

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview



Person Interviewed Suzanne Elizabeth McKnight (SM)

Place of Interview Room at Appley Bridge Post Office Branch

Exhibit No:
Number of pages:
Signature of interviewing
officer producing exhibit

Date of Interview 15th October 2008

Time 10:39am Time concluded 11:20am
commenced

Duration of 41 minutes Tape reference 071371
Interview no

Interviewing Officer(s) Stephen Bradshaw (SB)
Paul Whitaker (PW)

Other persons present Winifred Maureen Whalley (WW) –
Friend

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
0.00		SM agrees to interview being tape recorded Legal Rights given and representation declined – Form GS001 completed and signed. Post Office friend Accepted – Form GS003 completed and signed. Caution given and Explained.
7.45		The purpose of the interview was explained to SM. SB explained that in July SB attended the branch and there was a problem concerning the ATM machine. Instructions were left to contact Chesterfield as the figures had been reported earlier and this was causing discrepancies. There was audit on 20 th August 2008 and resulted in a shortage of £53,035.60. SB explained that SM's mother is the sub postmaster

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
9.30	SM	<p>who was suspended on this day. We attended at a later date and a search of the premises was done, but an interview could not take place as there was a power cut in the area. SM was then due to go on holiday and the interview was arranged for this day.</p> <p>SM agreed that this was correct.</p> <p>SB asked SM what could she say about the audit and the shortage.</p> <p>SM explained that the auditors came back with quite a large discrepancy, one for the ATM and the other for the Stock Unit.</p> <p>I knew that there would be a discrepancy of some sort, not to the degree that it was, especially the cash machine, the last I knew it was the ten thousand and it jumped up to I think it was thirty thousand or something like that. I honestly can't see why that was.</p> <p>I was just doing things as I was told to do things. The all of a sudden it went wrong.</p>
10.30		<p>SB asked SM for an explanation for the difference in the lottery scratch cards.</p> <p>SM said that they had received an error correction and that she had read it wrong, SM assumed that it was scratch cards that SM had put through the system that she had activated but when she had not. SM thought that it was in their favour as she had put to many through the system that she shouldn't have done. SM said that it was wrong and that it was lost money and that it was a misunderstanding of how things worked.</p>
11.15		<p>SB asked for an explanation concerning the difference in the cheques on hand.</p>
11.30		<p>SM explained that previous members of staff had made mistakes, whilst SM was absent. On her return SM said that there was a</p>

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
12.30		<p>request for evidence for the cheques that had remmed out twice. The evidence was sent out showing it was not the fault of the branch and SM said that nothing was done about it and never been rectified back to them, as it was not their fault as it was a doubling up of the money sent out.</p> <p>SM said that her mother had, had the Post Office for nearly four years. SM confirmed that her mother never worked behind the counter and SM was the officer in charge during this time.</p> <p>SM explained that she attended the training school, SM said that she had previously worked in a Post Office and this training wasn't management style training, it was basically counter training. SM said the course was for a week, but as they were the only people on the course, they did not do full days, never attended on one day and on the final day they attended only for a couple of hours. SM said that the hours that they did, the course could have been done in two days.</p>
14.30		<p>SM explained that they balanced at the end of the Trading Period. and how they performed the balance.</p> <p>SB asked SM what they did with any surplus amounts, SM replied that they would put it in the safe.</p> <p>SB then asked what they would do with any shortages. SM said that if they had it in the safe, they would put it back. SM was then asked what if they didn't have the money in the safe.</p>
16.00		<p>Depending on the amount we would put it back in out of our own money, but obviously if there is a large amount, stupidly I'll sort of put that back in next week or week after.</p>
16.15	SB	Did the money go back in next week or the week after?
	SM	Sometimes it did sometimes if didn't.

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

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17.00	SB	<p>SB explained that SM was rolling their losses and asked when the money would have gone back in. SM said that it would have gone in before the next balance.</p> <p>It was explained to SM that if the money was not replaced, then the losses would mount up over a period of time and the losses would accumulate.</p> <p>SB asked if there was any time that your balance was actually straight? SM replied that she honestly could not remember, the balance was never been down to a tee where its been straight, there have been times when its been twenty pounds here or there.</p> <p>SB explained about how the losses mount up, if the money is not put into to make the balance correct.</p>
19.00	SM SB SM	<p>Do you mean, did I put the money in at any point</p> <p>yes to make it straight</p> <p>No, to be honest, not intentionally I didn't do it, it was the fact that I had forgot or and, no I did I did put it back in but not every time if you get what I mean.</p> <p>A discussion took place and it was said to SM that if she did not put the money in, in Period one, she would put the money in, in period two. SM said that this was correct.</p> <p>SM said that it was a repetitive thing, where they were up and down and at one point, her mother did ring the Post Office to request that they come down to have a look at what was going on because they were struggling with it, but nobody came.</p>
19.45		<p>SM went on to say that the problems were due to her lack of experience and she said that she was Ok sitting there serving customers, selling the products but the accounting side, had got SM confused.</p>

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
21.30		<p>The audit report (JR/1) was shown to SM. It was confirmed that the ATM was installed in March.</p> <p>SM was asked what training she received for the ATM machine. SM replied "Not Much To Be Honest". SM said that she was shown how to open the ATM up, how to open the drawers and fill it up, SM said that it was very short and they were given a pamphlet to work it out themselves.</p> <p>SM said that the first fill of the machine a small amount of cash was put in to show they how to do it. SM further explained the ATM Fill and confirmed that a separate Stock Unit for the ATM was held.</p>
22.00		<p>SB asked SM to explain the ATM Stock Unit, what money goes in and why, the reporting of the figures and how the cassettes are filled.</p> <p>SM said that two of them would count the cash before loading the cassette for the ATM.</p>
30.00		<p>SM said that they had Transaction Corrections for the ATM as they had reported figures before 1630 and she said that the clock ion the machine must have been a different time to the branch clock.</p>
32.15	SB	<p>Have you ever filled the machine by yourself?</p>
32.30	SM	<p>No</p>
	SB	<p>Ever filled the machine out of hours, when you shouldn't have done?</p>
	SM	<p>Out of hours as in?</p>
	SB	<p>Outside the normal Post Office or Shop hours.</p>
	SM	<p>Not the shop hours but the Post Office hour's yes?</p>
	SB	<p>You filled it?</p>
	SM	<p>Yes but not on my own.</p>

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
	SB	SM confirmed that she had never filled the ATM by herself.
	SM	Have you ever taken any of the money for yourself?
	No	
	SB	Have you ever taken any of the money out of the safe before passing it over as £20,000?
	SM	No
33.00	SB	Have you ever stolen any of the money?
	SM	No
	SB	Can you give me an explanation of how we are £30,000 plus short in the ATM?
	SM	To be honest with you I can't, because I am as shocked as anybody else about it. It is a ridiculous amount of money and like the last time that you came, it was £10,000 but then within the scale of a month or so it has just rocketed and became that ridiculous amount of money, but I can't, I don't know the workings of it, I know that a gentleman came the other work to train the girls, he was here for well over an hour, training them on the actual machine, and the only thing I can think about that, is that somewhere along the line I've been making huge mistakes in how I have been inputting things and how I have been doing things for it to be the degree that it is, I have never taken, I have not touched the money, it has always been separate, its never been where it has got muddled up with anything else, it has always been separate.
34.15		It was explained that in the month, the amount had tripled. SM said that it was a shock to her and it was to you. SM confirmed that a Transaction Correction had been received for approximately £8,000. SB explained that the £8,000 may have covered the

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35.15	SB SM	<p>original outstanding amount, but it still left £20,000 to be explained and asked SM if she had an explanation.</p> <p>SM replied no and that she did not understand the workings of the machine.</p> <p>So in between the July and the August did you do anything different concerning the ATM machine?</p> <p>No</p> <p>SM said that the cash machine was new to her and the girls, SM stated that she had reported the figures on the ATM as she had been told and re-iterated that everything had been kept separate and she could not give us an answer to where the money has gone because I was just shocked when the auditors told her how much it was. SM said that she said to the auditors, how could that be, when the money is never touched apart from when the money is being loaded into the ATM.</p>
36.30	PW SM	<p>PW asked SM if it was always her that put the figures onto the Horizon system or was it the other girls?</p> <p>SM replied that Rachael would occasionally put the figures onto the Horizon system is she was busy. SM was asked if she told Rachael the figures and SM replied that she (Rachael) would have the slip.</p> <p>SM confirmed that Rachael would put the figures on the same as she would.</p> <p>So you have no reason to believe that she is deliberately done anything to cock the figures up or anything?</p> <p>No</p> <p>SM confirmed that the ATM was installed in March 2008, the branch was visited in July and between this visit and the audit</p>

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

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37.30	SM	<p>£20,000 was missing, SM was asked if she continued to do it as she had done from day one?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>SB explained that on the audit report, there was a shortage of just over £5,000 in the lottery scratch cards and asked SM for an explanation.</p>
38.45	SM	<p>No, that has come about, from the error corrections and the only thing I can say about that is that I read the error correction wrong, accepted it not realising that, it wasn't as I thought, I thought it was that they were giving us the stock, because, not the stock, I thought that it was money in our favour in the sense that it was money I had put through that I shouldn't have put through or you know, because the way it read it was that it was a credit to many scratch cards either activated or something like that, so I read it as that I had gone into the system and activated, your know, too many. But they weren't and I think that there was two of them that came back like that and I was, I just didn't understand that either to be fair, I just think a lot of this is a lack of understanding and knowledge of how these things work when they come through, I was stupidly accepting them.</p>
	SB	<p>So you feel that the scratch cards, is because you have activated to many scratch cards?</p>
40.30	SM	<p>Yes, that is how I read it</p> <p>A discussion took place regarding the activation of lottery scratch cards.</p> <p>SM explained how they activated the lottery scratch cards and said that she did not activate all the packs. If more cards were required on the shop side, the staff in the shop would activate the cards</p>

Summary of Tape Recorded Interview (continued)

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
42.00	SB	and SM would not always be told. SM said that they use to have a separate lottery stock unit, but they stopped using it because SM kept serving customers out of this stock unit. SM said that she contacted the Post office and told them what she had done, she was told to reverse things out and get everything out of the system, When SM contacted them again, she was told you shouldn't have done anything, you should have left it and just removed the cash.
	SM	Have you ever activated any of these scratch cards for your own use? No SB explained that the tape buzzer was due to sound and we would change the tapes before proceeding with the interview. All parties signed Master Tape seal 071371 Tape switched off at 11.20am.

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