 Card Batch Reconciliation Procedure at Post Office

Card batch reconciliation is the process currently carried out by a post office clerk on receipt of a new card batch from De La Rue Card Systems, prior to issuing a card to a customer. The purpose of this process is to check the integrity of the card batch. Recent experience suggests that card reconciliation at the post office is onerous and time consuming for the post office clerk, delays the issue of cards to the customer, and incurs an unnecessary cost for Pathway. Cards are being swiped through several times. This causes a card and PUN re-order because the system then believes the card to be faulty or the card reader is faulty  (known as a Surplus to Batch Problem).

Action is required to reinforce the Batch Reconciliation Procedures at post offices. CCN232, which seeks to modify this process at NR2+, has been submitted to the PDA for approval.

## 3.8    Re-Issues Agent not running

On 10 February an incident occurred that caused the Re-Issues Agent not to run. One customer was affected and had to be paid via the Payment Card Help Line. Although similar in impact to the Maestro Scheduler failure, this problem is viewed as a separate issue since other agents were unaffected at the time of this incident. A problem of a similar nature occurred on 5$^{th}$ March but this appears likely to have been self-inflicted due to some activities being undertaken by Pathway support. There were no beneficiaries affected. The problem thus remains under  investigation  and will be subject to a PIR later in March.  Forecast closure March 1998.

## 4.    Closed since last report

## 4.1    Lost BES Transactions

CCN0224 was implemented and installed in the live estate on 9 February 1998. There have subsequently been no lost transactions in the area of this change. The Accounting and Reconciliation Meeting (attended by PDA/BA/Pathway) meets on a regular basis to examine transactions that are lost due to operational issues and progress on such issues is tracked via this meeting.   Problem closed