

*Bond Pearce*

# Telephone attendance

Client: Royal Mail Group PLC Sub Postmaster Litigation

Matter: Mr Lee Castleton

Matter no: 348035.134

Attending:

Name: Stephen Dilley

Location: N/A

Date: 6 December 2005

Start time:

Units:

SJD3 having a telephone conversation with Helen Rose (nee Hollingworth) (her call) telephone number [GRO] She had the following comments in response to my email of 2 December to her, adopting that paragraph numbering:

1. She is currently an Investigations Manager and has been since September 2004. Before that she had been an Auditor at the Post Office for 5 years since February 1997. On average she used to carry out one audit a day, sometimes more. She has 20 days per year holiday plus Bank Holidays, so she probably has about 285 working days per year. Over 5 years at one audit a day that works out as 1,425 audits. Possibly more, possibly less if she didn't do an audit every single day, but then this was probably balanced out by the fact that sometimes she would do two, three and on one occasion four audits a day. In other words, she was a very experienced auditor. In all her time, she never encountered the sort of problem with Horizon that Mr Castleton alleges took place and Horizon only came in very shortly after she started working at the Post Office.
2. No.
3. No, although Cath Olglesby was there that day. Chris Taylor is no longer with the Post Office.
4. The audit involves physically counting the cash and stock at the Post Office and checking the paperwork on hand. The auditors would then generate their own account which is document P32. The sort of documents they would look at from the paperwork were P and A Reports, Giro deposits and declared cash receipts (although she could not remember whether she checked Declared cash receipts on this occasion).
5.
  - a) She cannot remember
  - b) She cannot remember
  - c) She thinks that Mr Castleton would have told her that. She thinks that he went out of the branch during lunchtime and came back later strongly smelling of drink.
  - d) She cannot remember.
  - e) The standard procedures are that the Post Office Master should make good losses each week but Mr Castleton did not do so and he rolled over his losses.
  - f) She cannot remember.

However, she did tell me that there was a standard audit questionnaire and that she would have asked Mr Castleton the questions on it. She will try and get hold of a copy and email it to me.

In laymans terms her conclusions were that Mr Castleton was fiddling the books. She had never seen the Horizon system cause the problems that Mr Castleton said it was causing. She thought in her words that he was "shifty".

7. She might have asked Mr Castleton to print off spare copies of documents for her to take away but wouldn't have removed anything where he didn't have a spare copy and she wouldn't have been interested in the daily snapshots. She couldn't say either way whether Cath Oglesby removed anything.
8. No, other than possibly to ring Cath Oglesby the following week to enquire as to whether the new Sub Postmaster balanced.

My impression of Helen is that understandably her memory has faded over time and that she will need to rely heavily upon her audit to refresh her memory of events. She doesn't remember some details that we would like, for example, about how long the safe was left open for and why and what Mr Castleton said about it. However, she did come away with the strong impression that he was fiddling.

Time engaged in telephone conversation and attendance note: 48 minutes