

Royal Mail Group

Witness Statement

Criminal Justice Act 1967, Section 9; Magistrates Court Act 1980, sub section. 5A(3)(a) and 5B; Criminal Procedure Rules 2005, Rule 27.1

Statement of Thelma CRERAND

Age if under 18 Over 18 (if over 18 insert 'over 18')

This statement (consisting of 4 pages each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Dated the 11th day of May 2009

Signature

GRO

I am the above named person and I give this statement of my own free will. I am employed as the Assistant Manager of Jesmond Post Office, St Georges Terrace, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 2SY. I have been employed there since 17th April 2008, initially part time as a counter assistant, working Thursday 08:45 to 17:30 hours, Friday 08:45 to 17:30 hours and Saturday 08:45 to 13:15 hours. The opening times for the Post Office are 09:00 to 17:30 hours Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 13:00 hours Saturday. On Thursday 18th September 2008 I was asked to take over as temporary Sub Postmistress after Sunil Khanna, Sub Postmaster was suspended after a large shortage was found at audit. Although Sunil was the Sub Postmaster, he never took any part in the running of the Post Office. He employed Peter Holmes as the Manager to run the office. Prior to 18th September 2008 my responsibilities were to serve the customers. We operated a shared stock unit AA in the office and each morning when I arrived, Peter Holmes would either be putting cash and stock in the drawer at my counter position or it would already be there. I never counted the money to check what was there as it was a shared stock unit. If I required more money throughout the day I would ask Peter for it and he would take it

from the safe. At three O'clock on Thursday & Friday I would count the Scottish and spoilt notes, balance them and get someone to check them. I would then check the cash in my drawer. If there was a lot I would bundle them into £1,000's and hand them to Doreen Corcoran. I never opened the Post Office in the morning or closed it at night. I never took the Post Office keys at any time. My User Id for Horizon is TCR001 and my password is not known to anyone. I do not know anyone else's password. I was not aware of any problems with the Horizon system when Peter was employed. The Branch trading Statement was completed at the period end, however, I had no involvement in preparing it as I didn't work on a Wednesday. Although I worked on a Wednesday when someone was on holiday, however I still didn't take part in the balance. I wasn't made aware if the balance was over and short. I did ask Peter on a Thursday occasionally and he said it was right or something along those lines. On occasion I would enter the cash figures from the cash sheet onto Horizon. When I did so I never a variance check and it was always entered under 06. On Thursday 18th September 2008 the audit team were in the office when I arrived. Sunil met me in the medicentre where the Post Office is and told me they were in and to wait in the tea room. Later on Sunil said they didn't know how long they would be in and told me to go home. Sunil contacted me later and asked if I would take over the Post Office as he had been suspended. He also told me there was a £46,000 shortage and Peter had also been suspended. I agreed and came back to the office. I asked the auditor why there was a £46,000 shortage and he said there was a second cash declaration that I later found out was 09. I was not aware that cash declaration 09 existed. I didn't steal the money.

Signature

GRO

Signature witnessed by

Robert Daily