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Record of Taped Interview

Short Descriptive Notes

Record of Taped Interview Summary

Full Taped Interview Transcript

(delete as applicable)

Person interviewed: KYAYYAM ISHAQ (KI)
Place of Interview: TRAINING ROOM
BRADFORD DELIVERY OFFICE

Exhibit No:
Number of pages: 13
Signature of interviewer producing record

Date of Interview: 7.4.11 **Time commenced:** 11.11

Tape reference no.: 071401 Time concluded: 11.53

Duration of Interview: 42 MINUTES

Interviewing Officers: STEPHEN BRADSHAW (SB) ANDREW WISE (AW)

Other persons present: MUSA PATEL (MP) - SOLICITOR

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		Voice identification of everyone present and the nature of the enquiry explained. Permission to tape record given.
1.30		KI cautioned and reminded of legal rights. KI told (1) he is not under arrest, (2) is free to leave, (3) is entitled to legal representation and advice including the right to speak with a Solicitor and (4) is entitled to read the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 Codes of Practice setting out the rules and rights governing the conduct of this interview. The necessary form completed and signed – Solicitor present.
3.00		The Royal Mail Employee Rights to a Friend at an interview or search form GS003 completed and signed. Offer of friend – friend declined.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
4.40		KI was questioned regarding an Audit conducted on 8 th February 2011 which revealed a shortage of just over £21,000 and states:-
4.56	KI	Firstly I don't know where it's arose from. We were doing balances of the stamps and the stock but not the safe stock and in the audit, while the audit was taking place that figure jumped several times from 17, 18 to in the end then they came back with a figure 3 days later of 21,000. I wasn't present all the time while the audit was taking place 'cos in the middle of it they says once they found a discrepancy I got suspended and they won't let me back into the Post Office side.
6.40		KI denied being asked to re-audit everything himself and said he was simply asked 'this is what we've found sign this here'.
7.28	SB	Now you're saying 3 days later?
	KI	Yeah because he couldn't finish the audit off that same day so they came back, he couldn't come back the next day so we were closed for another day and then he came back on Wednesday no he came back on the.
	SB	They came back on the 11 th that was to transfer the branch to another Sub-Postmaster that wasn't the audit, the audit was concluded on the 8 th February.
7.50	KI	Right 'cos my understanding was the audit was still in process.
	SB	No no the audit would be completed. Once you're suspended the audit was completed and then you gave permission for the Post Office to be run by an interim Sub-Postmaster.
	KI	Yeah 'cos that's what the Contracts Manager asked me to do.
	SB	Yeah and it's 3 days later when the audit concluded and transfer was concluded on the 11 th February.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	KI	Well the figure of, the 21,000 came on that 3 rd day it didn't come on the first day.
8.30		KI reiterates the figure kept changing on the auditor's laptop and he was told the figure of 21,000 on the 3 rd day when he signed the Post Office over to the interim Sub-Postmaster.
9.20		KI states he took over the Post Office in July 2008 at which time he employed 2 staff. He By August 2010 he only had 1 member of staff, this being (Umair Liaquat). KI confirmed that his hours were on an adhoc basis coming 'in and out'. Umair worked 10 to 4 Monday to Friday (with a break for lunch when they stayed open) with himself covering Saturdays alone.
11.15		KI confirmed that he would therefore work 9 to 10, during the lunch hour then 4 – 5.30 and Saturdays 9 – 12.30. He said there are 3 counter positions but they only use 2 with him using the middle one. They do not share passwords and he temporary locks his terminal when he is away from it. KI considers himself to be competent with Post Office transactions. Umair is still receiving training.
15.40		KI states most of the time he would produce the branch trading statement but Umair would do extra hours when needed to help.
17.29	SB	Just talk me through how you would do the balance, I understand that some of the stock you would count throughout the day, you're trying to make, in your mind you're trying to make life easy for you for when you

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		produce your balance so if you've got a book of stamps you would count what's in there because you may not use them so during the day your customers have gone it's half past 5 you now start doing the balance ok. Now the purpose of the balance is to check that everything that you should have is there because you're custodian of Post Office money and the stamps and stock.
	KI	Can I just say I was never shown the back office at all I had to learn that from somebody else who was teaching me you know the previous.
	SB	And again we will check it out but my understanding and I'm sure it's Andrew's understanding as well that when you've done your initial training, a trainer is on site while you produce your first, at least one of your branch trading statements you will be shown everything that sort of goes through it. However you know I take on what you say and we'll see but how confident was you then about producing this branch trading statement?
18.59	KI	Well we counted the cash.
	SB	Right is there anything you done before counting the cash?
	KI	We used to do the reports you know the daily reports.
	SB	Yeah you'd do your daily reports you've sent them off ok, is there anything you've done before you start counting the cash? Did you produce anything off the Horizon system?
	KI	No.
	SB	Did you never print off a balance snapshot?
	KI	No.
	SB	Never in all your time?
	KI	I have printed a balance snapshot but never for a balance.
	SB	Ok so, ok just talk through it then you count your cash?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	KI	We count the cash, we counted the stamps on the counter and basically that's it, just counted those stamps at the back stock, we knew how much was there we had it on a sheet you know how much stock was, we never actually counted that and we just count the stock on hand on the counter.
20.30		KI confirmed they did not count the bulk stock when doing the balance every month and just took the figure from the sheet.
21.40	SB	Right so what you do is you're keeping a record, you've initially counted all your bulk stamps and then you keep a record and again we use the example 10 sheets, so say for example you take a full sheet out you cross out 10 and leave 9?
	KI	Yeah leave 9 yeah.
	MP	Yeah but what Mr. Bradshaw is saying that you're saying that when the stock is delivered, the bulk stock is delivered, you've counted it and put it in the store room yeah?
	KI	That's a different question.
	SB	Well no actually Mr. Patel's correct it does come in at some stage.
	KI	When it comes from Post Office, when it usually came from Post Office we just checked it off basically and then put it into the back, we never actually physically counted that.
	SB	Right but just to go onto what Mr Patel said but you're taking 10 stamps, again that's down to you if you haven't, if you don't count what you receive and it's short, anything that's missing is down to you because you're signing to accept 10 sheets have been delivered in. Now if you're taking 10 sheets in and you've got 10 sheets in the back you change your piece of paper to read 20 and then when you give them out

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		it goes down to 19, 18 and so on so at some stage in your mind you have got an idea of how much cash and stock you've got haven't you?
	KI	Yeah.
23.04	SB	Right and then so you've added your stamps from the book you've added the bulk from there you've counted your cash and you put them figures into the machine and then you produce a balance doesn't it?
	KI	Yeah.
	SB	And from that balance it tells you whether you're perfect and you haven't lost a penny and haven't gained a penny, you've gained some money or you've lost some money. Now what were your balances like?
	KI	I think it always showed a loss.
	SB	Right always showed a loss ok. Why did it always show a loss do you think? 'Cos in simplistic terms, person comes in with money you sell them a stamp ok. If they give you £1 stamps have gone up now so they're 46 so you give them 54p change. Before that it was 41p so you gave them 59p change so you get an extra £1 in your coinage and you get the denomination of the 59 or 54p and then your value of your stock, the stamps decrease by 1 so if you don't make any mistakes the money comes in and the paper goes out, the machine adds it all up for you and then you get your perfect balance ok. When you're short ok you say you're always short that normally comes 3 ways isn't it, you're being careless 'cos somebody's given you money and you're given the wrong change, you're not taking the money when you're selling something, incompetence a little bit like the carelessness, you don't know what you're doing so you're just giving money backwards willy nilly or somebody's taken stolen cash stolen stock and that's how you end up with shortages. In the retail trade we call it shrinkage and all this but in

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		effect it's all about theft that people are taking something that doesn't belong to them.
26.45		KI said his losses were about £20 to £30 but rose to about £1400 about October 2010 which was settled centrally. He thinks the next shortage was about £400 in January which was added to the audit.
28.47	SB	Right so that explains then when the auditors went there they found a loss of about £500 and that escalated the audit up to go back to a question Mr Patel had before. That's why one person arrived and then 2 people finished off your audit because they found the loss and they went from checking your cash to actually checking everything that you held in the branch yeah that right?
	KI	That's what happened yeah.
	SB	Ok so we've got the £1400 which is the October one ok let's just take another step back now. On a daily basis which is the bit what you were going to say just before to assist you when you know about these losses, you would do something that's known as a cash declaration ok. Can you explain to me who done them and what you did with a cash declaration?
29.35	KI	It was done both, I did them and he, you know the other clerk did them as well.
	SB	Ok what time would you normally do them?
	KI	Between half 4 quarter to five maybe to 5.
29.57	SB	Now you say the other clerk done them.
	KI	As well.
	SB	Why did he do it did he have his own stock unit?
	KI	No it was a shared stock unit.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	SB	Right so it's a shared stock unit. Ok so if he left at 4 o'clock would he do a cash dec?
	KI	No.
	SB	Ok but you would then do it between half past 4 and 5 o'clock?
	KI	Yeah.
	SB	Ok. If he didn't leave at 4 o'clock you'd have asked him to stay behind and he's working until 5 o'clock or half past five, is he the person who then produced the cash dec?
	KI	Sometime yes.
	SB	Right or sometimes do it yourself?
	KI	Or sometimes I did it.
	SB	Ok so how did you produce your cash declaration?
	KI	We entered the figures, we counted all the cash. The bulk cash now is counted, pre-counted it was banded up into £5,000 so to make it easier for us to count and we did the coins separately they were counted and we had little slips telling us exactly what they counted.
	SB	Yeah and then you entered them in?
	KI	And then you entered them in.
	SB	And then you press a button.
	KI	Yeah and it shows you how much you're down or up.
	SB	Down or up right. Is there any time when you've done cash declarations that the money was showing strange
	KI	No it never showed strange figures.
	SB	Right so it didn't say you were, for October, if we broke that down into a weekly thing, I know it's very simple but if we broke that down to £300 a week you didn't and over the period of the first week start seeing the money creep up to £300 then during the second week creep up to

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Record of Taped Interview - Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
32.50	KI	£600, during the third week creep up to £900 and then.
	KI	Yeah and that. On that example yeah.
	SB	So what you're saying is your cash is out, for the example of October, the £1400 you knew from the end of your previous trading statement to the end of the other one that your cash was out when you produced your cash declaration?
	KI	Yeah the cash was out yeah.
	SB	Right so each time your cash was out.
	KI	I knew how much cash was out.
	SB	Yeah and it built up so you knew prior to the branch trading statement that you were expecting to show a loss in the region of £1400 if we use October as the example.
	KI	Yeah.
	SB	Ok and that's the one you're saying you settled centrally and sort of paid. If we was, you know and we're talking examples and simplistic, if after the first week it was £300 out, what did you do?
	KI	I looked at the transactions that were happening to try and find it. When we did the, when he did the balance he usually told us if there were any stamps that were out and stuff like that so we checked those on the books.
	SB	Right so.
	KI	But they were always out by 1 or £2 so they were always showing.
	SB	So your stamps were sorted out?
	KI	Yeah.
	SB	Or the cash it out but you tried to find out where the money was?
	KI	Yeah but we couldn't find it.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
33.15		KI states he did not phone the helpline regarding the losses.
33.30		KI shown branch trading statement for October 2010 showing a £1065.56 loss which he said he settled centrally clearing his account before trading period 7, as far as he could recall.
37.05		KI was informed the loss at trading period 7 was in fact £4,211.00, £3658.00 at period 8 and £479 by January.
37.20	SB	So your first and last one are within the balance but you're out by the middle 2 and that's why I'm saying figures like that will stand out and you will remember. You remembered your £1400 you remembered your £400 you don't remember nearly £8,000.
	KI	I don't remember doing that.
	SB	Well that's your Post Office that's what's been done right so if that loss is out how would you make good your accounts? You're £4,000 short then right how have you made good that loss?
	KI	I think if it was that amount.
	SB	Not it is that amount.
	KI	I would have contacted Chesterfield about that one.
	SB	I've just asked you and all your remember contacting Chesterfield is about the first one and they're big amounts to me that you will remember and you'll be going hang on something's wrong in this Post Office so how did you make good, how did you manage to get your account straight for the next one in trading period 8 when you were £4,000 short and that's short by that, did you put any money in and that loss is part of that loss?

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
39.25	KI	I think that loss might have been part of that loss.
	SB	Right so what you've done is when that money come in there the £4,211, you haven't contacted Chesterfield, you've let that roll over into that one?
	MP	And is that a roll over figure then?
	SB	Well again that's the following one so it's one of two ways it's whether you've got a further loss of 3,000 or whether that loss is part of that loss.
	KI	Every loss I got I contacted Chesterfield.
		KI states he was paying about £1,000 out of his remuneration and on a couple of occasions paid £2,000.
	SB	Did you ever inflate the cash?
	KI	No.
	SB	So you never inflated the cash, have you ever stolen any money:
	KI	No I haven't.
40.58	SB	Did you get any transaction corrections 'cos I don't believe that in that period you've given over £1,000 a week over the counter to customers 'cos you'd have the queue round the door. I'd even drive up to come and get served by you 'cos I know I'm going out with more money than what I come in for.
41.26	AW	Just leading on from the rolling over suddenly the loss from that trading statement has then disappeared on the January one, so what happened did you put that money in or?
	KI	That cash 3,000 they contacted, this wasn't settled I don't think centrally I don't think so, I think I put cash in there.

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
41.50		<p>KI was advised to say what had happened rather than to guess.</p> <p>Master tape seal signed on number 071401</p> <p>Interview terminated at</p>