1		Friday, 29 September 2023	1		Thank you for coming to the Inquiry to
2	(10.	00 am)	2		assist it in its work and for providing the
3		PRICE: Good morning, sir. Can you see and hear	3		witness statement that you have. As you know,
4		us?	4		I will be asking questions on behalf of the
5	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you.	5		Inquiry.
6	MS	PRICE: May we please call Mr Jones.	6		Today I'm going to be asking you about
7		JOHN HOWARD JONES (sworn)	7		issues which arise in Phase 4 of the Inquiry,
8		Questioned by MS PRICE	8		focusing on your involvement in the proceedings
9	MS	PRICE: Can you confirm your full name please,	9		bought by the Post Office against Mr Castleton,
10		Mr Jones.	10		relating to the alleged losses at Marine Drive
11	A.	It's John Howard Jones.	11		Post Office branch.
12	Q.	You should have in front of you a hard copy of	12		You joined the Post Office in 1982 as
13		a witness statement in your name and dated	13		a counter clerk; is that right?
14		17 May 2023. If you turn to the last page of	14	A.	That is correct, yes.
15		that, please, which is page 14, do you have	15	Q.	In 1988 you became a visiting officer. Can you
16		a copy with a visible signature?	16		help us with what that role involved?
17	A.	Yes, I do.	17	A.	The visiting the visiting officer essentially
18	Q.	Is that your signature?	18		worked out of defined areas in I was working
19	A.	Yes, it is.	19		in South Manchester and basically you were
20	Q.	Are the contents of that statement true to the	20		visiting directly managed branches, agency
21		best of your knowledge and belief?	21		branches, franchise branches, to really manage
22	A.	Yes, they are.	22		the kind of score balance scorecard that we
23	Q.	For the purposes of the transcript, the	23		had in those days, which was around service,
24		reference is WITN08560100. There's no need to	24		customer service and accuracy of documentation,
25		display that now.	25		particularly to our clients, as well as cash
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1		management and the control of cash at the	1	^	commercial journey.
2	_	Network.	2	Q.	You became a Senior Account Manager in 2006; is
3		The in 1990 you became a branch manager?	3		that right?
4	Α.	That's correct.	4	_	That is correct.
5	Q.	In 1994 you became a Retail Network Manager? That's correct.	5 6	Q.	In 2009 you became a Project Manager in directly
6 7	Α.		7	٨	managed branches? Yes
8	Q.	In 2002, you became an Area Development Manager working on the Network Reinvention Programme.	8		A Flagship Manager of a directly managed branch
9		What was your role in relation to the Network	9	Q.	in 2010
10		Reinvention Programme?	10	A.	Yes.
11	Α.	I was the area development manager for the	11	Q.	and you held Area Manager roles between 2011,
12	Α.	Western Territory. The Network Reinvention	12	Q.	and 2019?
13		Programme split the country into three areas:	13	A.	That is correct.
14		North, East and West. Essentially, West was	14	Q.	In 2019 you held the role of Regional Manager of
15		everything on the motorway network west of the	15	٠.	the East of England; is that right?
16		M6, west of the M40, west of the M25, right the	16	A.	That is correct.
17		way down to the South and West Coast.	17	Q.	Separately to these roles, you held the role of
18		Essentially, I managed a team of Business	18		an Appeals Manager from 2003 until you left the
19		Development Managers who were developing the	19		Post Office in 2019; is that right?
20		voluntary closure programme, so we were	20	A.	That is correct.
21		basically reducing the size of the network from	21	Q.	Just to be clear, you were, in this role,
22		a commercial point of view in the urban sector.	22		hearing appeals from disciplinary decisions
23		We didn't cover the rural sector. So we were	23		taken by the Post Office, weren't you?
24		managing the voluntary exit of postmasters and	24	A.	Not necessarily well, not necessarily
25		closure of those branches as part of an ongoing	25		disciplinary, the there's a wide range of
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1	appeals that you hear as an Appeals Manager.
2	Disciplinary, yes, but also the vast majority of
3	appeals are against various process. So for
4	example, if a branch manager or a counter
5	colleague did not agree with their personal
6	development review score, it's not
7	a disciplinary appeal hearing but they have that
8	right to appeal against that score. Appeals
9	against our attendance policy, bullying and
10	harassment, et cetera.

So it's quite a wide-ranging element, so with Post Office employees there are a significant area of policies that they can appeal against.

You explain in your witness statement made for 15 Q. 16 the Inquiry that the Appeals Manager role is not 17 a permanent role, rather it is something which 18 Senior Managers do alongside their day-to-day 19 role?

20 A. That is correct.

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21 Did that possible, any difficulties for those 22 performing the Appeals Manager role in terms of 23 the time they had to deal with these appeals?

24 A. You had to manage your time very succinctly, 25 depending on the size of the case, the nature of

1 original decision-maker, from whose decision you 2 were hearing the appeal, was considering, so you 3 could look at new information?

4 A. Absolutely, yes.

5 Q. The process, which you also set out at 6 paragraph 6 of your statement to the Inquiry, 7 consisted of pre-appeal inquiries, you say to

8 establish the nature of the case --

9 A. Yes.

-- the appeal interview --10 Q.

Α. Yes. 11

12 Q. -- post-appeal inquiries --

13 Α.

14 Q. -- and, you say, conclusion and summing-up; and finally, the decision and any recommendations. 15

16 Is that a fair summary?

A. That's absolutely correct. 17

Q. Is it right that you only heard three appeals 18 19

brought by subpostmasters during your career

20 with the Post Office?

A. That is correct. 21

22 Q. Only one of these was related to the Horizon

23 System, Mr Castleton's case?

24 That is correct.

25 Mr Castleton's appeal was against the decision

the case, to give full due diligence to that 1

2 appeal and fairness to that appeal. Very often,

3 a huge amount of your analysis work was done in

4 the evenings or it was done at the weekend, just

to slot it in around the day job. Obviously, 5

6 you were making time slots when you needed to

7 visit a branch to hold the hearings, et cetera.

8 But a huge amount of time was actually on your

9 own time

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10 Q. You say at paragraph 6 of your statement to the 11 Inquiry that:

> "Appeals were allocated by the HR Service Centre and that the allocation process and the way in which an appeal is conducted is intended to ensure that appeals are an independent rehearing of a case."

17 So your understanding of your role as 18 an Appeals Manager was to hear cases afresh; is 19 that right?

20 A. That's absolutely correct.

21 You were not, therefore, limited to the material 22 before the original decision-maker?

23 A. Sorry, can you clarify that?

24 If you were hearing things afresh, you were not 25 limited, were you, to the information which the

1 taken by his Retail Network Manager Catherine

2 Oglesby on 17 May 2004 to terminate

3 Mr Castleton's contract as the subpostmaster of

4 Marine Drive Post Office; that's right, isn't

5 it?

6 That is right, yes. A.

7 A decision which you upheld?

8 That is correct.

9 Q. I would like to start, please, with the

10 documentation which you were provided with when

11 you were allocated Mr Castleton's appeal. Could

we have on screen, please, POL00071234. Could 12

13 you explain, please, what this document is?

14 A. This document is a standard business document

15 that is summarised in the event of

a termination. It's normally done by the 16

contracts manager however, in this case, 17

18 I believe it was done by Cath, to detail the

reasons, the rationale, for their decision. 19

20 We can see Mr Castleton's details at the top and

21 then at point 4 there are brief details of the

22 case. If we can scroll down a little bit so we

23 can see that whole box, please.

24 You see there the brief details are:

25 "Large unexplained losses at the office over

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1 a 12-week period. PMR blames the Horizon kit 2 and software problems. No errors on system. No 3 error notices due. No figures could be 4 identified that had been changed by the system. 5 Checks done by helpline, NBSC, Horizon Helpdesk, 6 Girobank, postmasters records and Chesterfield. 7 Request sent to Fujitsu to check suspense 8 account software, as not yet received. PMR 9 suspended as a precaution. I have had three 10 temps in there over the last ten weeks, no large losses." 11

> At point 5, we have "Details of specific charge":

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"Unexplained losses totally £25,758.75."

We have the date on which Mr Castleton was suspended, 23 March 2004, then a brief summary at point 7 of the reasons for termination. It says this:

"No evidence to support PMR claims of computer problems. As soon as the people were removed from the office the losses stopped. The computer equipment has not been changed. Losses reached a very large amount in a very short space of time."

Could we go, please, to page 3 of this

1 the steps you took but, just focusing at the 2 moment on the documents that you had in front of 3 you and had been looking at --

- 4 A. Yes, I had all of those documentation.
- 5 Q. If we can scroll down, please, towards the 6 bottom of the index. Item 16 seems to have been 7 documents contained in a separate file, 8 comprising record of balances, cash accounts, 9 Horizon printouts. Do you recall having been 10 given this separate file at the time?
- A. No. Not on receipt of the appeals file. 11
- 12 Q. Going over to the fourth page of this document, 13 please, we can see the title at the top "Marine 14 Drive Post Office Summary of Events". This is 15 a five-page document. If we can look at the 16 last page, please, which is page 8 within the 17 larger document we're in. The last line here:

"My decision is to summary terminate Lee Castleton's contract for services."

Did you understand this summary to have been authored by Catherine Oglesby who made the decision to terminate Mr Castleton's contract?

23 A. Yes, I did.

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24 The next document, going over two pages, please, 25 to page 10, is the "Audit Report", dated

1 document. This appears to set out the documents 2 which you were provided with for the appeal; is 3 that right?

- 4 A. That is correct, yes.
- 5 Q. Would you have read the documents enclosed with 6 this index?

7 A. Absolutely. That's the sort of the key 8 understanding of the case, really, to look at 9 the level of detail that's gone into the case, 10 which starts to form my processes and appeals, 11 and it's just to look at the sort of pre-appeal enquiries, that can range from rechecking the 12 13 sort of calls that Cath has made, certainly 14 going to the Late Accounts Division at 15 Chesterfield to ascertain are there any error 16 notices in the system that could potentially 17 explain the losses that were being incurred.

> And due to the really unusual nature of the case -- I'd never heard of a case where either a counter colleague or a postmaster had singly blamed Horizon for the losses and not followed the appropriate advice that had been given by the Retail Line Manager -- I chose to visit the branch to --

25 Q. If I can just stop you there. We'll come on to

23 March 2004, the second document in your pack, so to speak. This had been completed by Helen Hollingworth, inspector. The first paragraph reads as follows:

"An audit took place at Marine Drive Post Office on 23 March 2004. Helen Hollingworth led the audit and in attendance was Chris Taylor. The audit commenced at 8.00 am and on our arrival the subpostmaster was very pleased to see us. He explained problems he had been having at the office regarding balancing. His problems with balancing started in week 43 with a misbalance of [minus] £4,230.97. He was adamant that no members of staff could be committing theft and felt that the misbalances were due to a computer problem. He had been in contact with the Retail Line Manager Cath Oglesby and the Horizon helpline regularly since the problems began. The following table gives further weeks' balance declarations on the cash account."

So the first contemporaneous document you would have read, assuming you reached the file in order, was this, saying that Mr Castleton was "very pleased to see us", he explained his 12

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problems with balancing, he was adamant that the problem was with his computer system and he had been in regular contact with the Retail Line Manager and the Horizon helpline since the problems began.

When you read this, what did you take from it?

- 8 A. It was unusual, that the -- all the advice that 9 Cath had previously given to Mr Castleton didn't seem to be in place in terms of the bringing 10 everything into individual stocks units and --11
- If I can just pause you there. 12 Q.
- 13 Α. Yeah, sorry.

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- Q. If you're reading your file and this is one of 14 the first documents you read, when you read 15 16 this, before going to consider anything else, 17 what did you take from this account here from 18 the auditor, in relation to Mr Castleton?
- 19 A. That the audit team were there to identify and 20 potentially find a solution to the issues that 21 were appertained between those dates and the 22 list of weeks 43 to 48, the losses that were 23 being incurred or the misbalances that were 24 being incurred.
- 25 Q. Going over the page, please, page 11 of this

1 bottom of his balancing problems, wasn't he?

- 2 A. He was and, again, that was unusual that 3 a postmaster would ask for a full audit of their 4 branches. I've never -- certainly never in my 5 experience have come across that, nor would 6 an audit team necessarily act on that. They 7 would normally go through the Retail Line 8 Manager before committing to an audit.
- 9 Q. You set out in your statement to the Inquiry the 10 steps you took as part of your pre-appeal 11 hearing enquiries. Could we have that statement 12 on screen, please. It's WITN08560100, and it's 13 page 5 of that statement, please, paragraph 16. 14

You say here:

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"I contacted the decision manager who was Cath Oglesby to go through the documentation I had received. This allowed me to ensure that I had a thorough understanding of the case and the associated paperwork and to understand the rationale for the decision to terminate

21 Mr Castleton's contract."

> Did you speak to Catherine Oglesby before or after you went through the documentation you had been provided with; can you remember?

I would have spoken to her after because I've no Α.

document, we see a letter of suspension of the same date as the audit report. Over the page again, please, page 12 of this document, we see a letter to Mr Castleton from Ms Oglesby dated 26 April 2004, informing Mr Castleton that she is considering the summary termination of his contract on the grounds that the audit on 23 March resulted in a total shortage of £25,758.75.

Going on two pages, please, page 14 of this document, this is a letter from Mr Castleton to "Mrs Oglesby and Mrs Joyce", dated 28 April, which followed Ms Oglesby's letter of 26 April. In it, he says this of the audit, in the first substantive paragraph:

"I would like to point out that the audit took place at this office at my request. I felt I was in a situation that nothing was being done and I felt I needed more people involved."

20 This was Mr Castleton flagging that he was 21 the one who had requested the audit which took 22 place, wasn't it?

- 23 A. It was indeed, yes.
- 24 Q. So Mr Castleton was seeking scrutiny of his 25 accounts, he was seeking help to get to the

1 working relationship with Cath. I know the name 2 but, as an Appeals Manager, it's independent of 3 the particular area that Cath works in. So it 4 would always have been after, in my 5 recollection, because -- it's kind of got to be 6 after, because you've got to understand what the 7 case is and then sort of build that rationale as 8 part of your pre-appeal enquiries.

- 9 Q. You already had a summary of events from 10 Ms Oglesby in your papers, didn't you, which 11 we've looked at, that first document?
- 12 A. Yes, I have.
- 13 Q. Given you were independently rehearing this 14 case, do you think there was a danger in 15 speaking to the original decision-maker, in 16 addition to simply reading their summary of the 17 events, in that their view of the case might 18 influence your own?
- 19 No, and I actually don't. I've always followed that process with all my appeals to understand 20 21 what the decision -- irrespective of the type of 22 appeal, to understand the rationale for the 23 decision taken, which it might seem strange but 24 it does help you with your pre-appeal enquiries.
- 25 It can point you in certain directions that may

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1 not be immediately obvious when you read the 2 papers.

> Some appeals do not come as concise as that one, some are a little harder to deal with, so I always follow that process.

- 6 Q. One of the pre-appeal hearing enquiries you made 7 was to contact the Transactional Account Team at 8 Chesterfield, wasn't it --
- 9 A. Yes, it was.

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- 10 Q. -- to check for error notices, as they were called during the period we're talking about? 11
- It's right, isn't it, that error notices were 12
- 13 generated when a subpostmaster made a mistake 14 when inputting transaction details into their
- 15 computer?
- 16 A. That is correct.
- 17 **Q.** So because there were physical documents 18 evidencing transactions, which were sent off in 19 an envelope to the relevant team, such an error
- 20 could be picked up?
- 21 A. That is correct.

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- 22 So error notices do not assist us in a situation
- 23 where the discrepancy is being caused not by the

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- 24 incorrect inputting of the figures but, instead,
- 25 for example, by a bug, error or defect in the
- 1 on is a difference between that physical 2 documentation and what's been input into the 3 system, isn't it?
  - A. It's can be an error that the branch has keyed off -- for example, with Alliance & Leicester giro, we accept cash and cheques, and the documentation is not necessarily that user-friendly, as it shows a grand total. So if a branch keys the grand total, we -- they will incur a potentially significant shortfall on the value of the cheques because we just simply process the cheques in a sealed envelope. However, they are included in the grand total.

So sometimes those can -- transactions can go through the system and then we have to wait until they correct themselves. So they would show an immediate negative position in the accounts, a loss, and we then wait for those to come back through the system to correct that position.

- 21 Could we have on screen, please, page 5 of this 22 document, going further down, paragraph 19. 23 This is still on the pre-appeal hearing 24 enquiries and you say:
- 25 "I checked with the National Business

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Horizon System? 1

2 Not necessarily, because of the -- with an error 3 notice, they come from various clients. So if 4 you are experiencing a discrepancy, it could be 5 from Alliance & Leicester Girobank, it could be 6 from National Savings, some of those error 7 notices take a considerable amount of time to 8 come back through the system. So one of the 9 things that I was looking at when I reviewed all 10 the paperwork and the documentation prior to 11 visiting the branch was really to start to close down points that could explain the 12 13 discrepancies.

> So some error notices take three months, some can take six months or longer. I've known some from National Savings Bank can take considerably longer because we're relying on the customer submitting their documentation at the same time. So it was important to understand what was coming through the system that potentially could have explained some or all of the discrepancies that Mr Castleton was incurring.

24 Q. But regardless of when that error notice might 25 come through, primarily what's being picked up

Support Centre and the Horizon System Helpline to confirm if the checks on the Horizon integrity had been completed and to check the phone calls to ascertain if the branch had ever had to close. The Horizon System Helpline did not raise any issues on the integrity of the confirmed that there were no reported calls of

You refer here to checks on the Horizon integrity. At the time, did you understand it to be part of the role of the Horizon System helpline to conduct checks on the integrity of the system.

- A. That is my understanding, yes, or they may refer 16 17 it to Fujitsu.
- Just decoding that, what that meant was whether 18 19 the figures produced by the system were 20 accurate; is that right?
- 21 A. No. What I was referring to here was Cath had 22 made various calls into the HSH, the Horizon 23 System Helpdesk, to have those checks.
- 24 I believe at the time, those checks hadn't come 25 through and it was trying to verify the position

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confirmed that the checks previously requested system. The National Business Support Centre the branch closing."

- 1 that Cath had started off as part of her case.
- 2 Q. But just in terms of what the integrity of
- 3 Horizon actually meant, that was referring,
- 4 wasn't it, to whether the figures being produced
- 5 were accurate?
- 6 A. Yes, it was.
- 7 Q. Setting aside Mr Castleton's case in particular,
- 8 did you understand, at the time, that Horizon
- 9 software problems could, in principle, cause
- 10 discrepancies in branch accounts?
- 11 A. That's in 2004 and in 2006. I personally had
- 12 never been made aware of any issues whatsoever
- in the Horizon System.
- 14 Q. The Horizon System helpline looked at the
- 15 integrity of Horizon and, presumably, you didn't
- 16 think that was just in this case. What did you
- 17 think the purpose of those checks were, if it
- 18 wasn't possible for the system to cause
- 19 discrepancies in the accounts?
- 20 A. To ascertain if everything that had been
- 21 processed in the branch was correct and if there
- 22 was nothing affecting the accuracy of that
- 23 information.

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- 24 **Q.** Contained within the documentation you were
- provided with for the appeal was a table setting
  - the breakdown given by Andrew Wise in his statement for the *Castleton* case.
    - Did you read the information relating to the helpline calls? Did you read through these tables?
- 6 A. Absolutely. Because that started to indicate --
- 7 when I first read through both of the tables,
  - one of the areas that kind of jumped out at me
- 9 at the first -- before I visited the office,
- 10 was, potentially, was this a training issue?
- 11 That there were lots of various issues that have
- been relayed, some are transactional, some are
- 13 just kind of reaching out and asking for help.
- 14 And that's what I started to look at when 15 I visited the office, to see what the state of
- 16 the accounts were, what the -- how the office
- 17 was trading. I appreciate there'd been two
- 18 interim postmasters in there, but that really
- 19 was the start point to go to the office and look
- 20 at the accounting documentation for myself to
- 21 try to rebuild the accounts, as I didn't have
- any other analysis, really, as part of the case
- 23 and what was happening.
- 24 **Q.** On any view, this was not someone who was
- 25 seeking to hide the apparent discrepancies which

- 1 out the calls made from Marine Drive Post Office
- 2 to the Horizon System helpline and a table
- 3 setting out the calls made from the branch to
- 4 the Network Business Support Centre. Could we
- 5 have on screen, please, POL00071234, starting at
- 6 page 20, please.
- 7 So we can see at the top there that these
- 8 are the HSH, the Horizon System helpline calls.
- 9 On my count there were 20 calls relating to the
- 10 Marine Drive branch in the relevant period, that
- 11 is January to April 2004, nine of which related
- 12 to balancing or discrepancy issues and six of
- 13 which were reports of computer problems. Does
- 14 that sound about right to you, having looked at
- 15 this document to refresh your memory more
- 16 recently?
- 17 A. Yes, it does. I think the remainder are NBSC
- 18 calls.
- 19  $\,$  Q. Going forward, please, to those NBSC calls,
- 20 page 23. On my count, there are 74 calls
- 21 recorded here. Of these calls, 11 appear to
- 22 relate to the issue of balancing or discrepancy
- 23 issues, a further 11 appear to relate to
- 24 computer issues and a further four relate to
- 25 both balancing and computer issues, and that was

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- 1 were occurring, was it?
- 2 A. Absolutely not.
- 3 Q. Quite the opposite, wouldn't you agree?
- 4 A. Indeed, yes. Absolutely.
- 5 Q. You say at paragraph 11 of your statement to the
- 6 Inquiry, and you have said it again this
- 7 morning, that you considered this case to be
- 8 most unusual, as you had never before seen or
- 9 heard of an instance where a subpostmaster or
- 10 POL employee was making a claim that
- 11 discrepancies were as a result of the Horizon
- 12 System. Did you ask anyone at the Post Office
- 13 whether there were any other cases in which
- 14 subpostmasters or Post Office employees had made
- 15 such claims?
- 16 A. There's only one point at the -- towards the end
- 17 of the appeal hearing, after -- we'd done the
- 18 appeal hearing, sorry -- that I discussed the
- 19 case with my colleagues on the points that
- 20 Mr Castleton had asked me to look at. That was
- a discussion of the case with a very experienced
- 22 colleague.
- 23 Q. But did you ask whether there were any other
- 24 cases, apart from Mr Castleton's, of people
- 25 experiencing what Mr Castleton was experiencing?

1	A.	No, I didn't. It was the first time I'd seen	1		an expert on Horizon, I don't understand how the
2		anything like it.	2		bugs worked that are identified in Mr Justice
3	Q.	Did the fact that you thought this to be	3		Fraser's summary of the Horizon trials, Bates &
4		an isolated case influence the way you assessed	4		Others. It's yes, I would have looked at it
5		Mr Castleton's appeal?	5		completely differently, whether I'd have got
6	A.	No, it was really to relook at everything that	6		an answer or not, remains to be seen.
7		was happening within the branch that I could	7	Q.	As part of your pre-appeal hearing checks you
8		possibly analyse to see if there was there	8		conducted visits to the Marine Drive Post Office
9		was no evidence that Mr Castleton was producing	9		on 28 June and 30 June 2004; is that right?
10		as part of the his case to Cath Oglesby. So,	10	A.	That is correct, yes.
11		therefore, it was my thought train was	11	Q.	Taking this fairly shortly, would it be right to
12		looking at rebuilding those accounts to see if	12		say that you concluded, by reference to
13		there was something that could explain the	13		undercopies, as you call them that is
14		shortfalls, and that's the approach I took with	14		physical documents recording transactions in the
15		this appeal.	15		branch that the figures Mr Castleton had
16	Q.	Had you been aware of other cases where	16		entered into the Horizon System, relating to the
17		subpostmasters or Post Office employees were	17		transactions carried out at the branch, were
18		making the same claims as Mr Castleton, that	18		correct?
19		apparent discrepancies were being caused by	19	A.	That is correct, yes.
20		problems with the system, would that have	20	Q.	The appeal hearing took place on 1 July 2004,
21		changed the way you approached this case?	21		didn't it?
22	A.	Potentially, yes. But I still thought it was	22	A.	Yes, it did.
23		really important to go through all the	23	Q.	Just as a point of clarification, you say in
24		documentation at the branch to ascertain its	24		your statement to the Inquiry that you believed
25		arithmetical correctness, to I'm not	25		the person supporting Mr Castleton at the
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			4		V. L.P.I.
1		meeting, Julie Langham, was a representative of	1		Yes, I did.
2		the National Federation of SubPostmasters.	2	Q.	Could we go, please, to the record of the appeal
3		Mr Castleton was, in fact, not a member of the	3		hearing contained within your decision letter to
4		National Federation of SubPostmasters and it is	4		Mr Castleton. The reference is POL00071227. It
5		Mr Castleton's recollection that Ms Langham was,	5		is page 4 of that document, please. Starting,
6		in fact, a fellow subpostmaster. Was that just	6		please, at the third paragraph down there:
7		an assumption you were making as to Ms Langham's	7		"JJ"
8		association with the National Federation of	8		Is that you?
9		SubPostmasters?	9	Α.	It is.
10	Α.	Yes, I was. I was completely unaware that	10	Q.	" asked what action he took following the
11		Mr Castleton wasn't a member of the NFSP,	11		first discrepancy in Week 39. LC said he made
12		although, however, that is detailed in the	12		a call to the helpline to say he was short and
13	_	additional bundle that I've recently received.	13		began to work through all the figures. LC
14	Q.	One of the factors you have cited in favour of	14		stated he kept asking for help following
15		your decision to uphold the termination of	15		subsequent shortages, but his Retail Line
16		Mr Castleton's contract, this paragraph 34a of	16		Manager said it could be in the system and would
17		your statement we needn't display that now	17		probably come back.
18		was that Mr Castleton did not take the action	18		"JJ asked if LC had taken any other action.
19		recommended by Cath Oglesby to create single	19		LC said they had discussed splitting the stock
20		SINCK LINES TO IDENTITY IT THERE WAS			
0.4		stock units to identify if there was	20		unit or running a manual week. LC said he had
21 22		embezzlement taking place and to perform frequent balance and cash declarations to	20 21 22		been in favour of running a manual week to prove the system was wrong, but this had not actually

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identify daily or interdaily balance positions.

hearing, didn't you?

You asked Mr Castleton about this at the appeal

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meeting. Could we have on screen those notes,

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We also have some handwritten notes of this

been done and he was then suspended."

please, which is POL00082324. Starting on page 2 of that document, please, as the first page is blank, we see the title and reference to who was at the meeting, so notes of the meeting held on 1 July 2004 at Darlington Post Office and the people present at interview there.

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Then over to page 4 of this document, please, about halfway down we see JJ -- this is you -- and the question:

"Your RLM suggested splitting the stock unit. Why were you so adverse to this?" LC says:

"No. Not until week 9 of the problem. I was not adverse to splitting the stock unit, I was adverse to the fact that the suggestion had been made in week 9 after so many phone calls and repeatedly asking for help. We discussed a manual week also and we decided that was the best way to prove the fault on the computer, but Chrissie was away over the next two balances and then I was suspended before we had [and it looks like the word 'chance' at the bottom]."

So Mr Castleton is effectively saying, isn't he, that the suggestion came too late to be

1 he didn't take it on board?

- A. My understanding is that the -- that Cath had
   asked Mr Castleton a lot earlier in the case to
   put that discipline in place.
- put that discipline in place.
  Q. Both before the appeal hearing and at the appeal hearing, it was clear, wasn't it, what
  Mr Castleton was saying, consistently and repeatedly, that the discrepancies being shown
  by the Horizon System were caused by the system and did not represent real losses?
- 11 A. That is correct.
- Q. Could we have on screen, please, Mr Jones's
   statement to the Inquiry, WITN08560100. At
   page 6, please. Paragraph 21 here, you say:

"As far as I can recall, Mr Castleton submitted no actual specific evidence at the appeal hearing, the core of his submission as I recall centred on blaming the Horizon System and the data telephone lines for causing the cash discrepancies."

- 21 A. Yes -- sorry.
- Q. Apologies. What evidence could Mr Castleton
   have produced at the appeal hearing, over and
   above the evidence you already had as a result
   of your enquiries?

1 helpful. Do you remember him saying that?

2 A. I don't recall those specific words. My 3 understanding from Cath was that the suggestion to go to individual stocks and do the frequent 4 5 cash declarations is a standard process that we 6 always put in place where we've got multi-user 7 stocks and, when you put them down to individual 8 stocks, you can start to isolate and eliminate 9 any issues you may be having, and particularly 10 doing the cash declarations, frequently you 11 would, if there was a bug there or if there's 12 anything that was causing anything untoward, you 13 can immediately address it, rather than simply 14 waiting until you do the cash account at the 15 week end -- at the end of the physical week, 16 then it becomes a bit of a needle in a haystack.

17 If you're splitting that stock unit up and
18 putting that rigour in place, you can see if
19 there are things happening that potentially Cath
20 could have taken back to the Horizon System
21 Helpdesk, simply to look at.

Q. But in circumstances where Mr Castleton was
 saying the suggestion was too late to be
 helpful, was that a factor that you should have
 taken into account in your decision making, that

I kind of return back to the advice, the salient 2 advice that the -- Cath Oglesby had put -- asked 3 him to put in place. That is the standard 4 approach that we use right the way up to myself 5 leaving the business in 2019, that when you're 6 operating on multi-user tills, then if you put 7 those into individual stock units and do the 8 necessary cash declarations maybe in the morning 9 and then afternoon, then if there is anything 10 that is causing a discrepancy in the system,

That should be -- and give the opportunity to take that away and look at it. That wasn't available, it didn't happen and so, for me, there was nothing else that I could look at that related to the Horizon System being the core of these issues.

then you will see that.

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- 18 Q. But that not being available, what else could
   19 Mr Castleton have produced at the appeal hearing
   20 in these circumstances to support what he was
   21 saying?
- A. That's a very good question. I'm really not
   sure because the other cases -- and this is with
   hindsight -- that are identified in Mr Justice
- 25 Fraser's report, that postmasters were

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1		identifying issues and raising those and dealin
2		with those that were accepted by the HSH call
3		centre. That really was the area we were
4		looking at that, that that particular process
5		hadn't been followed, so we really had nothing
6		else to go on.
7	Q.	You go on at paragraph 22 of your statement,

You go on at paragraph 22 of your statement, directly below, to say:

> "I do not recall any other submissions or mitigation made by Mr Castleton or Julie Langham other than the requests by Mr Castleton to recheck the Horizon accounts from weeks 45 to 50 of the 2003/2004 financial year."

A. That is correct. 14

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Q. Some analysis of weeks 46 to 50 was done after 15 16 the appeal hearing by a Post Office area manager 17 called Anita Turner, wasn't it?

A. It was indeed. 18

19 You communicated the results of that analysis to 20 Mr Castleton by way of a letter dated 8 July 21 2004. Could we have this on screen, please. 22 It's LCAS0000113, at page 54 of that document, 23 please. If we can just zoom out a little, so we 24 can see further down and over the page, this is 25 the letter from you, going back, please, one

> "Cash account week 48, week ending 26/02/2004: The branch declares a shortage discrepancy of £3,509.18. The figure of £8,243.10 remains in the suspense account. The table at the top of the printout indicate the zero discrepancy from week 47 and the discrepancy from week 48.

> "Cash account week 49 week ending 04/03/2004: The branch transfers the shortage discrepancy from the previous week of £3,509.18 to the already open suspense account. The rolling total in the suspense account now stands at £11,752.28. The branch then declares a further shortage of £3,512.26.

> "Cash account week 50, week ending 11/03/2004: The branch does not transfer the previous shortage discrepancy from week 49 of £3,512.26 into the suspense account. This shortage discrepancy is rolled over into week 50 without the subpostmaster making good the discrepancy. It should be noted that rolling losses forward is in breach of the Subpostmaster's Contract. The final balance declared of £10,653.11 is made up of £3,512.26 from week 49 and a further shortage discrepancy

> > 35

2 "... Mr Castleton 3 I am writing to advise you of the 4 independent analysis that has been conducted on the Horizon balance printouts that you requested 5 6 be performed at your appeal hearing on 1 July 7 2004." 8 Just pausing there, the independent analysis

page, to Mr Castleton, and you say:

you're talking about is the review of the documentation by Post Office Area Manager Anita Turner?

That is correct. 12 A.

13 Q. The analysis is as follows:

14 "Cash account week 46, week ending 15 12/02/2004: The branch declared a shortage 16 discrepancy of £8,243.10.

17 "Cash account week 47, week ending 18 19/02/2004: The branch opened a suspense account 19 facility and transferred the shortage 20 discrepancy of £8,243.10 into the discrepancy. 21 The week ending report at the top of the 22 printout indicates the discrepancy from the 23 previous week and the entry from the addition to 24 table 2a (the suspense account) which shows 25 a net discrepancy for the week of zero.

1 of £7,140.85 from week 50." 2 In your statement to the Inquiry at 3

paragraph 27 -- we needn't turn it up unless you wish to, Mr Jones -- you say this:

"The results of the findings were communicated to Mr Castleton on 8 July 2004 to advise him of the findings of the analysis and confirm that the Horizon accounts for the weeks 45 to 50 were deemed to be performing correctly."

But it's right, isn't it, that all this 12 analysis did was to confirm the discrepancies 13 being shown by the system? 14 Mr Castleton specifically asked at his appeal 15 hearing to check the suspense accounts and, to 16 give full and due fairness to the points 17 Mr Castleton was raising when I discussed the

an independent manager who had no dealing with 19 the case whatsoever to cast a separate set of 20 21 eyes over how the suspense account was working. 22 That's what Mr Castleton had asked for and those

case with a colleague, that was why we asked

23 results were the outcome of that second set of

24 eyes looking at the accounts.

25 Q. What the analysis did not do was to assist in

- any way on the question of whether the figures 1 2 being generated by the system were correct, did 3
- 4 A. Mr Castleton asked us to look at the suspense 5 account to see if it was working correctly. My 6 understanding of that analysis is that the 7 suspense account appeared to be working 8 correctly.
- 9 Q. Just to be clear, Mr Jones, then, we shouldn't 10 take from your statement at paragraph 27, the statement to the Inquiry, that "the accounts 11 12 were deemed to be performing correctly" meant 13 anything more than the analysis we've just seen.
- A. Indeed. 14
- Q. At paragraph 24 of your statement to the 15 16 Inquiry, you say that:
- 17 "In 2004 [you] were unaware of what Fujitsu 18 generated Horizon reports were available."
- 19 A. That is correct.
- 20 Q. This was, as you've said a number of times in 21 your statement, an independent rehearing of the 22 case --
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. -- and we've already established you were not 25 limited to the material which had been before
- 1 behalf of its subpostmasters or can't you help 2 with that?
- 3 A. I really can't help with that. However, I think 4 Mr Justice Fraser's report clearly identifies 5 that that really wasn't the case in all the 6 circumstances.
- 7 Q. You did some analysis of the cash accounts at 8 Marine Drive Post Office for the weeks 46, 47 9 and 50, didn't you?
- 10 A. Yes, I did.

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Q. The results of this feature in your decisions 11 letter sent to Mr Castleton under "Factors 12 affecting the decision". Could we have that 13 14 decision letter on screen, please. It is 15 POL00071227.

> It is page 7 of that document, please. About a third of the way down the page we see point 5, "Factors affecting the decision". Then at the bottom of the page at (f) we have this:

"The daily cash transactional analysis that was conducted identified in cash accounts week 46, 47 and 50 that there was clear evidence of false cash declarations being made as the cash received from a giro customer was not reflected in the final cash declaration at the branch.

Ms Oglesby. 1

- 2 A. That is correct.
- 3 Did it occur to you, at any stage when you were 4 making your enquiries, to ask someone, whether 5 that was someone from within the Post Office or

6 someone at Fujitsu, whether there was any

- 7 further evidence which Fujitsu might be able to 8 provide which might assist you in your task?
- 9 A. I was completely unaware of any other reports, 10 as -- within my role or in the role of Appeals

11 Manager, that could have assisted me.

You say at paragraph 29 of your statement to the 12 Q. 13

Inquiry that you had no authority to access 14 Fujitsu. Setting aside the question of whether

15 you personally had authority to access people at

16 Fujitsu, did it occur to you that someone at the

17 Post Office should ask Fujitsu to investigate

18 further whether any problems with the system 19 might be causing the apparent discrepancies?

20 A. I didn't and, with hindsight, that potentially

21 could have been a route that I could have

22 followed.

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23 Q. To the best of your recollection, did the Post 24 Office see it as any part of its role to raise 25 concerns like Mr Castleton's with Fujitsu on

Mr Castleton was unable to offer any explanation for such discrepancies, other than it 'was the system'."

Could we have on screen, please, Mr Jones's statement to the Inquiry, that's WITN08560100. Page 9 of that document, please, paragraph 34. You list here the factors you say you took into consideration when upholding the decision to terminate Mr Castleton's contract. Do take the time to look at this again, so the factors that you list here and then, again, over the page it continues. (Pause)

Just scrolling down to the end of those factors. You do not list in your statement to the Inquiry under these factors the factor that you listed in your decision letter at (f), that there was clear evidence in the cash accounts for weeks 46, 47 and 50 of false cash declarations being made, as the cash received from a giro customer was not reflected in the final cash declaration at the branch. Why is that?

- 23 A. That was a complete oversight by myself.
- You did include this factor, factor (f), in your 25 decision letter in your statement you made for

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1 the litigation against Mr Castleton, didn't you? 2 A. Yes, I did. 3 Q. Could we have that statement on screen, please. 4 It is LCAS0000113. It's page 3 of that, please. 5 Starting towards the bottom of the page at 6 paragraph 12, please. You say here: 7 "I also conducted a daily transactional 8 analysis from both daily and weekly balance 9 snapshots in the cash accounts of weeks 46, 47 10 and 50 in which there were losses of £8,243.10, zero, and £10,653.11 respectively. My analysis 11 12 showed that there were anomalies between the 13 cash contained in the balance snapshot for the 14 Tuesday of those weeks and the final cash 15 declaration set out in the final balance in the 16 weekly Cash Account produced on the Wednesday. 17 For example, I evaluated individual transactions 18 between Tuesday 10 February 2004 and Wednesday

transactional receipts exceeded those payments that were declared by the Marine Drive branch by

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approximately £15,300. It can be demonstrated, 24 by reference to a giro receipt, that a cash

25 deposit of £16,500 by the car auction [there's

evaluation indicated that the actual

11 February 2004 for cash account week 46. My

book and receipt slip. I was advised by the Interim Subpostmaster that this was normal practice for the branch to check the amount in the pouch and then complete the deposit and receipt slip on behalf of the customer. The amount deposited was then processed without any verification with the customer. The pouch would then be returned to the customer with the receipt slip on their next visit to the branch."

You then say at 14:

"I analysed all of that customer's deposits since November 2003 to confirm that the deposits had been brought to account. I double checked the cash account weeks of 46, 47 and 50 where I had carried out a daily transactional analysis, to establish whether the levels of cash that had been declared had actually been received from this customer. My analysis showed that erroneous cash declarations had been made because the cash usage that occurred in the weeks 46, 47 and 50 was not reflected in the final cash declared by the Marine Drive branch upon completion of the weekly balance. In other words, the cash that the giro receipts and balance snapshots showed that the Marine Drive

a customer number] was received on Wednesday 11 February 2004 but this is not reflected in the Cash Account signed by Mr Castleton at the close of business on the Wednesday. A cash declaration of approximately £49,000 should have been made as opposed to the incorrect cash declaration that was actually made of £33,100. In other words, my assumption at the time was that the Marine Drive branch physically received approximately £15,300 more cash than the amount it actually declared for that week in the Cash Account. I have no conclusive explanation for this other than that the paper records were seriously inaccurate."

You go on at paragraph 13:

"I again visited the Marine Drive branch on 30 June 2004 to track the Girobank business deposits that the branch received and to establish the flow of cash into the branch. The Marine Drive branch permanently held the account book for the car auction who regularly deposited significant volumes of cash each Wednesday. The deposit pouch I examined from the company at my visit to the branch contained a large amount of cash and was accompanied by a blank inpayment

branch had physically received from this customer was not reflected in the cash that Mr Castleton declared in the Cash Account for each of the weeks examined. The cash physically deposited at the Marine Drive branch should have been accounted for."

So you were telling the court, in your witness statement, that there were three instances where cash which was received by Marine Drive branch was not declared. This, if true, would have been a great cause for concern, would it not?

13 A. Potentially, yes. The analysis that was done in 14 terms of looking and tracking the overall 15 business and the mean value was also looking at 16 potential areas where we could further look to 17 explain the discrepancies. So I have no Fujitsu 18 reports or the luxury of Fujitsu reports to do 19 all that analysis. The analysis was done 20 manually from the documentation that I had 21 available to me at the branch.

22 **Q.** Shortly before the trial took place in December 23 2006, the Post Office obtained a draft

24 accountancy report in the Castleton case. This

25 draft was dated 29 November 2006. You have seen

1		this document, I think, for the purposes of	1	ir	n large amounts in cash to its Girobank
2		preparing your statement to the Inquiry; is that	2	а	ccount. My conclusions are that the three
3		right?	3	la	arge amounts that Mr Jones refers to were
4	A.	Yes, that was the this is the BDO Stoy	4	С	orrectly dealt with in the cash account. This
5		Hayward report?	5	is	s discussed in section 7."
6	Q.	Yes.	6		Could we go, please, to section 7, that's
7	A.	Yes, that's the first time I had seen that	7	р	age 22 of this document. This is entitled
8		document.	8	"	Errors in Recording Receipts; Incorrect cash
9	Q.	So just to be clear, were you provided with	9	d	leclarations". At 7.1.1:
10		a copy of that report or told anything about its	10		"In his witness statement Mr John Jones of
11		findings, relating to your evidence, before you	11	th	ne Post Office comments at paragraph 12 about
12		gave evidence in the Castleton trial?	12	ir	ncorrect cash declarations.
13	A.	No, I was not. The first time I saw that report	13		"Mr Jones refers to receipts in a customer's
14		was with the Horizon Inquiry documentation that	14	а	ccount [there's a reference number]. I have
15		was sent to me. That's my recollection.	15		examined the available information on this
16	Q.	Could we have that draft report on screen,	16	а	account covering the points that Mr Jones
17		please. It is POL00069955. We can see, as you	17		aises.
18		have already said, it was prepared by BDO Stoy	18		"In his Daily Analysis Cash Account for
19		Hayward, chartered accountants. Could we go,	19	W	veeks 46, 47 & 50 Mr Jones suggests that the
20		please, to page 4 of this document. This is the	20		nree receipts were excluded from the weekly
21		summary of the report. Over the page, please,	21		ash balances declared by Mr Castleton.
22		subparagraph (e):	22		"I have been given photocopies of Giro
23		"There is a suggestion by a Mr John Jones of	23	С	Deposits Office Copy slips which would appear
24		the Post Office that Mr Castleton had omitted	24		be printouts from the Horizon computer.
25		receipts from a car auction customer which paid	25		"Report dated 11 February 2004 timed at
		45			46
1		16.20 shows a receipt of £16,537.25 for account	1	е	vidence given at the trial on 12 December 2006.
2		[there's a reference number].	2	Т	The reference is LCAS0000570. Turning, please,
3		"Report dated 18 February 2004 timed at	3	to	o the second page of that document. We can see
4		17.04 shows a receipt of £12,000.00 for account	4	у	ou being sworn at the top, examination-in-chief
5		[again there's a reference number].	5	b	y Mr Morgan and then, a bit further down at E,
6		"Report dated 10 March 2004 timed at 16.46	6	р	lease, the question is:
7		shows a receipt of £12,000 [for the same	7		"Could you turn through that document to
8		account].	8	р	age 489. Could you tell the court what you see
9		"From the detailed transaction listings	9	th	here, please.
10		these amounts can be seen to be entered into	10		"Answer: That is a statement and my
11		Horizon as follows:	11	s	ignature dated on 5 October 2006.
12		"£16,537.25 at 15.08 on 11 February 2004,	12		"Question: Have you had an opportunity to
13		posted to code 262.	13	re	ead this witness statement recently?
14		"£12,000 at 13.26 on 18 February 2004 posted	14		"Answer: I have indeed.
15		to code 262.	15		"Question: Are there any corrections or
16		"£12,000 at 11.55 on 10 March 2004 posted to	16	С	hanges to it that you would wish to make?
17		code 262."	17		"Answer: No, there are not."
18		Do you accept now that you were wrong in	18		Can we turn, please well, first of all,
19		your conclusion set out in your witness	19	W	when you were being questioned by Mr Castleton,
20		statement for the litigation against	20		lo you remember him challenging you on your
21		Mr Castleton that Mr Castleton had not declared	21		onclusion at paragraph 12 of your statement for
22		these three large sums of cash received by the	22		ne litigation? The conclusion relating to the
23		branch.	23		gure of £15,300?
24		Yes, I do and I can't explain how that happened.	24		
	Α.	100, 1 do dila i carri explairi non trat riapportod.		<b>A</b> . v	ery vaguely. I can't specifically recall it
25	Q.	Could we go, please, to the transcript of your	25		out I do remember Mr Castleton challenging me on

1		that, yes.	1		the discrepancies in the figures then the
2	Q.	Could we turn, please, to page 47 of this	2		assertion, I believe, is not correct. Do you
3		transcript, starting just below "Circa 22":	3		believe that, Mr Jones?
4		"So from there, where you state the branch	4		"Answer: There would appear to be just for
5		receives £15,300 more in receipts than in	5		46 a figure that I am not sure where that figure
6		payments, is that still the case?"	6		originally derived from.
7		So this is a question from Mr Castleton.	7		"Question: So you are happy that in week 46
8		The answer here from you is:	8		your assertion that £15,000 came into the office
9		"From these figures that would appear not to	9		but in actual fact was not accounted for is
10		be the case.	10		incorrect?
11		"Question: Are you happy with those	11		"Answer: The branch receives £15,000
12		figures?	12		greater than receipts, I would concur that would
13		"Answer: I am indeed.	13		appear to be incorrect."
14		"Question: So that is factual then, as far	14		I understand your evidence that you were not
15		as you are aware?	15		told about the draft report from BDO before you
16		"Answer: As far as I am aware."	16		gave evidence at the trial but, at any point
17		Then His Honour Judge Havery asks between D	17		before the trial, did you check the figures, as
		and E:	18		-
18					Mr Castleton had done, to make sure you were
19		"What is this thing anyway, Mr Castleton?"	19		right in your conclusions about cash received
20		The decument that is being asked about.	20		not being declared?
21		The defendant:	21	A.	No, I didn't because I didn't have access to
22		"It is something that Mr Jones prepared for	22	_	that documentation.
23		the appeals panel where he provided me with	23	Q.	Another point which Mr Castleton questioned you
24		proof that cash came into the office but was not	24		on was your suggestion that the branch had been
25		in actual fact accounted for. But because of 49	25		ordering more cash than it needed to have to 50
1		operate and it was his position, wasn't it, that	1		physically all cash is accounted for. Therefore
2		you had not taken into account cash which had	2		I would ask that 'C' is allowed to prove that
3		been returned, which was foreign currency or	3		this physical cash is missing before my
4		unusable notes. Do you recall that now?	4		witnesses and I are asked to defend these
5	A.	Very vaguely.	5		assertions."
6	Q.	We have Mr Castleton's skeleton argument for the	6		Did you check the figures on the levels of
7		trial. Could we have that on screen, please.	7		cash held by the branch before the trial?
8		That is POL00107458. Turning, please, to page 5	8	A.	Not before the trial, no. Everything that was
9		of that document. Actually, if we can go back	9		relating to my analysis was from 2004.
10		one page, please, just to put it in context.	10	Q.	Could we have on screen, please, Mr Jones's
11		We see here "Defendant's skeleton on trial	11		statement to the Inquiry, WITN08560100. Page 7
12		to be heard from Monday 4 December 2006".	12		of this, please, it's paragraph 28 towards the
13		Then going over the page, please, to	13		bottom of the page. Starting at the penultimate
14		paragraph 10, which is towards the bottom of	14		line:
15		that second page. Mr Castleton says this:	15		"Given the documentation at my disposal and
16		"Mr Jones witness, asserts that only £20,000	16		the enquiries I was able to conduct, I have
17		was returned over the period of 15 January to	17		never been able to determine the cause of the
18		17 March. This is because £35,000 actually	18		shortfalls experienced by Mr Castleton. It was
19		returned was made up of foreign currency	19		not possible to determine from the information
20		(Scottish notes), coinage and unusable notes	20		at my disposal if the discrepancies were caused
21		(defaced, ripped). This then proves that the	21		by the Horizon System. However, my enquiries
22		£35,000 returned when taken from the actual	22		verified that all the customer transactions over
23		ordered £316,590 gives £282,000. This, when	23		the periods in question were performed correctly
24		consideration that the Branch needed £288,000 to	24		and accurately at the Marine Drive branch."
25		fulfil its payments clearly shows that	25		Did it not concern you at the time that you
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were upholding the termination of the contract
of someone in circumstances where the cause of
the apparent shortfalls was undetermined?

4 A. The decision that -- well, as part of my 5 enquiries, all the areas that I was able to look 6 at, with the documentation that was available to 7 me at the time to verify all the customer 8 transactions, essentially, I'd reached a point 9 where everything we'd looked at, that there was 10 nowhere else, really, to go with that and the decisions were based on the balance of 11 12 probability. So, essentially, I was looking at 13 everything that I possibly could to ascertain 14 was the -- were the accounts operating 15 correctly, and everything that I was able to 16 look at indicated that they were.

There had been two interim postmasters following Mr Castleton's suspension who'd ran the branch, both of those, apart from one error that I believe was appropriate to leaving a customer's transactions on the stack, the branch was operating as one would normally expect a post office to operate.

So there was no other areas that I could possibly look at from the information that I had

Q. He was reporting the apparent discrepancies and repeatedly seeking help to get to the bottom of them. You didn't see any problem with the way customer transactions were being done in the branch and you couldn't ascertain yourself, from the information you had, whether Mr Castleton was right that the discrepancy in the figures did not reflect a true loss?

9 A. That is correct, yes.

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10 Q. In these circumstances, what did you understand
 11 to be the reason that the Post Office was
 12 terminating Mr Castleton's contract?

A. That the unexplained losses were genuine losses to the business and the Retail Network Managers have a role in the business to protect our assets and value and, therefore, I think Cath had reached a point where those losses were believed to be real losses, hence why she took that decision, probably based on risk.

And that was the understanding of the case: that those unexplained losses were genuine losses and that's why the decision was taken.

Q. If you believed those to be real losses, whatdid you think had happened to the money?

25 A. I've no genuine idea where the money went.

1 available to me at that time, that's -- you

2 evaluate all those points and reach the decision

3 that I did, on the balance of probability that

4 the decision that was taken by Cath Oglesby was

5 the correct decision at that time. Obviously,

6 knowing what we know now, then potentially that

7 was not the correct decision.

8 Q. You're saying here it wasn't possible to

determine from the information you had if the

10 discrepancies were caused by the Horizon System.

11 Again, didn't that concern you, that you simply

12 could not say, from what you had looked at, if

13 his theory was correct or not?

14 A. Everything I looked at to verify all the

customer transactions were done correctly,

16 looking at all the figures that were going into

17 the accounts, there was nothing that alluded to

18 that the Horizon System was not working

19 correctly.

20 Q. To draw things together, at the time you took

your decision, nobody had been able to identify

22 the cause of the apparent discrepancies, there

23 was no evidence that Mr Castleton had stolen any

24 money?

25 A. Correct.

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There is certainly no accusation whatsoever that
Mr Castleton did anything untoward with that.

3 I've never been able to find out where those

4 losses, if they were real losses, went to.

5 Hence why I think at the start of the case the

6 Security and Investigation Team did not want to

7 get involved in that. There was no evidence of

8 any criminal activity taking place, in their

9 view. So I really can't explain where the

10 monies went to.

11 **MS PRICE:** Sir, those are all the questions I have.

12 Subject to any questions you may have, maybe it

is nearly time for our morning break, to

14 ascertain whether there are any questions from

15 Core Participants.

16 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, let's find that out first.

17 Are there any questions from Core Participants?

18 **MS PAGE:** There is a very short question from me,

19 sir.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. I think we will take the
 morning break now, if I -- because I would like
 something checked during the break. When you

22 Something checked during the break. When yo

23 began questioning Mr Jones about what I will

call his view in 2004, that there had been, in

effect, under-declarations of cash received,

which appeared to be part of his reasoning for upholding the termination, and then pointed out that that did not appear at paragraph 34 of his witness statement, I think he used words which suggested that they didn't appear in paragraph 34 because that was an oversight on his part.

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I want that checked because, if he did say that, that would be entirely inconsistent with what followed, namely you demonstrating that, by the time he gave evidence at the trial, he was accepting under cross-examination from Mr Castleton that his view on that topic was erroneous or, at least, that's my understanding of the evidence.

I would like that checked because, if he did say that to me, I want to know why he was telling me that, in effect, it was an oversight that it didn't appear in paragraph 34.

Now, I may have misunderstood what he is saying, which is why I want the transcript checked before either I or anybody else pursues that point. So we'll take our break and would someone check the transcript for me, please?

**MS PRICE:** Yes, sir. Of course. Shall we come back 57

going to ask for one document to be put up on the screen, please. It's POL00083351.

Now, this is an email from you to Mr Stephen Dilley, copying in Mandy Talbot and Cath Oglesby, and we can see that it's near-ish to the beginning of the involvement of those lawyers in the *POL v Castleton* trial, 17 November 2005. You've attached your appeal report and you've gone through some of the issues that have come out from that appeal report but, if we scroll down to the bottom you summarise, and that final paragraph reads as follows:

"In summary, the decision to terminate the contract for services of Mr Castleton was sound and on the balance of probabilities the cash was removed by a person or persons working within the branch."

Now, you've just told us in fact there was no evidence, was there, that cash was removed? There was no specific evidence that was ever levelled against Mr Castleton. In terms of the summary of the case, they were believed to be live losses and therefore there was the belief

1 in 20 minutes, in that case? So 11.45.

2 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, please, yes.

3 MS PRICE: Thank you, sir.

4 (11.25 am)

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(A short break)

6 (11.45 am)

7 MS PRICE: Hello, sir, can you see and hear us?

8 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, thank you.

9 MS PRICE: Sir, you asked that the transcript was
 10 checked. In answer to my question as to why the
 11 factor listed at (f) in the decision letter was
 12 not included in the list of factors in the

statement to the Inquiry, the answer was:

14 "That was a complete oversight by myself."

15 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Thank you.

All right. Well, before I ask any questions, if I do, let those recognised legal representatives who wish to ask questions ask their questions.

20 MS PRICE: I think it's Ms Page who has questions.

21 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes.

22 Questioned by MS PAGE

23 MS PRICE: Thank you, sir.

24 Mr Jones, I represent a number of 25 subpostmasters including Mr Castleton. I'm

Mr Castleton's contract was initially terminated
 by Cath Oglesby.

Therefore, taking that assumption, that the cash and the losses were genuine losses, then, on the balance of probabilities, where is that cash? That was the rationale for that statement.

8 Q. Is it right that you took the view that either
 9 Mr Castleton or Ms Train must be guilty of
 10 theft?

11 **A.** There was never any allegation or insinuation12 ever made that Mr Castleton did anything

improper, and I think that's also recorded at the Royal Courts of Justice, when I think

15 Mr Castleton asked me a similar question.

16 Q. But that's what you believed, isn't it?

17 A. Working on the balance of probabilities that if18 those cash losses were real, and it was believed

they were by both the dismissing manager, and

20 there was nothing else that I couldn't uncover

21 to indicate anything else, then there was

22 a belief that that cash had gone.

23 Q. Do you have anything to say to Mr Castleton now?

24  $\,$  A. I've always said, and I said to Mr Castleton at

25 the Royal Courts of Justice, there's never been

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1		any insinuation that he did anything wrong.
2		There's been no wrongdoing on the part of
3		Mr Castleton. No evidence to suggest that.
4	Q.	So you don't have anything else that you want to
5		say to him now?
6	A.	I think, on the balance of Mr Justice Fraser's
7		report and the amount of bugs that were
8		uncovered that were in the Horizon System, then
9		I think both myself and I'm happy to
10		apologise but, also, I think Post Office Limited
11		have got a duty of care to apologise because,
12		quite clearly, Mr Justice Fraser's identified
13		many bugs that potentially there's probably
14		only one, I've looked at those having read
15		Mr Fraser's reports on a number of occasions.
16		Because you do some soul searching when you
17		find out the nature that was uncovered in the
18		Horizon trial and you've got to do some soul
19		searching to understand that was decision I took
20		correct? And the nearest bug that I could or

ook that was recorded in Mr Justice Fraser's report, was the Falkirk bug, that potentially that may, with hindsight, have affected Marine Drive. So I'm more than happy to apologise that, on

behalf of the Post Office but, in essence, at

that time in 2004, we were completely unaware, and even at 2006 when the case went to the Royal Courts of Justice, of anything that was actually wrong with the Horizon System.

The one point I would like to make is that BDO Stoy Hayward were provided with detailed Fujitsu reports, certainly weren't available to myself. When those accounts were reopened in 2006, what did they actually see? Because of the detail of those reports that the author has concluded his report on, would suggest that they were not just Credence reports; they were at a different level that, potentially, when they were reopened, could Fujitsu have seen a bug or something affecting those accounts, that would have explained everything that has since transpired -- or I say everything but has since transpired from the Horizon trials.

So at that point in 2006, those accounts were reopened, Mr Castleton's account was reopened. So I think it's a question that needs to be asked of Fujitsu. What did they see? Because they provided really detailed reports to BDO Stoy Hayward to do a forensic analysis of those accounts. Does that answer the question?

## MS PAGE: I have no further questions. Thank you.

## Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Could that document remain on screen, please. Sorry, if you scroll up, to the sentence which is the one that's visible right at the top where we are. It's the sentence which begins under (i) "On a number of occasions it was demonstrated", could that be highlighted please? It's about halfway through that paragraph.

Now, my understanding, and please feel free to correct me, Mr Jones, if I'm wrong in this, that when you wrote your statement for the High Court, that sentence, not in precisely that form of course, but that sentence was included in your witness statement. When I say "included", that point rather, rather than the sentence, was included in your witness statement.

That is correct. 19

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20 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: That was because, at the time you 21 dismissed the appeal of Mr Castleton, you 22 believed that to be true, as I understand it?

23 A. I do and documentation that -- both BDO Stoy 24 Hayward and their forensic analysis concluded 25

the same. I also understand in the additional 63

1 bundle of papers that Fujitsu have made 2 a similar -- I think it is Julie Welsh from

3 Fujitsu, I'm not sure who she was responding to, 4 she wasn't responding to myself, it was that

they were also seeing exactly the same. So 5 6 I think it's not just me saying that I believe

7 that was the case; there are two other

8 independent statements that say exactly the 9

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Well, I'm confused now, and you'd 10 11 better put me right, because I thought that this

12 sentence, in effect, related to that part of

13 your appeal decision which you subsequently, in

14 the trial, accepted wasn't correct on the basis.

A. This, sir, is different. This is the --15

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right, then I've made 16 17 a mistake in highlighting that sentence. Forget that sentence and let me start where I -- from 18 19 a different point.

In your appeal decision at paragraph (f), you made as one of your reasons for upholding the appeal that which was contained in that paragraph (f). That's correct, isn't it?

24 A. Which is that paragraph, sir?

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. I'm sorry, I'm not 25

1		helping you as much as I should. Ms Price asked	1		identify those particular transactions. I was
2		you to look at paragraph 34 of your witness	2		using manual undercopies that those
3		statement, and you have that in hard copy in	3		undercopies may not have been fully complete,
4		front of you, and she pointed out to you that	4		hence why the analysis I drew was what it was.
5		paragraph (f) of your appeal decision did not	5		Whereas BDO Stoy Hayward have specific
6		feature as a factor in paragraph 34 to your	6		Fujitsu reports that indicated the deposits by
7		witness statement.	7		time and potentially cash user, I was simply
8	A.	Yes, sir, that is what I referred to as	8		using the hard copies that was in the branch,
9		a complete oversight on my part.	9		and therefore it may well be that the individual
10	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Exactly.	10		hard copies for those transactions were not
11	A.	And I apologise for that.	11		there, or were not in the order that all other
12	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Exactly. Now, you have said that	12		documentation was at the branch. I don't know,
13		it was an oversight that you did not include	13		I can't
14		that amongst the factors and I just want to ask	14	SIF	R WYN WILLIAMS: No, because my understanding
15		you a few questions about that.	15		Mr Jones, is that you had not seen the Stoy
16		In the witness statement which you made for	16		Hayward report before you gave evidence in the
17		the Castleton trial, it did feature as one of	17		Castleton trial and, indeed, hadn't seen it
18		the reasons why you upheld the termination, did	18		until it was disclosed to you by the Inquiry?
19		it not?	19	A.	That is correct.
20	A.	It did and my analysis was based on the branch	20	SIF	R WYN WILLIAMS: So nothing in the Stoy Hayward
21		undercopies that I was able to access at the	21		report could have alerted you to the fact that
22		branch to recreate that. I think the	22		you may have been mistaken when you gave
23		documentation was also referred to under the	23		evidence in the <i>Castleton</i> trial.
24		BDO Stoy Hayward report was using Fujitsu's	24	Α.	It potentially could, because the if
25		either Credence what other error reports to 65	25		R WYN WILLIAMS: Well, it couldn't if you hadn't
1		seen it. You weren't aware of it.	1		that when you were challenged about it at the
2	Α.	Sorry, yes, I wasn't aware of it. If I had seen	2		trial, you conceded that Mr Castleton had
3		it, then	3		a point or at least may have a point?
4	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Never mind about the	4	A.	I did indeed.
5		hypothetical.	5	SIF	R WYN WILLIAMS: Right. That's why I want to
6	Α.	Right.	6		explore with you why you tell me that you'd
7	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: So nothing in the Stoy Hayward	7		simply forgotten about this factor when you
8		report alerted you to the fact that you may have	8		drafted paragraph 34. Because that event having
9		made a mistake, for the simple reason that you	9		occurred in the trial, you having realised that
10		hadn't seen it?	10		you may have made a mistake, makes me wonder how
11	A.	Correct.	11		it comes to be that you forgot that, at the time
12	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Right. But Mr Castleton asked	12		of the appeal decision, you included it as
13		you questions along the lines of "You're	13		a factor.
14		mistaken in your belief", did he not?	14	A.	I just can't explain why it wasn't in the
15	A.	He did.	15		statement I gave. It is a complete oversight on
16	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: As a result of those questions,	16		my part. I apologise. I clearly remember
17		you conceded that you were or at least could	17		the well, I vaguely remember it, it was
18		have been mistaken in your belief?	18		19 years ago.
19	A.	Yes, and it comes back to the my analysis to	19	SIF	R WYN WILLIAMS: Well, there is another
20		derive the points I made was taken from manual	20		explanation: that you deliberately sought to
21		undercopies in the branch. Hence why there may	21		hide the fact that you had included as a factor
22		have been those undercopies may not have been	22		in your appeal decision one which you
23		present. That's why the mistake may have	23		subsequently recognised may not have been of
24		occurred.	24		a valid reason for upholding the appeal.
25	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Yes. My point is simply this:	25	A.	Absolutely not. Like I say, I was

1	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: That's unduly suspicious on my	1		amenable to it, I
2		part, is it?	2		to deal with that
3	A.	I can only offer an apology, sir, but I under	3		lunch at the usu
4		no circumstances did I deliberately miss that	4	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS:
5		off my statement to the Horizon Inquiry.	5		Mr Jones, tl
6	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Because if you had thought about	6		statement
7		it and can I suggest to you that what your	7	THE	E WITNESS: Tha
8		statement to the Inquiry should have said was	8	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS:
9		"I recall the following factors were taken into	9		evidence before
10		consideration as part of my decision", that's	10		We will con
11		how paragraph 34 starts. It would then have	11	MS	PRICE: Yes, sir
12		included the subparagraph (f) but then would	12	(12	.04 pm)
13		have gone on to say, "I now recognise and	13		(The
14		I recognised in 2006, that my reliance upon	14	(1.0	95 pm)
15		paragraph (f) was misplaced", or words to that	15		(Pro
16		effect. That's really what happened, isn't it?	16	(1.1	3 pm)
17	A.	With hindsight, like I say, I apologise, sir,	17	MR	BLAKE: Good a
18		that well, absolutely. That's what it should	18	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS:
19		have said.	19	MR	BLAKE: Can I d
20	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, all right. Thank you very	20	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS:
21		much. I think that concludes the questions,	21	MR	<b>BLAKE</b> : Thank
22		does it?	22		SIMO
23	MS	PRICE: Yes, sir.	23		Que
24		We do have one matter of housekeeping which	24	MR	BLAKE: Thank
25		affects the next witness and, sir, if you're 69	25		full name, pleas
1	Α.	Simon Recaldin.	1	A.	I do, but without
2	Q.	Mr Recaldin, you should have in front of you	2	Q.	Ah, yes. That's
3		three witness statements. I'm going to just	3		ask you to turn t
4		take you through each one of them.	4		have the origina
5		The first is dated 30 March 2023. It has	5		that hasn't been
6		the URN WITN09890100. Do you have that in front	6		same. Can you
7		of you?	7		signature on pag
8	A.	I do.	8	A.	It is.
9	Q.	Can I ask you to turn to the final substantive	9	Q.	Thank you very
10		page in that statement, page 15. Is that your	10		Are all three
11		signature?	11		together true to
12	A.	It is.	12		belief?
13	Q.	Thank you. The second statement is dated	13	A.	They are.
14		13 July this year, 2023. It has the URN	14	Q.	Thank you. As
15		WITN09890200. Do you have a copy of that in	15		be uploaded and
16		front of you?	16		You are the
17	A.	I do.	17		Post Office; is th
18	Q.	If you could turn to the final substantive page,	18	A.	I am.
19		that's page 31, is that your signature at the	19	Q.	Can you tell us
20		end?	20		I think it was pre
21	A.	It is.	21		Historical Matter
22	Q.	Thank you. Finally, we have a statement,	22	A.	Correct, and the
23		a third statement of today's date, 29 September.	23		the compensation
24		That's WITN09890300. Do you have a copy of that	24		Post Office.

1	amenable to it, I would suggest an early lunch
2	to deal with that rather than a break and then
3	lunch at the usual time.
4	<b>SIR WYN WILLIAMS:</b> All right. That's fine by me.
5	Mr Jones, thank you for making you witness
6	statement
7	THE WITNESS: Thank you.
8	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: and thank you for giving
9	evidence before me.
10	We will convene again at 1.05?
11	MS PRICE: Yes, sir. Thank you.
12	(12.04 pm)
13	(The Short Adjournment)
14	(1.05 pm)
15	(Proceedings delayed)
16	(1.13 pm)
17	MR BLAKE: Good afternoon, sir.
18	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Good afternoon.
19	MR BLAKE: Can I call Simon Recaldin, please.
20	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes.
21	MR BLAKE: Thank you.
22	SIMON RECALDIN (affirmed)
23	Questioned by MR BLAKE
24	MR BLAKE: Thank you very much. Can you give your
25	full name, please?
1	A. I do, but without that reference on it.
2	Q. Ah, yes. That's absolutely fine. If I could
3	ask you to turn to page 5 of that document, you
4	have the original in front of you or a version
5	that hasn't been uploaded but it's entirely the
6	same. Can you confirm that that is your
7	signature on page 5?
8	A. It is.
9	Q. Thank you very much.
10	Are all three of those statements taken
11	together true to the best of your knowledge and
12	belief?
13	A. They are.
14	Q. Thank you. As you know, those statements will
15	be uploaded and published in due course.
16	You are the Remediation Unit Director at the
17	Post Office; is that right?
18	A. Lam.
19	Q. Can you tell us what the Remediation Unit is?
20	I think it was previously known as the
21	Historical Matters Unit; is that correct?
22	A. Correct, and the Remediation Unit I head up
23	the compensation schemes for postmasters for the
24	Post Office.

25 **Q.** Thank you. You've been in that position since

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in front of you?

- 1 10 January 2022; is that correct?
- 2 A. That is correct.
- Q. Were you at the Post Office before that or inanother job?
- 5 A. I was not in the Post Office before that in --
- 6 I was working for another -- in another role.
- 7 Q. Thank you. You are involved in managing the
- 8 delivery of the Horizon Shortfall Scheme, the9 criminal appeals process and matters such as
- 10 that. It may be that you make a return
- appearance to this Inquiry in Phase 5 or 6 or 7.
- 12 I'm not going to ask you today about any of
- 13 those issues.

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Today we're going to address a single issue and that is various prosecution statistics that have been provided.

have been provided.
To begin with, I'd just like to get some
terms or acronyms out of the way. Can we

terms or acronyms out of the way. Can we start with post-conviction disclosure exercise. It's

referred to in your statement by PCDE, but if we could stick to the full title, post-conviction

disclosure exercise, can you briefly tell us

23 what that is?

A. A post-conviction disclosure exercise isan exercise of bringing data together within

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- data together in one place. That became the
- 2 PCDE.
- 3 Q. Thank you very much. We'll get to the
- 4 spreadsheets shortly. You have defined
- 5 Horizon-related cases. Can you tell us or how
- 6 you define a Horizon related case?
- 7 A. Horizon related is where the evidence provided
- 8 in the prosecution either was essential --
- 9 Horizon was essential to that prosecution or
- 10 partly used as evidence for the prosecution.
- 11 Q. In terms of figures, you have identified 700
- 12 Potential Future Appellants; is that correct?
- 13 A. Correct.
- 14 Q. 88 convictions or, in fact I think, two more
- 15 today have been overturned; is that correct?
- 16 A. Post Office 88, and non-post Office
- 17 prosecution's overturned, three -- sorry, one
- 18 for CPS, two for Northern Ireland and today two
- 19 from Scotland.
- 20  $\,$  Q. Thank you. You've identified that there are 538
- 21 that have not yet appealed; is that correct?
- 22~ **A.** Some of those have appealed and are in the
- 23 process of having their appeal looked into.
- 24 Q. I think in your third statement you have given
- 25 various numbers of cases that were either 75

- 1 certain parameters, in order to ascertain
- 2 whether or not we can appropriately evaluate
- 3 them for the appeals process.
- 4 Q. That results, I think, in the identification of
- 5 what you call Potential Future Appellants.
- 6 Again, in your statement you refer to those as
- 7 PFAs but if we could stick to that during your
- 8 evidence as "Potential Future Appellants". Can
- 9 you tell us what is a Potential Future
- 10 Appellant?
- 11 A. It's somebody who they would have been convicted
- 12 and that conviction might have been -- would
- 13 have been done by Post Office as the prosecutor,
- 14 the prosecution would be based wholly or partly
- on data derived from Horizon and, finally, the
- 16 prosecution would have been taken place between
- 17 1999/2000 and 2013.
- 18 Q. Who set those parameters?
- 19 A. So we worked with P&P, Peters & Peters, our
- 20 legal -- and that was -- those were set through
- 21 a disclosure management document that was
- 22 originally set up and an addendum to the
- disclosure management document, which was
- an amalgamation of a number of spreadsheets
- 25 found across Post Office that pulled all that

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- 1 abandoned or refused or cases that are pending?
- 2 A. I have.
- 3 Q. Thank you. We don't need to repeat those now.
- 4 A. Thank you.
- 5 Q. To identify what you've termed Potential Future
- 6 Appellants you have created a casework
- 7 spreadsheet. Can you previously tell us what
- 8 casework spreadsheets are?
- 9 A. The casework spreadsheet is work identified
- 10 across the country when we decided to amalgamate
- 11 all the information to understand the population
- 12 of potentially unsafe convictions. So we went
- out to P&P -- went to Peters & Peters, sorry,
- 14 went out to investigate all those. Several of
- those came in. I think the number in my witness
- statement is around 100, were brought back to amalgamate them into one central database and
- then that was analysed and put to the PCDE,
- to then that was analysed and put to the PC
- 19 along with the full criteria which I've
- 20 previously described.
- 21 Q. So that's the post-conviction disclosure
- 22 exercise?
- 23 A. Correct, sorry.
- 24 Q. Can you tell us who was providing those figures
- 25 to Peters & Peters?

1 <b>A</b> .	So it was through a disclosure process. So Post	1	see there it's summarised by you in your second
2	Office were doing that and they were	2	witness statement. You say:
3	independently going out and getting those	3	"Request number 6"
4	spreadsheets, the Security team and other teams.	4	That's I think a Rule 9 Request number 6:
5 <b>Q</b> .		5	" asked for confirmation of (a) the
6	search term list. Can you tell us what the	6	number of prosecutions [the Post Office] brought
7	master search term list is, please?	7	(in total) between 2000 and 2015, and (b) the
8 <b>A</b> .		8	number of those prosecutions brought that
9	populating the PCDE.	9	resulted in a conviction."
10 <b>Q</b> .		10	You've set out there that, as part of that:
11	exercise, that is a document, is it?	11	"[Herbert Smith Freehills] explained that
12 <b>A</b> .	Yes.	12	they were instructed that [the Post Office]
13 <b>Q</b> .	Yes. I want to ask you this afternoon about	13	brought a total of 844 prosecutions between 2000
14	a number of different requests that have been	14	and 2015, which resulted in 705 convictions, on
15	made, both by the Inquiry and also under the	15	the basis of the following understanding of the
16	Freedom of Information process, that appear to	16	scope of the request and limitations"
17	give different statistics, and I want to try to	17	So you set out, after that, various
18	get to understand why they are different.	18	limitations that applied. Can you summarise for
19	If I could ask you to look if we could	19	us the limitations that apply in the
20	bring on screen, in fact, paragraph 25 of your	20	identification of those figures? So that's 844
21	second witness statement. So that is	21	prosecutions in that 15-year period, resulting
22	WITN09890200 thank you very much and if we	22	in 705 convictions. I think you'll find those,
23	look at paragraph 25. That is page 9. So this	23	for your assistance, at paragraph 31 of your
24	was a request from the Inquiry itself, rather	24	witness statement, although we don't need to
25	than a Freedom of Information Request and we can	25	bring that up on screen. 78

1 If it assists, I think you say, for example, 2 that they were based on information in the 3 casework spreadsheets; is that correct?

4 A. Correct.

- 5 Q. And that there was a degree of verification from 6 underlying papers but that some dates couldn't 7 be verified?
- A. 8 Correct.
- 9 In fact, you've carried out further verification checks and now the figure is slightly different. 10 So it's now 781 prosecutions with 700 11 12 convictions; is that correct? So the number of 13 prosecutions has come down somewhat and the 14 number of convictions has slightly changed?
- 15 A. That is correct.

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- Q. So we have there 781 prosecutions with 700 17 convictions, that's nearly 90 per cent of 18 prosecutions resulting in convictions. You're not here to give expert evidence but does the 19 20 Post Office have a view as to whether that is 21 a high conviction rate or not?
- 22 Α. Doesn't have a view.
- 23 Has it considered whether there is a high 24 conviction rate or not? Are you aware of --

25 A. No, I don't know.

I'm going to move on to the Freedom of 1 2 Information Requests and we're going to see what 3 looks like inconsistent figures being given and 4 I'd like you to explain briefly why that might 5 be. We're going to look at the first Freedom of 6 Information Request, that's at paragraph 37 of 7 your statement. It's page 13. Could we please 8 bring that up on screen. So page 13 of the second statement. Thank you. So you've called 9 10 it here the "[Freedom of Information Act] Response 1", 26 September 2016, and the 11 12 question, the request to the Post Office was: 13

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"How many subpostmasters have had charges filed against them for false accounting and inflating figures and/or theft? Since 2010."

16 The response, we can see below, there are 17 various statistics provided and a table. If we 18 could scroll down slightly. Can you assist us 19 with telling us who compiled this response and 20 how they went about that?

- 21 A. It was the -- from -- I cannot recall who did 22 it. I do have it in my notes, if you're --
- 23 Q. I don't think we need a name but in terms of the 24 department?
- 25 My understanding, it would have been the -- it

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1 would have been overlooked by the Legal 2 department. 3 Q. Can you briefly summarise for us how they went 4 about obtaining those figures? 5 A. They would have done an exercise asking various 6 people questions around gathering the data 7 together. 8 Where from? You described various different 9 spreadsheets, databases, et cetera. Can you assist us with how those figures were obtained? 10 A. That would have been the starting point. They 11 would have looked at the databases containing 12 13 the number of prosecutions in that period. Q. I think you said in your statement that: 14 15 "The person who is understood to have 16 compiled the date has confirmed the source of 17 the data likely to have been the casework 18 spreadsheet." 19 Α. Correct. 20 Q. Is that correct? 21 A. Correct. 22 Are there any limitations in those figures that 23 you'd like to draw to the Inquiry's attention? 24 A. The limitations are based on the question asked 25 in terms of the request around "false 1 the following reasons ..." 2 It then gives four reasons below. The first 3 4 "The table below is based solely on 5 information held by Post Office Limited, and

6 does not therefore reflect information (if any) 7 that may be held by Royal Mail ... 8 "The request covers a lengthy period of time 9 extending back 30 years. 10 "Data relating to convictions between 1991 11 and 2006 in particular have been compiled from 12 extremely limited available material. 13 "The table excludes cases where the data 14 held by Post Office is inconclusive as to 15 whether the prosecution was brought by any other 16 organisation, or whether it resulted in 17 a conviction. 18 "In addition, although you have asked for 19 information on both prosecutions and 20

convictions, the table contains information on convictions only. This is because Post Office does not hold a sufficiently complete set of data for prosecutions which do not result in a conviction, again reflecting the length and aged period of the request.

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1 accounting" and "inflating figures" and "since 2 2010", so obviously the data produced is limited 3 by the question.

Q. I'm going to move on to another Freedom of Information Request and that's set out at page 14 of your statement. It's referred into your statement as "FOIA", that's Freedom of Information Act "Response 2", 22 May 2020. Now this is a request that was made by Nick Wallis, a journalist and author, and that reads as follows, the Post Office was asked to supply:

"... 'by year the number of prosecutions of: subpostmasters, their assistants or Post Office workers (eg those in Crown Post Offices) brought by the Post Office/Royal Mail since 1990. Please also supply, by year, the number of criminal convictions which resulted from those prosecutions'."

It's quite a lengthy response but I will read it all out. The response was as follows:

"We do not hold all of the information which pertains to your request. The information we do hold is set out in the table below. However, the data is likely to be incomplete and therefore should be treated with caution, for

"The below table sets out the number of a conviction. To date, we have been unable to cases where Post Office Limited holds information recording that the defendant was convicted, but not the date of the conviction, for which the year has been listed as

Then if we go over the page we have there a table

Now, it doesn't seem to have entirely answered the request because it doesn't separate out prosecutions and convictions. You were able to provide the Inquiry with various statistics for prosecutions and convictions between 2000 and 2015, which we've just talked about. Can you assist us with why it wasn't able to provide both of those details? So both convictions and prosecutions?

22 Because the number of prosecutions, we didn't 23 have a complete set of data for the number of 24 prosecutions.

25 Q. Thank you. So you did have some data and that

- data fed into the earlier figure that you gaveto the Inquiry?
- 3 **A.** Yes.
- 4 Q. But here that information wasn't provided
- 5 because it wasn't felt to be complete; is that
- 6 correct?
- 7 A. Correct.
- 8 Q. Thank you. If you add up the total between 2000
- 9 and 2015, the number you reach is different to
- 10 the one that was provided to the Inquiry, the
- 11 response that we've been over already. Can you
- 12 assist us with why those figures might be
- 13 different?
- 14 A. No. I'm happy to look at it and come back to
- 15 the Inquiry.
- 16 Q. At paragraph 43 and onwards in your statement,
- 17 you provide some limitations to this data.
- 18 A. Correct.
- 19 Q. You've come here today to assist the Inquiry --
- 20 A. I do.

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- 21 Q. -- in respect of this data and in respect of the
- information you have provided in that statement.
- 23 Can you briefly summarise for us what you
- 24 consider to be the key limitations to that data?
- 25 **A.** Again, it's the question that is asked, the data
- of Appeal asked counsel for the appellants
  whether they wished to argue that the number of
  prosecutions rose immediately after Horizon was
  rolled out and it was argued by counsel for the
  appellants that -- I think you set out in your
  statement that there were maybe two or three
  prosecutions pre-Horizon and it went up to 40 or

50 post-Horizon.

- The answer from counsel to the Post Office is set out in your witness statement, if we could go to that. That's at paragraph 50, so it's over the page, please. I think these are the words of Mr Altman, King's Counsel, in the Court of Appeal and he's there giving a number of statistics. We see there he says, for example:
  - "... In 1999 there were 60 in total."
- That figure doesn't appear in that table that we've just looked at for 1999, the figure that's given to Mr Wallis is 50. Are you able to assist us at all with that difference?
- 22 A. Yeah, again, it's down to the question that's
- 23 been asked but also this data is dynamic. So
- 24 it's moving all the time. As the PCDE exercise

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25 carries on, more data is collected and the

- 1 that is taken from the master -- the
- 2 spreadsheet, and ensuring that the data is
- 3 robust in terms of the prosecuting authority and
- 4 the details of each case itself.
- 5 Q. Perhaps, if we scroll down and look at
- 6 paragraph 43 and 44 in your statement, that may
- 7 assist you with providing a slightly fuller
- 8 answer in respect of the limitations.
- 9 A. As per the statement, prosecutions which had
  - definitively resulted in convictions and not
- 11 prosecutions -- cases in which the prosecution
- 12 authority was believed to be Post Office, as
- 13 opposed to other prosecuting authorities. Cases
- which appeared to be based on a shortfall of the
- 15 branch accounts, ie for example, there may be
- 16 cases which referred to robbery or others and,
- 17 therefore, not shortfall related. And cases
- 18 where the defendants were -- their title didn't
- 19 fit with the description being asked.
- 20 Q. Further details set out in your witness
- 21 statement. Can we move on, please, to the
- 22 information provided to the Court of Appeal in
- the *Hamilton* proceedings. That's page 19 of
- your witness statement. It's the bottom of
- page 19. In the *Hamilton* proceedings the Court
- 1 numbers move all the time as we get more
- 2 certainty around the numbers of prosecutions and
- 3 the numbers of convictions.
- 4 Q. But I think there's a more significant answer
- 5 that's set out in your witness statement, and
- 6 that is that the 1999 figure of 60 included
- 7 things like robberies and burglaries?
- 8 A. Correct, because it was -- because it was all
- 9 convictions and these are related to
- 10 Horizon-related convictions.
- 11 Q. So the figure there, 60 for 1999, included
- things like robberies and burglaries, whereas
- the post-Horizon figures, so the 2000 onwards
- 14 figures, am I right in understanding that those
- 15 were actually figures excluding robberies and
- burglaries, et cetera, because they focused on
- 17 Horizon and the way that you've described
- 18 a Horizon conviction?
- 19 **A.** That is my understanding.
- 20  $\,$  Q. Is it -- are we therefore to understand that
- 21 that's very much like comparing chalk and cheese
- in terms of those two figures, because robberies
- 23 and burglaries are obviously totally different
- 24 subjects that aren't reflected in those later
- 25 figures?

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Α.	Correct

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Q. That was then, as you set out in your witness statement, accompanied by a note to the Court of Appeal, which gave some of the limitations in those figures. I'm not going to bring it up on screen and it may not yet be available to Core Participants but it will be shortly. We have a Unique Reference Number for that that I'll provide now for the purpose of the transcript: 10 that's INQ0000721.

> Perhaps that's something that we will look at in more depth in Phase 5 of this Inquiry. Again, those figures don't match the ones that were provided to the Inquiry. I think we were given the figure of 705 convictions. Are you able to assist at all with why those figures and the ones that were provided to the Inquiry are different?

18 19 Α. Again, because it's dynamic. The exercise, 20 I think the number went from 705 to 700, as the 21 data is analysed and reasons for taking the 22 cases out of that population are found. For 23 example, there may be a case that was -- that 24 the initial indication was that it was -- the 25

conviction was in England but, following

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Then went on to say:

"Post Office Limited's prosecution records are incomplete. It is not possible to determine in any given case whether the person who was prosecuted was unwilling or unable to make good a shortfall, nor when the last such circumstances arose. The last time a postmaster was prosecuted by Post Office Limited in relation to a shortfall identified within their branch was 2015. Post Office Limited does not know, however, whether any postmasters have been prosecuted in relation to shortfalls at their branch by any other prosecuting entity ... subsequent to 2015."

A. I understand it still to be accurate, yes and 17 18

Thank you. I think you give some information in 19 Q. 20 paragraph 59 about a 2019 case. Are you able to 21 assist us with that, please?

22 Α. There was a 2019 case and that was, sort of, 23

24 Q. Thank you. Moving on to the fourth Freedom of 25 Information Act request and that's on page 24,

1 research, that case might have been discovered 2 to be in Scotland and, therefore, been taken out 3 of the PCDE.

4 Q. Thank you. I think that you have other 5 explanations that are also provided --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- at paragraph 54 onwards in your witness 8

A. Correct. 9

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10 We can move on to the third Freedom of 11 Information Act response. That is at page 23 of your witness statement, could we please bring 12 13 that up on screen, it's paragraph 56. This was 14 requested 23 April 2021 and the request was as 15 follows:

> "I would like to know when the last time Post Office attempted a prosecution. I would also like to know the last time a subpostmaster was unwilling or unable to make good any reported shortfalls was prosecuted."

The response from the Post Office on 20 May 2021 said:

"Post Office limited last prosecuted an individual in 2019. This prosecution was not branch related and did not relate to or rely on

any evidence from Horizon."

Is that response accurate?

consistent, related to information we have.

a Head Office case and wasn't Horizon related.

thank you. If we could just scroll down slightly. We have there paragraph 60, the request on 26 April:

"Please confirm how many criminal prosecutions took place against postmasters and postmistresses for fraud and/or false accounting in the 10 years prior to the introduction of the 'Horizon IT Computer System'."

Then we have the answer at paragraph 61:

"I can confirm that Post Office holds some information in relation to this. The Horizon IT System was introduced in 1999. For the ten years prior to that (between 1989 and 1999), Post Office cannot confirm the number of criminal prosecutions that took place. This was because the age and manner in which information was recorded in this period, before widespread use of computerised records, means it is not possible to verify the accuracy of Post Office records. The surviving historical records for pre-1999 cases are extremely limited and the information cannot be relied on as definitive.

"A search of these records provides information about 57 prosecutions the Post Office appears to have carried out that resulted 92

1		in convictions. These were initiated after	1		it exclude yeah, the 57 convictions excluded
2		a shortfall was identified in the relevant	2		cases that did not appear to arise from
3		individual's branch which, for the purposes of	3		shortfall in the branch accounts, even though
4		this data, usually relate to cases recorded as	4		evidence from Horizon is relevant on these
5		theft, fraud, cash loss, audit shortage or false	5		cases.
6		accounting and does not include convictions	6	Q.	Sorry, you're speaking a little too quickly for
7		which appear not to have relied on Horizon data	7		the stenographer. Are you able to repeat what
8		in whole or in part (eg burglary or robberies)	8		you just said?
9			9	A.	I referred to paragraph 62 and the 57
10		Is that response correct?	10		convictions excluded cases that did not appear
11	A.	No, I think there's been a mistake in there, if	11		to arise from a shortfall in the branch
12		I may advise the Inquiry. As per my witness	12		accounts.
13		statement, in the final sentence it says:	13	Q.	Are you able to briefly summarise paragraph 63
14		"Any conviction before 2000 cannot have	14		and 64 of your witness statement which also
15		relied on Horizon because Horizon hadn't been	15		provide further explanation as to why those
16		installed."	16		numbers are different?
17		So that's an error and my apologies for that	17	A.	Yes. The 57, including convictions of
18		error.	18		individuals
19	Q.	The 57 figure there, 57 prosecutions, in the	19	Q.	Sorry, if you could slow down slightly the
20		10 years prior to Horizon, that doesn't seem to	20		stenographer is struggling to keep up.
21		tally with the response that was provided to	21	A.	Yes, regardless of their specific role, despite
22		Mr Wallis or a later response that we're going	22		the fact that the request was for referred to
23		to see. Are you able to assist us with that	23		SPMs, because this had been approached in
24		inconsistency?	24		response to the preceding information request.
25	A.	Because it was limited to shortfall cases. So 93	25	Q.	We're going to now look at the fifth Freedom of 94
1		Information Act response, that's 24 March 2023.	1		It then goes on to say:
2		Can you look at page 26, please, paragraph 65.	2		"A search of these records provides
3		I'm going to briefly take you through this	3		information has provided to the following
4		response. The request was:	4		information [sic]."
5		"Can you say how many [subpostmasters] you	5		Number 1, in answer to the question can you
6		prosecuted between 1990 and 1999? Can you say	6		say how many subpostmasters you prosecuted
7		how many [subpostmasters] you prosecuted between	7		between 1990 and 1999, the response is:
8		2000 and 2009?"	8		"Due to the limited records we can
9		Again, looking for that difference between	9		confirm there were 65 convictions for
10		the two:	10		postmasters.
11		"What is the [percentage] increase in the	11		"2. Can you say how many [subpostmasters
12		latter figure? What [percentage] of 1990 to	12		you prosecuted between 2000 and 2009?"
13		1999 convictions were overturned? What	13		The answer there is "380".
14		[percentage] of the latter figures figure were	14		"What is the [percentage] increase in the
15		overturned?"	15		latter figure?"
16		The response is as follows:	16		It says:
17		" We can confirm that the Post Office	17		"484% but please note caveat in relation to
18		does hold the information you have requested.	18		limitation of records as above.
19		For the period of 1990-1999, Post Office cannot	19		"What [percentage] of 1990-1999 convictions
20		verify the accuracy of this information due to	20		were overturned? 0%.
21		the age and way information was recorded before	21		"What [percentage] of the latter figure
22		the widespread use of computerised systems. The	22		were overturned? 8%."
23		surviving historical records for pre-1999 cases	23		These are once again different figures. Can
24		are extremely limited, and the information	24		you assist us with this response and whether
25		cannot be relied on as definitive". 95	25		that response is accurate? 96

- The percentage given is absolutely not accurate. 1 Α.
- 2 Just scroll up. Thank you. We'll just scroll
- 3 up to have a look at the figure that's provided
- there. Yes, sorry. Can you assist us? 4
- 5 A. Yes, so the -- I think the percentage was worked
- 6 out at 484 per cent, one of the numbers, which
- 7 is a human error and, again, with apologies to
- 8 the Inquiry, that's wrong.
- 9 They were compared -- the numbers were
- 10 comparing convictions with prosecutions, which
- is a nonsense. So that can be disregarded, if 11
- I could be so bold. 12
- 13 Q. So the figure there incorrectly compared the
- 14 percentage for the number of prosecutions with
- 15 the number of convictions --
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- for the different years?
- A. Correct. 18
- 19 So they're again comparing chalk and cheese? Q.
- 20 A. You can -- yes, correct.
- 21 Q. Are there any other limitations to that data or
- 22 is there any other reason why the figures are
- 23 different to previous figures we've seen?
- 24 A. As per my witness statement, we were able to
- 25 provide figures for prosecutions that did not
- 1 a period of time and it continues to -- this
- 2 a dynamic database, and continues to be updated
- 3 and continues to move and, therefore, depending
- 4 when the requests come in, will be dependent on
- 5 the information that comes out, and so the data
- 6 will move accordingly and it depends on the time
- 7 that the requests are entered.
- 8 In respect and, in particular, around the
- 9 22 May FOIA requests, again, with apologies to
- 10 the Inquiry, the inaccuracies are in that
- 11 dataset, and we now recognise that in terms of
- 12 the drawing up of my second witness statement.
- 13 We recognise that and there were errors in that
- 14 and, again, with apologies. And that will be
- 15
- Q. Thank you. That 22 May 2020 request that was 16
- 17 the request made by Nick Wallis. I believe the
- 18 Post Office has written to him today to
- 19 apologise for the errors in the data that were
- 20 provided; is that correct?
- That is correct. 21 Α.
- 22 Q. Can you assist us with why it was just today
- 23 that the Post Office wrote to Mr Wallis, given
- 24 that your witness statement, for example, your
- 25 second witness statement, was now written some 99

- 1 result in convictions in response to this
- 2 request, of the post-1999 period because of the
- 3 additional work to the Inquiry, and any data
- 4 pre-'99 is very difficult and cannot be relied
- 5 on in any way.
- 6 Q. Sorry, can you just expand upon that?
- 7 A. Because -- simply because the limitations of
- 8 availability of data and its reliability.
- 9 Q. So in terms of pre-1999, so pre-Horizon data, is
- 10 the Post Office's position that that data is
- 11 unreliable because of the lack of information
- 12 that you have available to you?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. We've seen quite a variation in figures this
- afternoon. Can you assist us with why, overall, 15
- 16 there is such an inconsistency or lack of
- 17 consistency in these figures?
- 18 I'd absolutely like to. So, firstly, each FOIA
- 19 request may have a slightly different question,
- 20 do have different questions and, therefore, that
- 21 will drive differences in numbers. So it's
- 22 the -- the parameters of the information
- 23 requests are different.
- Secondly, as hopefully I've tried to 24
- 25 describe, the data revolves over this, over

- 1 time ago?
- We felt it was appropriate to advise him 2
- 3 regarding an update of his Freedom of
- 4 Information Request at the same time as the
- 5 Inquiry.
- 6 Q. But you updated the --
- 7 Apologies --
- 8 Q. -- Inquiry on 13 July 2023 with the figures?
- 9 A.
- **Q.** Why has the letter appeared in his inbox today? 10
- 11 A. We felt it was appropriate to advise him.
- 12 Why today, though? We're having a hearing
- 13 today; is that a coincidence?
- 14 A. I don't think so.
- 15 Q. So it was intentionally to apologise to him
- 16 prior to your giving evidence?
- 17 Yes. Α.
- 18 Q. You've produced an appendix with more accurate
- figures and that, I think, you call appendix 2. 19
- 20 Could we bring that up on screen, please.
- 21 That's WITN09890208. Thank you.
- 22 If we could zoom out to get a better picture
- 23 of the overall table, please. Thank you very
- 24 much. Do you have more confidence in the 25

figures that are provided here than in the

		The Po	st Office Horizon I	ΓInc	juiry 29 Septem
1		earlier table that we saw?	1		increase in that Freedom of Information Request,
2	A.	I do. With the caveat, if I may, to say that	2		for example, to suggest that the number of
3		this again, these numbers are dynamic because we	3		prosecutions dramatically increased in the
4		keep on improving our data.	4		decade after Horizon. You're not a statistician
5	Q.	Again, can you just briefly explain the	5		or an expert witness today. Can you tell us
6		difference between the shaded area, the unshaded	6		what the Post Office's position is in respect of
7		area and also why certain numbers are in	7		those two positions?
8		brackets and some aren't?	8	A.	Firstly, hopefully as I've already articulated,
9	A.	I can. The pre-2000 data, which is the darker	9		the 484 per cent is a human error and
10		background and from 1990 to 1999, relates to all	10		a nonsense. So, again, apologies for that. But
11		offence types where the convictions have been	11		in terms of the numbers before and after the
12		confirmed or is assumed where the defendant was	12		introduction of Horizon, which was 1999 to 2000
13		an SPM, assistant or a Post Office employee,	13		time, I can confirm from the stats that the
14		including all case types. So it's all	14		and I'm not a statistician, but the numbers
15		convictions, and then the figure in the brackets	15		increase before and of prosecutions increase
16		are likely to involve a shortfall in the branch.	16		before and after
17	Q.	A shortfall?	17		Sorry, convictions increase before and after
18	A.	Correct.	18		the introduction of Horizon.
19	Q.	Thank you.	19	Q.	Statistically correct but I think you have also
20		Some people might use these statistics to	20		said in your evidence today that there are
21		suggest that there was an increase in	21		issues with your figures pre-Horizon?
22		prosecutions by the Post Office in the years	22	A.	Correct.
23		prior to the rollout. We see there 26 and 51 in	23	Q.	So in light of the issues that you've raised,
24		the years 1998 and 1999. Other people might use	24		regarding the figures pre-Horizon, does the Post
25		the figures we've heard, the 484 per cent 101	25		Office have a position, has it taken a position 102
1		or has it carried out and analysis and produced	1		say, to put this matter to bed, whether there
2		something conclusive, which can say whether the	2		was or was not a significant increase in
3		number of prosecutions increased before Horizon	3		prosecutions following the implementation of
4		or whether there was a significant increase	4		Horizon?
5		after Horizon, one way or another?	5	A.	There were an increase in convictions coming up
6	A.	So we have carried out an exercise as per the	6		to the introduction of Horizon and there were
7		bracketed numbers to see whether or not they're	7		a continued increase in convictions after the
8		shortfall related and then the remainder the	8		introduction of Horizon. The root cause of
9		2000 onwards, you know, are Horizon related.	9		those, I don't know.
10		Now, in terms of the numbers that are shaded in	10	Q.	When you say there was an increase:
11		brackets, clearly Horizon wasn't there and,	11		statistically from the information you've
12		therefore, we've taken a number of definitions	12		gathered, there was an increase before
13		of what could be a shortfall, depending on the	13		Horizon
14		investigation and depending on the data that we	14	A.	Yes.
15		gathered, so if there's fraud or something or	15	Q.	but, as you've said, the records are a little
16		another description of the activity that's being	16		dodgy, to say the least?
17		investigated, we have associated that with	17	Δ	Are not great. I didn't use the word "dodgy"

increase: ation you've ease before cords are a little he word "dodgy" 18 but they are potentially inaccurate, simply because of the length of time that has been 19 20 between now and then. 21 Q. Are the records that post-date Horizon more 22 accurate because of the electronic records? 23 A. The automation, correct. 24 MR BLAKE: The automation. 25

Thank you very much, I feel like we've had 104

a potential shortfall and, therefore, we would

Q. I'm not sure that assists us either way. You're

identifying that you have confirmed those

Q. But does the Post Office -- I mean to put --

does the Post Office consider itself able to

put it in that bracketed population.

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statistics?

A. Correct.

fact.

1	enough of s	statistics for the afternoon. I don't
2	think there	are any questions.
3	Ah, Mr	Whittam may have a question, in
4		Questioned by MR WHITTAM
5	MR WHITTAM:	Richard Whittam on behalf of Fu
6	Techni	cal problems out of the way and b

iitsu Technical problems out of the way and back statistics. Mr Blake was asking you to put these matters to bed. It's not quite as simple as that, is it. You've been very frank with your analysis of the matters, and it's as simple as this, isn't it: you can only gather statistics that were recorded at the time and still exist -- you'll have to say yes, I can see you nodding, simply because of the shorthand note -- that 1999 and before then, for all the caveats that we've had set out, we don't need to repeat them, the records are incomplete and

therefore unreliable? 19 Α. Is that a statement or -- if that's 20 a question --

21 Do you agree with that? Q.

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22 Yes, because of the passage of time I recognise 23 there is difficulty in gathering data pre-1999.

24 Q. Because those records can't be verified; do you 25 agree with that?

105

1 a nonsense, because it's comparing different 2 things.

4 at 484 per cent as a nonsense because it 5 compares convictions with prosecutions and it 6 7

A. I described the percentage that was calculated

should be discounted as a figure for submission to the Inquiry. 8 Q. Thank you. As for any cause -- and Mr Blake

9 tried quite hard to get you to describe a Post 10 Office position on whether prosecutions went up after the introduction of Horizon -- you'd 11 12 defer, wouldn't you, to a witness who was in 13 charge of security at the Post Office, who has

14 given evidence before us to say that the

15 increase was more to do with the low numbers

before he arrived in September 1999, and it

17 then, after a short dip, went up because of

18 an improvement in efficiency of the

19 Investigation team from around 2001 onwards.

20 You would defer to a witness of fact as to what

21 was happening at the time?

22 A. I think my statement was clear in terms of 23 I recognised that the numbers of convictions 24 went up pre the introduction of Horizon and post

25

the introduction of Horizon. In terms of the 107

No, some of the records that are there can be 1 2

Q. But if things weren't recorded at the time or 3 4 can't be found, you can't say that they are

accurate figures? 5

6 Α. If they can't be found -- correct.

7 Q. As you've made plain, the non-conviction cases

8 data pre-1999 is very limited and incapable of

9 being verified as accurate? That's paragraph 24

10 of your statement, if it helps. It's your

11 words?

A. Yes, I think it's -- yeah, certainly limited. 12

13 Some of it is capable of being verified. If

14 it's there, we can verify it.

15 Q. But it's the things that aren't there that

16 caused the problem?

17 To your point.

18 Q. You use the description of --

19 (Microphone switched off)

20 THE STENOGRAPHER: Can you start the question again,

21 sorry?

23

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MR WHITTAM: Certainly. 22

You've described the comparison that was

24 being sought of you in the Freedom of

25 Information Act response number 5, as being

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1 root cause of why those were the case, I do not

2 know.

MR WHITTAM: I'm very grateful? 3

4 Sir, that's all that I ask.

Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS

6 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Can I be at least attempt to be 7 clear in my mind, Mr Recaldin. As I understand

8 it, your Appendix 2 is, as we sit here, the best

9 attempt you can make to provide accurate

10 information about the number of convictions

11 between 1990 and 1999, on the one hand, and 2000

12 and 2019, on the other?

A. Yes, Sir Wyn. 13

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. 14

A. On the basis that it continues to be dynamic 15

because the data still comes in and we evaluate

17 in the live environment.

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. As you say in appendix 2, 18

19 that is subject to caveats which you set out at

20 paragraph 71 of your witness statement.

A. Yes, Sir Wyn. 21

22 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So looking at that table, I have

23 to go back to paragraph 71 and read what it

24 says, yes?

25 A. Yes, Sir Wyn.

1	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: The figures between 1990 and	1 A. Correct.
2	1999, they may be wrong in the sense that there	2 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So that, in fact, there were many
3	is information missing, as I understand it?	3 more convictions I say many there were
4	A. Yes.	4 more convictions each year but those are the
5	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: But there were at least that	5 record of the convictions which Post Office
6	number of convictions in those years	6 regard as being Horizon related, as you have
7	A. Yes.	7 defined it?
8	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: is that right? And of those	8 A. Yes, Sir Wyn.
9	convictions, by a process of assessment or	9 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: There is no doubt that there were
10	analysis, the figures in brackets attempt to	10 those convictions because you have a record of
11	categorise the convictions which related to what	those convictions, so the only area for debate
12	we've called shortfalls?	12 would be whether or not they were Horizon
13	A. Correct, Sir Wyn.	13 related?
14	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So that, if what you're telling	14 A. Yes, Sir Wyn. And if I can refer you to 5, item
15	me is correct, I can be reasonably confident,	5 sorry, the note under the appendix 2.5 for
16	for example, that in the year 1999 there were at	16 2001, we can see there are 35 Horizon related
17	least 51 convictions to which at least of	17 cases, and there were 44 non-Horizon. So
18	which 21 related to shortfalls as Post Office	18 overall, there were 79 convictions.
19	assess it?	19 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I follow that.
20	A. Correct, Sir Wyn.	20 A. And 13 of the 44 non-Horizon cases are likely to
21	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. So far as 2001 and	21 have involved a shortfall in the branch.
22	onwards is concerned, my understanding of the	22 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes.
23	last column in the table is that that records	23 A. So they may have been to do with a branch
24	the number of what you have defined as	24 without the Horizon System in it.
25	Horizon-related convictions? 109	25 <b>SIR WYN WILLIAMS:</b> I follow. All right. Thank you 110
1	very much.	INDEX
2	THE WITNESS: Thank you, Sir Wyn.	JOHN HOWARD JONES (sworn) 1
3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Anything else from anyone?	
4	MR BLAKE: No, sir. I think we are finished.	Questioned by MS PRICE 1
5	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Very well. So we start again on	
6	Tuesday oh, sorry.	Questioned by MS PAGE 58
7	First of all, Mr Recaldin, thank you for	
8	three witness statements, one produced at very	Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS
9	short notice, obviously, and for coming to	
10	explain some parts of those witness statements	SIMON RECALDIN (affirmed) 70
11	this afternoon.	
12	We'll start again at 10.00 on Tuesday	Questioned by MR BLAKE 70
13	morning.	
14	MR BLAKE: Thank you very much.	Questioned by MR WHITTAM 105
15	THE WITNESS: Thank you.	
16	(2.08 pm)	Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS 108
17	(The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am	
18	on Tuesday, 3 October 2023)	
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
	111	112

	10.00 [3] 1/2 111/12	96/19	111/18	<b>37 [1]</b> 80/6
MR BLAKE: [7]	111/17	<b>1991 [2]</b> 83/10 84/5	<b>21 [2]</b> 31/14 109/18	<b>380 [1]</b> 96/13
70/17 70/19 70/21	<b>100 [1]</b> 76/16	1994 [1] 3/5	<b>22 [3]</b> 33/7 46/7 49/3	<b>39 [1]</b> 28/11
70/24 104/24 111/4	104 [1] 84/5	<b>1998 [1]</b> 101/24	<b>22 May [1]</b> 99/9	4
111/14	<b>11 [4]</b> 13/25 22/21	<b>1999 [25]</b> 87/17	22 May 2020 [2] 82/8	
MR WHITTAM: [3]	22/23 24/5	87/19 88/6 88/11	99/16	4 December 2006 [1]
105/5 106/22 108/3	11 February [2]	92/12 92/13 92/21	<b>23 [3]</b> 22/20 90/11	51/12
MS PAGE: [2] 56/18	41/19 42/2	95/6 95/13 95/19	90/14	<b>4,230.97 [1]</b> 12/13
63/1	11 February 2004 [2]	95/23 96/7 96/19 98/2		<b>40 [1]</b> 87/7 <b>43 [4]</b> 12/12 13/22
<b>MS PRICE: [12]</b> 1/3	46/25 47/12	98/9 101/10 101/24	12/6 14/8	85/16 86/6
1/6 1/9 56/11 57/25	<b>11,752.28 [1]</b> 35/13	102/12 105/15 105/23 106/8 107/16 108/11	<b>23 March 2004 [1]</b>   9/16	<b>44 [3]</b> 86/6 110/17
58/3 58/7 58/9 58/20	<b>11.25 [1]</b> 58/4 <b>11.45 [2]</b> 58/1 58/6	109/2 109/16	<b>24 [3]</b> 37/15 91/25	110/20
58/23 69/23 70/11	<b>11.55 [1]</b> 47/16	<b>1999/2000 [1]</b> 74/17	106/9	<b>45 [2]</b> 33/12 36/9
SIR WYN WILLIAMS:	<b>11/03/2004 [1]</b> 35/16		<b>24 March [1]</b> 95/1	<b>46 [12]</b> 33/15 34/14
<b>[47]</b> 1/5 56/16 56/20	<b>12 [4]</b> 14/3 41/6	2	<b>25 [2]</b> 77/20 77/23	39/8 39/22 40/18 41/9
58/2 58/8 58/15 58/21	46/11 48/21	<b>2.08 [1]</b> 111/16	<b>25,758.75 [2]</b> 9/14	41/19 43/14 43/21
63/3 63/20 64/10	12 December [1]	<b>2.5 [1]</b> 110/15	14/9	46/19 50/5 50/7
64/16 64/25 65/10	48/1	<b>20 [3]</b> 22/6 22/9 58/1	<b>26 [2]</b> 95/2 101/23	<b>47 [10]</b> 34/17 35/6
65/12 66/14 66/20	12,000 [3] 47/7 47/14		<b>26 April [3]</b> 14/5	39/8 39/22 40/18 41/9
66/25 67/4 67/7 67/12	47/16	<b>20,000 [1]</b> 51/16	14/13 92/3	43/14 43/21 46/19
67/16 67/25 68/5 68/19 69/1 69/6 69/20	42 000 00 [4] 47/4	<b>2000 [13]</b> 74/17 78/7	26 September 2016	49/2
70/4 70/8 70/18 70/20	42 04 [41 70/12	78/13 84/17 85/8	<b>[1]</b> 80/11	<b>48 [3]</b> 13/22 35/1
108/6 108/14 108/18	<b>12/02/2004 [1]</b> 34/15	88/13 93/14 95/8	<b>26/02/2004 [1]</b> 35/2	35/7
108/22 109/1 109/5	<b>13 [4]</b> 42/15 80/7	96/12 101/9 102/12	<b>262 [3]</b> 47/13 47/15	<b>484</b> [ <b>5</b> ] 96/17 97/6
109/8 109/14 109/21	80/8 110/20	103/9 108/11	47/17	101/25 102/9 107/4
110/2 110/9 110/19	<b>13</b> July [1] 71/14	<b>2001 [3]</b> 107/19	<b>27 [2]</b> 36/3 37/10	<b>489 [1]</b> 48/8
110/22 110/25 111/3	13 July 2023 [1]	109/21 110/16	<b>28 [1]</b> 52/12	<b>49 [3]</b> 35/8 35/17
111/5	100/8	2002 [1] 3/7	<b>28 April [1]</b> 14/12	35/25
THE	13.26 [1] 47/14	<b>2003 [2]</b> 4/18 43/12	<b>28 June [1]</b> 26/9	<b>49,000 [1]</b> 42/5
STENOGRAPHER:	<b>14 [4]</b> 1/15 14/10	<b>2003/2004 [1]</b> 33/13 <b>2004 [33]</b> 8/2 9/16	<b>282,000 [1]</b> 51/23	5
<b>[1]</b> 106/20	43/10 82/6	12/1 12/6 14/5 21/11	<b>288,000 [1]</b> 51/24	5 October 2006 [1]
THE WITNESS: [3]	<b>15 [1]</b> 71/10 <b>15 January [1]</b> 51/17		<b>29 [1]</b> 38/12	48/11
70/7 111/2 111/15	<b>15,000 [2]</b> 50/8 50/11		[1] 44/25	<b>50 [16]</b> 33/12 33/15
•	<b>15,300 [4]</b> 41/23	34/15 34/18 35/2 35/9	29 September [1]	35/15 35/19 36/1 36/9
100 [4] 00/4	42/10 48/23 49/5	35/16 36/6 37/17	71/23	39/9 39/22 40/18
'99 [1] 98/4	<b>15-year [1]</b> 78/21	41/18 41/19 42/2	29 September 2023	41/10 43/14 43/21
'by [1] 82/12 'C' [1] 52/2	<b>15.08 [1]</b> 47/12	42/17 46/25 47/3 47/6	[ <b>1</b> ] 1/1	46/19 87/8 87/11
'chance' [1] 29/22	<b>16 [2]</b> 11/6 15/13	47/12 47/14 47/16	<b>2a [1]</b> 34/24	87/20
'Horizon [1] 92/8	<b>16,500 [1]</b> 41/25	52/9 56/24 62/1	<del></del>	<b>51 [2]</b> 101/23 109/17
'Unknown' [1] 84/10	<b>16,537.25 [2]</b> 47/1	<b>2005 [1]</b> 59/8	3	<b>538 [1]</b> 75/20
'was [1] 40/2	47/12	<b>2006 [12]</b> 4/2 21/11	3 October 2023 [1]	<b>54 [2]</b> 33/22 90/7
	<b>16.20 [1]</b> 47/1	44/23 44/25 48/1	111/18	<b>56 [1]</b> 90/13
0	<b>16.46</b> [1] 47/6	48/11 51/12 62/2 62/9		<b>57 [6]</b> 92/24 93/19
<b>04/03/2004 [1]</b> 35/9	<b>17 March [1]</b> 51/18	62/19 69/14 83/11	35/10	93/19 94/1 94/9 94/17
1	17 May 2004 [1] 8/2	<b>2009 [3]</b> 4/5 95/8	<b>3,512.26 [3]</b> 35/14	<b>59 [1]</b> 91/20
	17 May 2023 [1] 1/14	96/12 <b>2010 [3]</b> 4/9 80/15	35/18 35/24	6
1 July [1] 34/6	17 November [1]	82/2	30 June [1] 42/17 30 June 2004 [1]	<b>60 [4]</b> 87/17 88/6
<b>1 July 2004 [2]</b> 26/20	59/8 <b>17.04 [1]</b> 47/4	<b>2011 [1]</b> 4/11	26/9	88/11 92/2
29/5 4 05 (3) 70/10 70/14	17.04 [1] 47/4 18 February 2004 [2]	<b>2013 [1]</b> 74/17	30 March 2023 [1]	<b>61 [1]</b> 92/9
<b>1.05 [2]</b> 70/10 70/14	47/3 47/14	<b>2015 [6]</b> 78/7 78/14	71/5	<b>62 [1]</b> 94/9
<b>1.13 [1]</b> 70/16 <b>10 [2]</b> 11/25 51/14	<b>19 [3]</b> 19/22 86/23	84/18 85/9 91/11	<b>30 years [1]</b> 83/9	<b>63 [1]</b> 94/13
10 [2] 11/25 51/14 10 February [1]	86/25	91/15	<b>31 [2]</b> 71/19 78/23	<b>64 [1]</b> 94/14
41/18	<b>19 years [1]</b> 68/18	<b>2016 [1]</b> 80/11	<b>316,590 [1]</b> 51/23	<b>65 [2]</b> 95/2 96/9
<b>10 January [1]</b> 73/1	<b>19/02/2004 [1]</b> 34/18	2019 [8] 4/12 4/14	<b>33,100 [1]</b> 42/7	7
10 March 2004 [2]	<b>1982 [1]</b> 2/12	4/19 32/5 90/24 91/20		<u> </u>
47/6 47/16	<b>1988 [1]</b> 2/15	91/22 108/12	57/19 65/2 65/6 68/8	<b>7,140.85 [1]</b> 36/1
<b>10 years [2]</b> 92/7	<b>1989 [1]</b> 92/13	<b>2020 [2]</b> 82/8 99/16	69/11	7.1.1 [1] 46/9
93/20	<b>1990 [8]</b> 3/3 82/15	<b>2021 [2]</b> 90/14 90/22	<b>34a [1]</b> 27/16	<b>700 [4]</b> 75/11 79/11 79/16 89/20
<b>10,653.11 [2]</b> 35/24	95/6 95/12 96/7	<b>2022 [1]</b> 73/1	<b>35 [1]</b> 110/16	<b>705 [4]</b> 78/14 78/22
41/11	101/10 108/11 109/1	2023 [7] 1/1 1/14	<b>35,000 [2]</b> 51/18	89/15 89/20
	<b>1990-1999 [2]</b> 95/19	71/5 71/14 95/1 100/8	51/22	30/10/00/20
	i	İ	İ	i .

(29) MR BLAKE: - 705

7	44/24	affecting [4] 21/22	also [19] 5/2 7/5	83/15 84/5 90/19 91/1
<b>71 [2]</b> 108/20 108/23	accountants [1]	39/13 39/18 62/15	28/24 29/18 41/7	91/5 91/12 91/14
<b>74 [1]</b> 22/20	45/19	affects [1] 69/25	44/15 60/13 61/10	93/14 97/21 97/22
<b>781 [2]</b> 79/11 79/16	accounted [4] 44/6	affirmed [2] 70/22	63/25 64/5 65/23	98/3 98/5 105/2 107/8
<b>79 [1]</b> 110/18	49/25 50/9 52/1	112/10	77/15 82/16 87/23	anybody [1] 57/22
8	accounting [5] 23/20 80/14 82/1 92/6 93/6	afresh [2] 6/18 6/24 after [18] 15/23 15/25	90/5 90/18 94/14 101/7 102/19	<b>anyone [2]</b> 24/12 111/3
	accounts [27] 10/14	16/4 16/6 24/17 29/16		anything [15] 13/16
8 July [2] 33/20 36/6	11/8 14/25 19/18	33/15 78/17 87/3 93/1		25/2 30/12 30/12 32/9
<b>8,243.10 [4]</b> 34/16 34/20 35/4 41/10	21/10 21/19 23/16	102/4 102/11 102/16	<b>Altman [1]</b> 87/13	37/13 45/10 56/2
8.00 am [1] 12/8	23/21 25/12 33/12	102/17 103/5 104/7	always [5] 16/4 16/19	60/12 60/21 60/23
<b>844 [2]</b> 78/13 78/20	36/8 36/15 36/24	107/11 107/17	17/5 30/6 60/24	61/1 61/4 62/3 111/3
<b>88 [2]</b> 75/14 75/16	37/11 39/7 39/21	afternoon [7] 32/9	am [11] 1/2 12/8 34/3	anyway [1] 49/19
9	40/17 41/9 53/14	70/17 70/18 77/13	49/13 49/16 50/5 58/4	apart [2] 24/24 53/19
<u> </u>	54/17 62/8 62/15 62/19 62/25 86/15	98/15 105/1 111/11 again [27] 14/3 15/2	58/6 72/18 88/14   111/17	<b>apologies [7]</b> 31/22 93/17 97/7 99/9 99/14
<b>90 [1]</b> 79/17	94/3 94/12	24/6 40/10 40/11	amalgamate [2]	100/7 102/10
Α	accuracy [4] 2/24	42/16 47/5 54/11	76/10 76/17	apologise [8] 61/10
<b>abandoned</b> [1] 76/1	21/22 92/19 95/20	70/10 74/6 83/24	amalgamation [1]	61/11 61/24 65/11
able [19] 38/7 52/16	accurate [11] 20/20	85/25 87/22 89/13	74/24	68/16 69/17 99/19
52/17 53/5 53/15	21/5 91/16 91/17		amenable [1] 70/1	100/15
54/21 56/3 65/21 84/3		97/19 99/9 99/14	amongst [1] 65/14	apology [1] 69/3
84/15 84/19 87/20	104/22 106/5 106/9	101/3 101/5 102/10	amount [9] 6/3 6/8	apparent [6] 23/25
89/16 91/20 93/23	108/9	106/20 111/5 111/12	9/23 18/7 42/10 42/24	25/19 38/19 53/3
94/7 94/13 97/24	accurately [1] 52/24 accusation [1] 56/1	<b>against [11]</b> 2/9 5/3 5/8 5/9 5/14 7/25 41/1	43/3 43/6 61/7 amounts [3] 46/1	54/22 55/1 appeal [ <b>52</b> ] 5/7 5/8
103/25 about [27] 2/6 17/11	acronyms [1] 73/18	47/20 59/22 80/14	46/3 47/10	5/14 6/2 6/2 6/14 7/2
22/14 27/24 29/8 34/9			analyse [1] 25/8	7/7 7/10 7/12 7/25
39/17 45/10 46/11	76/10	age [2] 92/16 95/21	analysed [3] 43/11	8/11 10/2 10/11 15/10
49/20 50/15 50/19	act [7] 15/6 80/10	aged [1] 83/25	76/18 89/21	16/8 16/22 16/24 17/6
56/23 63/9 65/15 67/4	82/8 90/11 91/25 95/1	agency [1] 2/20	<b>analysis [31]</b> 6/3	19/23 21/25 24/17
68/1 68/7 69/6 73/12	106/25	ago [2] 68/18 100/1	23/22 33/15 33/19	24/18 25/5 25/15 26/7
77/13 80/20 81/4	action [3] 27/18	agree [4] 5/5 24/3	34/4 34/8 34/13 36/7	26/20 27/24 28/2 31/5
84/18 91/20 92/24	28/10 28/18	105/21 105/25	36/12 36/25 37/6	31/5 31/17 31/23
108/10	activity [2] 56/8 103/16	<b>Ah [2]</b> 72/2 105/3 <b>alerted [2]</b> 66/21 67/8	37/13 39/7 39/20 41/8   41/11 43/16 43/18	32/19 33/16 34/6 36/14 59/8 59/10
<b>above [2]</b> 31/24 96/18	actual [5] 31/16	all [43] 11/4 13/8	44/13 44/19 44/19	63/21 64/13 64/20
absolutely [12] 6/20	41/20 49/25 50/9	16/20 18/9 18/21	46/18 52/9 62/24	64/22 65/5 68/12
7/4 7/17 10/7 23/6	51/22	25/23 28/13 36/11	63/24 65/20 66/4	68/22 68/24 75/23
24/2 24/4 68/25 69/18		39/5 43/11 44/19	67/19 103/1 105/10	86/22 87/1 87/14 89/4
72/2 97/1 98/18	16/19 21/3 28/22 42/7	48/18 52/1 52/22 53/5		appealed [2] 75/21
accept [2] 19/6 47/18	42/11 43/17 51/9	53/7 54/2 54/14 54/16		75/22
accepted [2] 33/2	51/18 62/3 62/9 88/15	56/11 58/16 64/16 66/11 69/20 70/4	Anita [2] 33/17 34/10	<b>appeals [22]</b> 4/18 4/22 5/1 5/1 5/3 5/8
64/14	adamant [2] 12/14 13/1	72/10 74/25 76/11	<b>Anita Turner [1]</b> 33/17	5/16 5/22 5/23 6/12
accepting [1] 57/12 access [4] 38/13	add [1] 85/8	76/14 82/20 82/21	anomalies [1] 41/12	6/15 6/18 7/18 10/10
38/15 50/21 65/21	addendum [1] 74/22	87/21 87/24 88/1 88/8		11/11 16/2 16/20 17/3
accompanied [2]	addition [3] 16/16	89/16 101/10 101/14	68/19 73/4 73/6 73/6	38/10 49/23 73/9 74/3
42/25 89/3	34/23 83/18	101/14 105/15 108/4	82/4 103/5 103/16	appear [14] 22/21
accordingly [1] 99/6	additional [3] 27/13	110/25 111/7	answer [11] 26/6	22/23 46/23 49/9 50/4
account [39] 4/2 9/8	63/25 98/3	allegation [1] 60/11	49/8 58/10 58/13	50/13 57/3 57/5 57/19
12/21 13/17 17/7	address [2] 30/13	alleged [1] 2/10	62/25 86/8 87/9 88/4	77/16 87/18 93/7 94/2
30/14 30/25 34/14	73/14	Alliance [2] 18/5 19/5		94/10
34/17 34/18 34/24 35/1 35/4 35/8 35/11	adjourned [1] 111/17 Adjournment [1]	allocated [2] 6/12 8/11	answered [1] 84/14 any [48] 5/21 7/15	appearance [1] 73/11
35/12 35/15 35/18	70/13	allocation [1] 6/13	10/15 20/7 21/12	appeared [4] 37/7
36/21 37/5 37/7 41/16		allowed [2] 15/17	23/22 23/24 24/13	57/1 86/14 100/10
41/19 42/3 42/12	29/14 29/15	52/2	24/23 28/18 30/9 33/9	
42/20 43/13 43/14	advice [4] 10/22 13/8	alluded [1] 54/17	37/1 38/3 38/6 38/9	92/25
44/3 46/2 46/4 46/14	32/1 32/2	along [2] 67/13 76/19		
46/16 46/18 47/1 47/4		alongside [1] 5/18	48/15 50/16 54/23	appellants [6] 74/5
47/8 51/2 62/20	93/12 100/2 100/11	already [7] 16/9	55/3 56/8 56/12 56/14	
accountancy [1]	advised [1] 43/1 affected [1] 61/23	31/24 35/11 37/24 45/18 85/11 102/8	56/17 58/16 60/11   61/1 73/12 81/22 83/6	87/5 appendix [5] 100/18
	anecieu [1] 01/23	70/10/03/11 102/0	01/1 /3/12 01/22 03/0	appendix [3] 100/10
				(30) 71 - appendix
				(SU) / I - appendix

50/15 62/6 62/24 argument [1] 51/6 at [193] arise [3] 2/7 94/2 at page 26 [1] 95/2 appendix... [4] 94/11 attached [1] 59/8 100/19 108/8 108/18 arithmetical [1] attempt [3] 108/6 110/15 25/25 108/9 109/10 appendix 2 [3] arose [1] 91/8 attempted [1] 90/17 100/19 108/8 108/18 around [8] 2/23 6/5 attendance [2] 5/9 appertained [1] 76/16 81/6 81/25 88/2 12/7 13/21 99/8 107/19 attention [1] 81/23 applied [1] 78/18 arrival [1] 12/9 auction [3] 41/25 **apply [1]** 78/19 arrived [1] 107/16 42/21 45/25 **appreciate** [1] 23/17 audit [14] 11/25 12/5 articulated [1] 102/8 approach [2] 25/14 12/7 12/8 13/19 14/2 as [120] 32/4 ascertain [8] 10/15 14/7 14/14 14/16 approached [2] 20/4 21/20 25/24 14/21 15/3 15/6 15/8 25/21 94/23 53/13 55/5 56/14 74/1 93/5 appropriate [4] 10/22 aside [2] 21/7 38/14 auditor [1] 13/18 53/20 100/2 100/11 ask [17] 15/3 24/12 author [2] 62/10 appropriately [1] 24/23 38/4 38/17 52/2 82/10 74/2 58/16 58/18 58/18 authored [1] 11/21 approximately [3] 59/1 65/14 71/9 72/3 authorities [1] 86/13 41/23 42/5 42/10 73/12 77/13 77/19 authority [4] 38/13 **April [6]** 14/5 14/12 108/4 38/15 86/3 86/12 14/13 22/11 90/14 asked [25] 24/20 automation [2] 27/24 28/10 28/18 104/23 104/24 April 2004 [1] 22/11 31/3 32/2 36/14 36/18 availability [1] 98/8 **April 2021 [1]** 90/14 36/22 37/4 49/20 52/4 available [11] 32/14 are [87] 1/20 1/22 5/3 58/9 60/15 62/22 65/1 32/18 37/18 44/21 5/12 6/15 8/21 8/24 67/12 78/5 81/24 46/15 53/6 54/1 62/7 10/15 17/4 18/4 19/13 82/11 83/18 85/25 83/12 89/6 98/12 22/8 22/17 22/20 86/19 87/1 87/23 aware [7] 21/12 23/12 23/12 26/2 asking [7] 2/4 2/6 25/16 49/15 49/16 30/19 32/24 46/2 23/13 28/14 29/17 67/1 67/2 79/24 48/15 48/17 49/11 81/5 105/7 away [2] 29/20 32/13 49/15 50/7 52/4 56/11 asks [1] 49/17 56/14 56/17 63/6 64/7 assertion [2] 50/2 72/10 72/13 72/16 back [14] 18/8 19/19 50/8 73/7 75/20 75/22 76/1 28/17 30/20 32/1 assertions [1] 52/5 76/8 77/18 79/24 33/25 51/9 57/25 **asserts** [1] 51/16 80/16 81/22 81/24 67/19 76/16 83/9 assess [1] 109/19 84/5 87/12 87/20 88/9 85/14 105/6 108/23 assessed [1] 25/4 88/20 88/23 89/15 background [1] assessment [1] 89/17 89/22 90/5 91/4 101/10 109/9 91/20 92/21 93/23 balance [17] 2/22 assets [1] 55/16 94/7 94/13 94/16 12/20 27/22 27/23 assist [18] 2/2 17/22 95/24 96/23 97/21 34/5 35/23 41/8 41/13 36/25 38/8 80/18 97/22 98/23 99/7 41/15 43/23 43/25 81/10 84/19 85/12 99/10 100/25 101/3 53/11 54/3 59/16 60/5 85/19 86/7 87/21 101/7 101/16 102/20 60/17 61/6 89/16 91/21 93/23 110/10 103/9 103/10 104/15 96/24 97/4 98/15 **balances** [3] 11/8 104/17 104/18 104/21 29/21 46/21 99/22 105/2 105/17 106/1 **assistance** [1] 78/23 **balancing** [7] 12/11 106/4 110/4 110/16 12/12 13/1 15/1 22/12 10/22 11/3 11/6 11/9 **assistant** [1] 101/13 110/20 111/4 22/22 22/25 **assistants** [1] 82/13 area [11] 3/7 3/11 Bank [1] 18/16 assisted [1] 38/11 4/11 5/13 16/3 33/3 based [8] 53/11 assists [2] 79/1 33/16 34/10 101/6 55/19 65/20 74/14 103/20 101/7 110/11 79/2 81/24 83/4 86/14 associated [2] 15/19 areas [6] 2/18 3/13 basically [2] 2/19 103/17 23/8 44/16 53/5 53/24 3/21 association [1] 27/8 aren't [3] 88/24 101/8 basis [3] 64/14 78/15 assumed [1] 101/12 106/15 assuming [1] 12/23 108/15 arque [1] 87/2 **Bates [1]** 26/3 assumption [3] 27/7 argued [1] 87/4 **BDO [8]** 45/4 45/18 42/8 60/3

63/23 65/24 66/5 be [92] 2/4 2/6 4/21 9/3 12/14 13/10 16/5 17/1 17/20 18/4 18/5 19/4 20/13 24/7 25/3 26/6 26/11 28/16 29/25 30/9 30/23 32/12 34/6 35/21 36/9 37/7 37/9 37/12 38/7 38/19 41/23 43/8 45/9 46/24 47/10 47/10 49/10 50/4 50/13 51/12 55/11 55/18 55/23 57/1 57/9 59/1 59/23 60/9 62/22 63/8 63/22 66/9 68/11 72/15 73/10 74/14 79/7 80/5 82/24 82/25 83/7 85/5 85/12 85/24 86/12 86/14 86/15 89/6 89/7 89/23 90/2 91/17 92/22 95/25 97/11 97/12 98/4 99/2 99/4 99/14 103/13 105/24 106/1 106/4 106/6 107/6 108/6 108/6 108/15 109/2 109/15 110/12 became [7] 2/15 3/3 3/5 3/7 4/2 4/5 75/1 because [55] 15/25 16/5 16/6 17/17 18/2 18/17 19/11 23/6 32/23 43/20 49/25 50/21 51/18 56/21 57/6 57/8 57/16 61/11 61/16 62/9 62/23 63/20 64/11 66/14 66/24 68/8 69/6 83/21 84/14 84/22 85/5 88/8 belief [6] 1/21 59/24 88/8 88/16 88/22 89/19 92/16 93/15 93/25 94/23 98/2 98/7 98/7 98/11 101/3 104/19 104/22 105/14 105/22 105/24 107/1 107/4 107/17 108/16 becomes [1] 30/16 bed [2] 104/1 105/8 been [79] 9/4 9/22 11/20 12/2 12/10 12/16 13/3 15/24 16/4 19/2 20/3 21/12 21/20 better [2] 64/11 23/12 23/17 25/16 28/21 28/23 29/16 33/5 34/4 37/25 38/21 42/6 43/13 43/17 43/17 43/19 44/6 44/11 46/22 50/24 51/3 52/17 53/17 54/21 56/3 56/24 101/6 104/20 108/11

60/25 61/2 66/3 66/22 67/18 67/22 67/22 68/23 72/5 72/25 73/16 74/11 74/12 74/13 74/16 75/15 77/14 80/25 81/1 81/11 81/17 83/11 84/3 84/4 84/9 85/11 87/23 90/1 90/2 91/12 93/11 93/15 94/23 101/11 104/19 105/9 110/23 before [35] 6/22 13/16 15/8 15/22 23/9 24/8 29/21 31/5 37/25 44/22 45/11 50/15 50/17 52/3 52/7 52/8 57/22 58/16 66/16 70/9 73/3 73/5 84/5 92/17 93/14 95/21 102/11 102/15 102/16 102/17 103/3 104/12 105/15 107/14 107/16 began [4] 12/19 13/5 28/13 56/23 begin [1] 73/17 **beginning** [1] 59/6 begins [1] 63/7 behalf [5] 2/4 39/1 43/5 61/25 105/5 being [28] 10/17 13/23 13/24 14/18 17/23 18/25 21/4 25/19 31/8 32/16 32/18 36/13 37/2 39/23 40/19 48/4 48/19 49/20 50/20 55/4 80/3 86/19 103/16 106/9 106/13 106/24 106/25 110/6 60/22 67/14 67/18 72/12 **believe [7]** 8/18 20/24 50/2 50/3 53/20 64/6 99/17 believed [8] 26/24 55/18 55/23 59/23 60/16 60/18 63/22 86/12 below [7] 33/8 49/3 80/16 82/23 83/2 83/4 84/1 best [5] 1/21 29/19 38/23 72/11 108/8 100/22 between [22] 4/11 13/21 19/1 41/12 41/18 49/17 74/16 78/7 78/13 83/10 84/17 85/8 92/13 95/6 95/7 95/9 96/7 96/12

48/18 51/9 58/7 59/5 34/17 35/1 35/8 35/15 44/11 52/17 53/2 В **bringing [2]** 13/10 73/25 69/3 69/7 70/19 70/24 39/7 39/20 39/21 54/22 104/8 107/8 **between...** [1] 109/1 brought [9] 7/19 71/9 72/6 72/19 73/18 39/23 39/23 39/25 108/1 bit [3] 8/22 30/16 43/13 76/16 78/6 78/8 73/22 74/2 74/8 75/5 40/17 40/18 40/19 caused [6] 17/23 48/5 78/13 82/14 83/15 76/7 76/24 77/6 77/25 40/21 41/9 41/13 25/19 31/9 52/20 **BLAKE [4]** 70/23 84/2 78/18 80/16 80/18 41/14 41/16 41/19 54/10 106/16 105/7 107/8 112/12 bug [5] 17/25 30/11 81/3 81/9 84/18 85/11 41/24 42/3 42/4 42/6 causing [4] 30/12 blamed [1] 10/21 85/23 86/21 90/10 61/20 61/22 62/14 42/10 42/11 42/19 31/19 32/10 38/19 blames [1] 9/1 bugs [3] 26/2 61/7 92/10 95/2 95/5 95/6 42/22 42/25 43/14 caution [1] 82/25 blaming [1] 31/18 95/17 96/5 96/8 96/11 43/17 43/19 43/20 61/13 caveat [2] 96/17 blank [2] 29/3 42/25 build [1] 16/7 96/23 97/4 97/11 43/22 43/24 44/2 44/3 101/2 **board [1]** 31/1 97/20 98/6 98/15 44/4 44/9 46/1 46/4 **bullying [1]** 5/9 caveats [2] 105/16 **bold [1]** 97/12 bundle [2] 27/13 64/1 99/22 101/5 101/9 46/8 46/12 46/18 108/19 book [2] 42/21 43/1 102/5 102/13 103/2 46/21 47/22 49/24 burglaries [4] 88/7 cent [5] 79/17 97/6 both [12] 22/25 23/7 50/19 50/25 51/2 52/1 101/25 102/9 107/4 88/12 88/16 88/23 105/11 105/13 106/1 31/5 41/8 53/19 60/19 106/14 106/20 108/6 52/3 52/7 56/25 59/16 central [1] 76/17 **burglary** [1] 93/8 61/9 63/23 77/15 59/20 59/25 60/4 60/6 centre [5] 6/13 20/1 108/9 109/15 110/14 business [11] 3/18 83/19 84/20 84/20 8/14 19/25 20/8 22/4 110/16 60/18 60/22 66/7 93/5 20/8 22/4 33/3 bottom [10] 11/6 32/5 42/4 42/17 44/15 can't [11] 39/1 39/3 cast [1] 36/20 centred [1] 31/18 15/1 29/23 39/19 41/5 55/14 55/15 certain [3] 16/25 74/1 47/24 48/24 56/9 **Castleton [79]** 2/9 51/14 52/13 55/2 but [59] 5/2 5/7 6/8 66/13 68/14 105/24 9/15 12/24 13/9 13/18 101/7 59/11 86/24 11/1 16/2 16/23 17/24 106/4 106/4 106/6 14/4 14/5 14/11 14/20 certainly [6] 10/13 bought [1] 2/9 18/24 21/2 23/18 cannot [7] 80/21 14/24 18/22 23/2 15/4 56/1 62/7 106/12 **box [1]** 8/23 24/23 25/22 28/15 92/14 92/22 93/14 24/20 24/25 25/9 106/22 bracketed [2] 103/7 28/22 29/20 30/22 95/19 95/25 98/4 25/18 26/15 26/25 certainty [1] 88/2 103/19 32/18 36/11 42/2 27/3 27/11 27/18 capable [1] 106/13 **cetera [4]** 5/10 6/7 brackets [4] 101/8 car [3] 41/25 42/21 27/24 28/4 29/24 48/25 49/24 49/25 81/9 88/16 101/15 103/11 109/10 50/9 50/16 59/11 45/25 30/22 31/3 31/7 31/15 chalk [2] 88/21 97/19 branch [67] 2/11 3/3 60/16 61/10 61/25 31/22 32/19 33/10 challenged [1] 68/1 care [1] 61/11 4/8 5/4 6/7 10/24 33/11 33/20 34/1 34/2 challenging [2] 48/20 62/17 63/15 67/12 career [1] 7/19 18/11 19/4 19/9 20/4 69/3 69/12 72/1 72/5 carried [6] 26/17 36/6 36/14 36/17 48/25 20/10 21/10 21/21 73/20 74/7 79/6 79/19 43/15 79/9 92/25 36/22 37/4 39/12 40/1 changed [4] 9/4 9/22 22/3 22/10 25/7 25/24 80/23 82/19 84/8 85/4 103/1 103/6 41/1 42/3 44/3 44/24 25/21 79/14 26/15 26/17 34/15 87/23 88/4 89/7 89/25 carries [1] 87/25 45/12 45/24 46/21 **changes** [1] 48/16 34/18 35/2 35/9 35/13 96/17 100/6 102/10 case [50] 5/25 6/1 47/21 47/21 48/19 charge [2] 9/13 35/16 39/25 40/21 102/14 102/19 103/24 6/16 7/8 7/23 8/17 48/25 49/7 49/19 107/13 41/22 42/9 42/16 104/15 104/18 106/3 8/22 10/8 10/9 10/19 50/18 50/23 51/15 charges [1] 80/13 42/18 42/19 42/20 52/18 54/23 55/6 56/2 chartered [1] 45/19 106/15 109/5 110/4 10/19 15/18 16/7 42/24 43/3 43/9 43/22 16/14 16/17 21/1 21/7 57/13 58/25 59/7 **check [8]** 9/7 17/10 44/1 44/5 44/10 44/21 C 21/16 23/2 23/22 24/7 20/3 36/15 43/3 50/17 59/15 59/22 60/9 47/23 49/4 50/11 **calculated** [1] 107/3 24/19 24/21 25/4 60/12 60/15 60/23 52/6 57/24 50/24 51/24 52/7 call [8] 1/6 26/13 25/10 25/21 31/3 60/24 61/3 63/21 checked [7] 19/25 52/24 53/19 53/22 28/12 33/2 56/24 36/18 36/20 37/22 65/17 66/17 66/23 43/13 56/22 57/8 55/5 59/18 65/20 70/19 74/5 100/19 39/5 44/24 49/6 49/10 67/12 68/2 57/16 57/22 58/10 65/22 66/8 66/12 called [5] 17/11 55/20 56/5 58/1 59/23 Castleton's [20] 7/23 checks [10] 9/5 20/2 67/21 86/15 90/25 33/17 77/5 80/9 62/2 64/7 75/6 86/4 7/25 8/3 8/11 8/20 20/6 20/11 20/14 91/11 91/14 93/3 94/3 109/12 20/23 20/24 21/17 89/23 90/1 91/5 91/20 11/19 11/22 15/21 94/11 101/16 110/21 calls [14] 10/13 20/4 91/22 91/23 101/14 21/7 24/24 25/5 27/5 26/7 79/10 110/23 20/9 20/22 22/1 22/3 108/1 27/16 38/25 40/9 51/6 cheese [2] 88/21 branches [6] 2/20 22/8 22/9 22/18 22/19 53/18 55/12 60/1 cases [25] 6/18 97/19 2/21 2/21 3/25 4/6 22/20 22/21 23/4 24/13 24/24 25/16 62/20 cheques [3] 19/6 15/4 29/17 32/23 75/5 75/25 76/1 19/11 19/12 categorise [1] breach [1] 35/22 came [4] 29/25 49/24 83/13 84/6 86/11 109/11 Chesterfield [3] 9/6 break [6] 56/13 56/21 50/8 76/15 86/13 86/16 86/17 Cath [19] 8/18 10/13 10/15 17/8 56/22 57/23 58/5 70/2 can [93] 1/3 1/5 1/9 89/22 92/21 93/4 12/17 13/9 15/16 16/1 chief [1] 48/4 **breakdown [1]** 23/1 2/15 5/13 6/23 8/20 93/25 94/2 94/5 94/10 16/3 20/21 21/1 25/10 chose [1] 10/23 brief [3] 8/21 8/24 8/22 8/23 10/12 10/25 27/19 30/3 30/19 31/2 Chris [1] 12/7 95/23 106/7 110/17 9/16 11/5 11/13 11/15 110/20 32/2 54/4 55/16 59/4 Chrissie [1] 29/20 briefly [7] 73/22 80/4 13/12 15/24 16/25 casework [5] 76/6 60/2 Circa [1] 49/3 81/3 85/23 94/13 95/3 18/15 18/16 19/4 76/8 76/9 79/3 81/17 Catherine [3] 8/1 circumstances [7] 101/5 19/14 19/14 22/7 30/8 cash [74] 2/25 3/1 11/21 15/22 30/22 32/20 39/6 53/2 bring [6] 77/20 78/25 30/13 30/18 31/15 11/8 12/20 19/6 27/22 Catherine Oglesby 55/10 69/4 91/8 80/8 89/5 90/12 33/23 33/24 41/23 30/5 30/10 30/14 **[1]** 15/22 cited [1] 27/14 100/20 45/17 47/10 48/3 31/20 32/8 34/14 cause [9] 21/9 21/18 claim [1] 24/10

C 72/21 72/22 73/1 73/2 65/25 completely [4] 26/5 contained [6] 11/7 27/10 38/9 62/1 21/24 28/3 41/13 75/12 75/13 75/15 criminal [5] 56/8 73/9 claims [3] 9/19 24/15 completion [1] 43/23 42/24 64/22 75/21 76/23 79/3 79/4 82/17 92/4 92/15 25/18 comprising [1] 11/8 containing [1] 81/12 79/8 79/12 79/15 criteria [1] 76/19 clarification [1] computer [11] 9/20 contains [1] 83/20 81/19 81/20 81/21 cross [1] 57/12 26/23 9/22 12/16 13/2 17/15 contemporaneous 85/6 85/7 85/18 88/8 cross-examination **clarify [1]** 6/23 22/13 22/24 22/25 **[1]** 12/22 89/1 90/9 93/10 97/18 **[1]** 57/12 clear [8] 4/21 31/6 29/20 46/24 92/8 97/20 99/20 99/21 contents [1] 1/20 Crown [1] 82/14 37/9 39/22 40/17 45/9 101/18 102/19 102/22 currency [2] 51/3 computerised [2] context [1] 51/10 107/22 108/7 103/23 104/23 106/6 92/18 95/22 continued [1] 104/7 51/19 clearly [5] 39/4 51/25 conceded [2] 67/17 continues [5] 40/12 109/13 109/15 109/20 customer [15] 2/24 61/12 68/16 103/11 99/1 99/2 99/3 108/15 18/18 39/24 40/20 68/2 110/1 clerk [1] 2/13 concern [3] 44/11 contract [12] 8/3 **corrected** [1] 99/15 42/1 43/5 43/7 43/8 clients [2] 2/25 18/3 corrections [1] 48/15 43/18 44/2 45/25 52/25 54/11 11/19 11/22 14/7 close [3] 18/11 20/5 concerned [1] 15/21 27/16 35/23 **correctly [9]** 36/10 52/22 53/7 54/15 55/4 42/4 customer's [3] 43/11 109/22 40/9 53/1 55/12 59/15 37/5 37/8 37/12 46/4 closing [1] 20/10 52/23 53/15 54/15 concerns [1] 38/25 60/1 46/13 53/21 closure [2] 3/20 3/25 **contracts** [1] 8/17 54/19 **concise [1]** 17/3 Coast [1] 3/17 concluded [3] 26/12 control [1] 3/1 correctness [1] code [3] 47/13 47/15 daily [6] 27/23 39/20 62/11 63/24 convene [1] 70/10 25/25 47/17 41/7 41/8 43/15 46/18 concludes [1] 69/21 convicted [2] 74/11 could [69] 7/3 8/11 coinage [1] 51/20 danger [1] 16/14 conclusion [4] 7/14 8/12 9/3 9/25 10/16 coincidence [1] darker [1] 101/9 47/19 48/21 48/22 conviction [17] 73/19 12/14 15/11 17/20 100/13 conclusions [2] 46/2 73/21 73/24 74/12 18/4 18/5 18/12 18/21 **Darlington** [1] 29/5 colleague [4] 5/5 76/21 77/10 78/9 19/21 21/9 22/4 25/7 data [38] 31/19 73/25 50/19 10/20 24/22 36/18 74/15 75/1 81/6 81/17 79/21 79/24 83/17 25/13 28/2 28/16 conclusive [2] 42/12 **colleagues [1]** 24/19 82/2 82/24 83/10 83/24 84/4 84/8 88/18 28/25 30/20 31/12 103/2 **collected [1]** 87/25 83/13 83/23 84/23 89/25 93/14 106/7 31/22 32/15 32/18 concur [1] 50/12 column [1] 109/23 84/25 85/1 85/17 conduct [2] 20/14 convictions [50] 33/21 38/11 38/21 come [15] 10/25 15/5 85/21 85/24 85/25 75/14 76/12 78/14 38/21 39/13 40/4 41/3 52/16 17/3 18/3 18/8 18/25 86/2 87/23 87/25 **conducted** [5] 6/14 78/22 79/12 79/14 44/16 45/16 45/19 19/19 20/24 28/17 89/21 93/4 93/7 97/21 26/8 34/4 39/21 41/7 79/17 79/18 82/17 46/6 47/25 48/7 48/8 57/25 59/10 79/13 98/3 98/8 98/9 98/10 83/10 83/20 83/21 49/2 51/7 52/10 53/13 confidence [1] 85/14 85/19 99/4 98/25 99/5 99/19 100/24 84/15 84/17 84/20 53/24 54/12 61/20 comes [4] 67/19 101/4 101/9 103/14 confident [1] 109/15 86/10 88/3 88/9 88/10 62/14 63/3 63/8 66/21 68/11 99/5 108/16 105/23 106/8 108/16 **confirm [12]** 1/9 20/2 89/15 93/1 93/6 94/1 66/24 67/17 71/18 coming [4] 2/1 18/20 94/10 94/17 95/13 72/2 73/21 74/7 77/19 **database [2]** 76/17 36/8 36/12 43/12 72/6 104/5 111/9 99/2 92/4 92/10 92/14 96/9 96/19 97/10 77/19 80/7 80/18 commenced [1] 12/8 97/15 98/1 101/11 87/11 90/12 92/1 databases [2] 81/9 95/17 96/9 102/13 **comments** [1] 46/11 81/12 confirmation [1] 78/5 101/15 102/17 104/5 94/19 97/12 100/20 commercial [2] 3/22 dataset [1] 99/11 **confirmed [5]** 20/6 104/7 107/5 107/23 100/22 103/13 4/1 date [7] 9/15 14/2 20/9 81/16 101/12 108/10 109/6 109/9 couldn't [4] 55/5 **committing [2]** 12/15 71/23 81/16 84/4 84/8 103/21 109/11 109/17 109/25 60/20 66/25 79/6 15/8 counsel [4] 87/1 87/4 104/21 confused [1] 64/10 110/3 110/4 110/5 communicated [2] consider [3] 13/16 dated [12] 1/13 11/25 110/10 110/11 110/18 87/9 87/13 33/19 36/6 85/24 103/25 14/4 14/12 33/20 copies [2] 66/8 66/10 count [2] 22/9 22/20 company [1] 42/23 44/25 46/25 47/3 47/6 copy [7] 1/12 1/16 considerable [1] counter [3] 2/13 5/4 **compared [2]** 97/9 48/11 71/5 71/13 45/10 46/23 65/3 18/7 10/20 97/13 dates [2] 13/21 79/6 considerably [1] 71/15 71/24 **country [2]** 3/13 **compares [1]** 107/5 day [3] 5/18 5/18 6/5 18/17 copying [1] 59/4 76/10 comparing [4] 88/21 core [5] 31/17 32/16 days [1] 2/23 consideration [3] course [3] 57/25 97/10 97/19 107/1 deal [3] 5/23 17/4 40/8 51/24 69/10 56/15 56/17 89/6 63/15 72/15 comparison [1] court [7] 44/7 48/8 70/2 considered [2] 24/7 correct [79] 2/14 3/4 106/23 dealing [2] 33/1 3/6 4/4 4/13 4/16 4/20 63/14 86/22 86/25 79/23 compensation [1] 36/19 considering [2] 7/2 5/20 6/20 7/17 7/21 87/14 89/3 72/23 dealt [1] 46/4 7/24 8/8 10/4 17/16 Courts [3] 60/14 14/6 compiled [3] 80/19 17/21 19/16 19/19 debate [1] 110/11 consisted [1] 7/7 60/25 62/3 81/16 83/11 decade [1] 102/4 21/21 26/10 26/18 consistency [1] cover [1] 3/23 complete [9] 40/23 **December [3]** 44/22 26/19 31/11 33/14 98/17 **covering [1]** 46/16 43/4 58/14 65/9 66/3 48/1 51/12 **consistent** [1] 91/18 34/12 37/2 37/19 38/2 covers [1] 83/8 68/15 83/22 84/23 decided [2] 29/18 50/2 54/5 54/7 54/13 consistently [1] 31/7 **CPS [1]** 75/18 85/5 76/10 54/25 55/9 61/20 create [1] 27/19 contact [3] 12/17 completed [2] 12/2 decision [40] 6/22 63/12 63/19 64/14 **created [2]** 76/6 77/5 13/3 17/7 20/3 7/1 7/1 7/15 7/25 8/7 contacted [1] 15/15 64/23 66/19 67/11 **Credence [2]** 62/12

64/15 64/19 77/14 71/15 71/17 71/24 D dependent [1] 99/4 drawing [1] 99/12 depending [4] 5/25 77/17 77/18 79/10 72/1 80/22 82/21 drew [1] 66/4 decision... [34] 8/19 99/3 103/13 103/14 81/8 85/9 85/13 88/23 82/22 83/23 85/20 drive [19] 2/10 8/4 11/18 11/22 15/15 11/14 12/5 22/1 22/10 depends [1] 99/6 89/18 94/16 96/23 98/20 100/24 101/2 15/20 16/15 16/21 deposit [3] 41/25 97/17 97/23 98/19 105/21 105/24 107/15 26/8 39/8 41/22 42/9 16/23 27/15 28/3 42/23 43/4 98/20 98/23 107/1 108/1 110/23 42/16 42/20 43/22 30/25 39/13 39/14 differently [1] 26/5 document [36] 8/13 43/25 44/5 44/10 deposited [3] 42/21 39/18 40/8 40/16 8/14 8/14 10/1 11/12 43/6 44/5 difficult [1] 98/4 52/24 61/23 98/21 40/25 53/4 54/2 54/4 deposits [5] 42/18 difficulties [1] 5/21 11/15 11/17 11/24 due [8] 6/1 9/3 10/18 54/5 54/7 54/21 55/19 43/11 43/12 46/23 12/1 12/22 14/1 14/3 12/16 36/16 72/15 difficulty [1] 105/23 55/22 58/11 59/14 diligence [1] 6/1 14/11 16/11 19/22 95/20 96/8 66/6 61/19 64/13 64/20 22/15 28/5 29/2 29/7 depth [1] 89/12 **Dilley [1]** 59/4 during [4] 7/19 17/11 65/5 68/12 68/22 derive [1] 67/20 dip [1] 107/17 33/22 39/16 40/6 45/1 56/22 74/7 69/10 45/8 45/20 46/7 48/3 derived [2] 50/6 directions [1] 16/25 duty [1] 61/11 decision-maker [3] 74/15 directly [4] 2/20 4/5 48/7 49/20 51/9 59/1 dynamic [5] 87/23 6/22 7/1 16/15 describe [2] 98/25 4/8 33/8 63/3 72/3 74/21 74/23 89/19 99/2 101/3 decisions [3] 4/22 108/15 107/9 **Director [1]** 72/16 77/11 39/11 53/11 described [5] 76/20 disciplinary [4] 4/22 documentation [21] declaration [5] 39/25 E 2/24 8/10 11/4 15/16 81/8 88/17 106/23 4/25 5/2 5/7 40/21 41/15 42/5 42/7 each [6] 42/22 44/4 107/3 15/23 18/10 18/18 discipline [1] 31/4 declarations [11] 19/2 19/7 21/24 23/20 71/4 86/4 98/18 110/4 description [3] 86/19 disclosed [1] 66/18 12/20 27/22 30/5 earlier [3] 31/3 85/1 103/16 106/18 disclosure [8] 73/19 25/24 34/10 44/20 30/10 32/8 39/23 101/1 despite [1] 94/21 73/22 73/24 74/21 45/14 50/22 52/15 40/19 43/19 46/9 detail [3] 8/18 10/9 74/23 76/21 77/1 53/6 63/23 65/23 early [1] 70/1 46/12 56/25 77/10 East [2] 3/14 4/15 62/10 66/12 declared [11] 34/15 effect [4] 56/25 57/18 detailed [4] 27/12 discounted [1] 107/6 documents [7] 10/1 35/24 41/22 42/11 64/12 69/16 10/5 11/2 11/7 13/15 47/9 62/6 62/23 discovered [1] 90/1 43/17 43/22 44/3 effectively [1] 29/24 details [8] 8/20 8/21 discrepancies [18] 17/17 26/14 44/10 46/21 47/21 **efficiency [1]** 107/18 8/24 9/12 17/14 84/20 18/13 18/22 21/10 dodgy [2] 104/16 50/20 eg [2] 82/14 93/8 86/4 86/20 21/19 23/25 24/11 104/17 declares [2] 35/2 does [15] 16/24 **eg burglary [1]** 93/8 **determine** [5] 52/17 25/19 31/8 31/20 35/13 eg those [1] 82/14 52/19 54/9 84/3 91/4 36/12 38/19 40/2 22/13 22/17 35/16 decoding [1] 20/18 44/17 50/1 52/20 either [7] 10/19 57/22 developing [1] 3/19 62/25 69/22 79/19 deemed [2] 36/9 83/6 83/22 91/11 93/6 60/8 65/25 75/8 75/25 development [4] 3/7 54/10 54/22 55/1 37/12 103/20 3/11 3/19 5/6 discrepancy [20] 95/18 102/24 103/24 defaced [1] 51/21 **electronic** [1] 104/22 did [61] 5/5 5/21 17/23 18/4 22/12 103/25 defect [1] 17/25 element [1] 5/11 11/20 11/23 13/6 22/22 28/11 32/10 doesn't [5] 79/22 defend [1] 52/4 eliminate [1] 30/8 13/17 15/22 20/7 34/16 34/20 34/20 84/13 84/14 87/18 defendant [3] 49/21 34/22 34/25 35/3 35/6 93/20 20/12 21/8 21/16 23/3 else [10] 13/16 32/15 84/7 101/12 doing [2] 30/10 77/2 32/18 33/6 53/10 23/4 24/12 24/23 25/3 35/7 35/10 35/17 Defendant's [1] 57/22 60/20 60/21 26/22 27/18 28/1 35/19 35/21 35/25 don't [14] 16/19 26/1 51/11 61/4 111/3 31/10 36/12 36/25 55/7 30/2 61/4 66/12 76/3 defendants [1] 86/18 37/2 38/3 38/16 38/23 discussed [5] 24/18 78/24 79/25 80/23 email [1] 59/3 defer [2] 107/12 39/7 39/10 40/24 41/2 89/13 100/14 104/9 embezzlement [1] 28/19 29/18 36/17 107/20 27/21 50/17 52/6 52/25 54/3 46/5 105/1 105/16 define [1] 75/6 55/8 55/10 55/24 56/2 discussion [1] 24/21 **employee [2]** 24/10 done [16] 6/3 6/4 defined [4] 2/18 75/4 101/13 8/16 8/18 9/5 14/18 56/6 57/3 57/8 57/16 dismissed [1] 63/21 109/24 110/7 **employees [3]** 5/12 60/12 61/1 62/9 62/22 **dismissing [1]** 60/19 24/17 28/23 33/15 definitions [1] 24/14 25/17 65/5 65/13 65/17 display [2] 1/25 44/13 44/19 50/18 103/12 54/15 55/4 74/13 81/5 **enclosed [1]** 10/5 65/18 65/20 67/14 27/17 definitive [2] 92/22 67/15 68/4 69/4 80/21 disposal [2] 52/15 end [5] 24/16 30/15 double [1] 43/13 95/25 30/15 40/13 71/20 84/25 90/25 94/2 doubt [1] 110/9 52/20 definitively [1] 86/10 94/10 97/25 ending [6] 34/14 down [19] 3/17 8/22 disregarded [1] degree [1] 79/5 34/17 34/21 35/1 35/8 didn't [22] 3/23 13/9 11/5 18/12 19/22 28/6 97/11 delayed [1] 70/15 35/15 16/10 21/15 23/21 **Division** [1] 10/14 29/8 30/7 33/24 39/17 deliberately [2] 68/20 25/1 26/21 27/25 31/1 do [48] 1/15 1/17 40/13 48/5 59/11 **England [2]** 4/15 69/4 32/14 38/20 39/9 41/1 5/18 11/9 16/14 17/3 79/13 80/18 86/5 89/25 **delivery [1]** 73/8 enough [1] 105/1 50/21 50/21 54/11 17/22 30/1 30/4 30/14 87/22 92/1 94/19 demonstrated [2] 55/3 57/5 57/19 84/22 32/7 33/9 36/25 40/9 draft [4] 44/23 44/25 enquiries [11] 10/12 41/23 63/8 15/11 16/8 16/24 17/6 86/18 104/17 40/14 44/18 47/18 45/16 50/15 demonstrating [1] 19/24 31/25 38/4 difference [4] 19/1 47/24 48/20 48/25 drafted [1] 68/8 57/10 52/16 52/21 53/5 50/2 51/4 58/17 60/23 dramatically [1] 87/21 95/9 101/6 department [2] 80/24 ensure [2] 6/15 15/17 61/16 61/18 62/24 differences [1] 98/21 102/3 81/2 63/23 69/24 71/6 71/8 draw [2] 54/20 81/23 **ensuring [1]** 86/2 different [20] 62/13

65/10 65/12 Ε fair [1] 7/16 finished [1] 111/4 front [8] 1/12 11/2 examination [2] 48/4 fairly [1] 26/11 first [18] 12/3 12/22 65/4 71/2 71/6 71/16 entered [3] 26/16 fairness [2] 6/2 36/16 13/15 14/14 16/11 57/12 71/25 72/4 47/10 99/7 Fujitsu [18] 9/7 20/17 examined [3] 42/23 Falkirk [1] 61/22 23/7 23/9 25/1 28/11 entirely [3] 57/9 72/5 44/4 46/15 false [6] 39/23 40/18 29/2 45/7 45/13 48/18 37/17 38/6 38/7 38/14 84/13 example [11] 5/4 80/14 81/25 92/6 93/5 56/16 71/5 80/5 83/2 38/16 38/17 38/25 entitled [1] 46/7 17/25 19/5 41/17 79/1 far [4] 31/15 49/14 111/7 44/17 44/18 62/7 **entity [1]** 91/14 firstly [2] 98/18 102/8 62/14 62/22 64/1 64/3 86/15 87/16 89/23 49/16 109/21 entry [1] 34/23 99/24 102/2 109/16 fault [1] 29/19 fit [1] 86/19 66/6 105/5 **envelope [2]** 17/19 exceeded [1] 41/21 favour [2] 27/14 five [1] 11/15 Fujitsu's [1] 65/24 19/12 exclude [1] 94/1 flagging [1] 14/20 fulfil [1] 51/25 28/21 environment [1] excluded [3] 46/20 full [7] 1/9 6/1 15/3 feature [3] 39/11 **Flagship [1]** 4/8 108/17 94/1 94/10 65/6 65/17 flow [1] 42/19 36/16 70/25 73/21 **equipment [1]** 9/22 76/19 **excludes [1]** 83/13 February [7] 41/18 focused [1] 88/16 **erroneous [2]** 43/19 **excluding [1]** 88/15 41/19 42/2 46/25 47/3 focusing [2] 2/8 11/1 fuller [1] 86/7 57/14 **exercise** [10] 73/19 47/12 47/14 **FOIA [3]** 82/7 98/18 fully [1] 66/3 error [18] 9/3 10/15 73/22 73/24 73/25 99/9 fed [1] 85/1 further [15] 12/20 17/10 17/12 17/19 76/22 77/11 81/5 Federation [3] 27/2 **follow [3]** 17/5 19/22 22/23 22/24 17/22 17/25 18/2 18/6 87/24 89/19 103/6 27/4 27/8 110/19 110/25 33/24 35/14 35/25 18/14 18/24 19/4 exist [1] 105/13 feel [2] 63/11 104/25 followed [6] 10/21 38/7 38/18 44/16 48/5 53/19 65/25 93/17 14/13 16/19 33/5 exit [1] 3/24 fellow [1] 27/6 63/1 79/9 86/20 94/15 93/18 97/7 102/9 expand [1] 98/6 felt [6] 12/15 14/17 38/22 57/10 Future [5] 74/5 74/8 errors [4] 9/2 46/8 expect [1] 53/23 14/19 85/5 100/2 following [10] 12/19 74/9 75/12 76/5 99/13 99/19 experience [1] 15/5 100/11 28/10 28/14 53/18 essence [1] 61/25 69/9 78/15 83/1 89/25 experienced [2] few [1] 65/15 **essential [2]** 75/8 gather [1] 105/11 24/21 52/18 96/3 104/3 fifth [1] 94/25 75/9 gathered [2] 103/15 follows [8] 12/4 experiencing [3] figure [20] 35/3 essentially [5] 2/17 104/12 18/4 24/25 24/25 48/23 50/5 50/5 79/10 34/13 47/11 59/13 3/14 3/18 53/8 53/12 gathering [2] 81/6 expert [3] 26/1 79/19 85/1 87/18 87/19 88/6 82/11 82/20 90/15 establish [3] 7/8 88/11 89/15 93/19 105/23 102/5 95/16 42/19 43/16 95/12 95/14 96/15 gave [8] 45/12 50/16 **explain [12]** 5/15 foreign [2] 51/3 established [1] 37/24 8/13 10/17 18/12 57/11 66/16 66/22 96/21 97/3 97/13 51/19 et [4] 5/10 6/7 81/9 68/15 85/1 89/4 25/13 44/17 47/24 101/15 107/6 forensic [2] 62/24 88/16 generated [3] 17/13 56/9 68/14 80/4 101/5 **figures [48]** 9/3 63/24 et cetera [2] 81/9 37/2 37/18 111/10 17/24 20/19 21/4 Forget [1] 64/17 88/16 26/15 28/13 37/1 49/9 forgot [1] 68/11 genuine [4] 55/13 **explained** [5] 12/10 evaluate [3] 54/2 49/12 50/1 50/17 52/6 forgotten [1] 68/7 55/21 55/25 60/4 12/25 18/21 62/16 74/2 108/16 get [9] 14/25 55/2 54/16 55/7 75/11 **form [2]** 10/10 63/14 78/11 evaluated [1] 41/17 56/7 73/17 75/3 77/18 76/24 78/20 80/3 explanation [4] 40/1 forward [2] 22/19 **evaluation [1]** 41/20 88/1 100/22 107/9 80/15 81/4 81/10 42/12 68/20 94/15 35/22 even [2] 62/2 94/3 **getting [1]** 77/3 explanations [1] 90/5 81/22 82/1 85/12 found [4] 74/25 89/22 evenings [1] 6/4 giro [6] 19/6 39/24 **explore** [1] 68/6 88/13 88/14 88/15 106/4 106/6 event [2] 8/15 68/8 40/20 41/24 43/24 **extending** [1] 83/9 88/22 88/25 89/5 four [2] 22/24 83/2 events [3] 11/14 16/9 89/13 89/16 95/14 46/22 **extremely [3]** 83/12 fourth [2] 11/12 16/17 92/21 95/24 Girobank [4] 9/6 18/5 96/23 97/22 97/23 91/24 ever [3] 20/4 59/21 eyes [2] 36/21 36/24 42/17 46/1 97/25 98/14 98/17 **franchise** [1] 2/21 60/12 give [7] 6/1 32/12 100/8 100/19 100/25 frank [1] 105/9 everything [11] 3/15 36/16 70/24 77/17 101/25 102/21 102/24 Fraser's [7] 26/3 13/11 21/20 25/6 52/8 facility [1] 34/19 79/19 91/19 106/5 109/1 109/10 32/25 39/4 61/6 61/12 53/9 53/13 53/15 fact [17] 25/3 27/3 given [16] 10/22 file [5] 11/7 11/10 61/15 61/21 54/14 62/16 62/17 27/6 29/15 49/25 50/9 11/10 13/9 16/13 23/1 11/11 12/23 13/14 fraud [3] 92/6 93/5 evidence [32] 9/19 59/19 66/21 67/8 46/22 48/1 52/15 filed [1] 80/14 103/15 25/9 31/16 31/22 68/21 75/14 77/20 75/24 80/3 87/20 final [10] 35/23 39/25 free [1] 63/11 31/24 38/7 39/22 79/9 94/22 105/3 89/15 91/5 97/1 99/23 40/21 41/14 41/15 Freedom [13] 77/16 40/17 45/11 45/12 107/20 110/2 107/14 77/25 80/1 80/5 80/10 43/22 59/12 71/9 48/1 50/14 50/16 factor [9] 30/24 82/4 82/7 90/10 91/24 gives [3] 12/19 51/23 71/18 93/13 54/23 56/7 57/11 40/15 40/24 40/24 94/25 100/3 102/1 83/2 finally [3] 7/15 71/22 57/15 59/20 59/21 58/11 65/6 68/7 68/13 giving [3] 70/8 87/14 74/15 106/24 61/3 66/16 66/23 70/9 68/21 financial [1] 33/13 100/16 Freehills [1] 78/11 74/8 75/7 75/10 79/19 factors [10] 27/14 go [19] 9/25 15/7 find [5] 13/20 56/3 frequent [2] 27/22 91/1 94/4 100/16 39/12 39/18 40/7 15/16 19/15 23/19 56/16 61/17 78/22 30/4 102/20 107/14 40/10 40/14 40/15 25/23 28/2 30/4 33/6 findings [3] 36/5 36/7 frequently [1] 30/10 evidencing [1] 17/18 58/12 65/14 69/9 33/7 42/15 45/19 46/6 45/11 Friday [1] 1/1 exactly [4] 64/5 64/8 47/25 51/9 53/10 factual [1] 49/14 fine [2] 70/4 72/2 friendly [1] 19/8

G happen [1] 32/14 helpful [2] 30/1 30/24 93/15 93/15 93/20 happened [3] 47/24 helping [1] 65/1 **go... [3]** 84/11 87/11 55/24 69/16 108/23 happening [4] 23/23 goes [1] 96/1 25/7 30/19 107/21 going [25] 2/6 10/14 happy [5] 49/11 50/7 11/12 11/24 13/16 61/9 61/24 85/14 13/25 14/10 19/22 **harassment** [1] 5/10 22/19 33/25 51/13 hard [5] 1/12 65/3 54/16 59/1 71/3 73/12 66/8 66/10 107/9 73/14 77/3 80/1 80/2 harder [1] 17/4 80/5 82/4 89/5 93/22 has [22] 9/22 10/13 94/25 95/3 19/4 34/4 58/20 62/10 gone [4] 10/9 59/9 62/16 62/17 71/5 60/22 69/13 71/14 79/13 79/14 good [7] 1/3 32/22 79/23 81/16 84/9 96/3 35/20 70/17 70/18 99/18 100/10 102/25 90/19 91/6 103/1 104/19 107/13 got [6] 16/5 16/6 26/5 hasn't [1] 72/5 30/6 61/11 61/18 have [166] 79/23 grand [3] 19/8 19/9 Havery [1] 49/17 19/13 having [9] 11/9 12/11 grateful [1] 108/3 22/14 30/9 61/14 68/8 64/17 great [2] 44/11 68/9 75/23 100/12 104/17 haystack [1] 30/16 greater [1] 50/12 Hayward [10] 45/5 grounds [1] 14/7 45/19 62/6 62/24 **guilty [1]** 60/9 63/24 65/24 66/5 66/16 66/20 67/7 Н he [35] 12/10 12/10 had [83] 2/23 5/23 12/13 12/16 12/25 5/24 9/4 9/9 10/20 13/1 13/2 14/14 14/20 10/22 11/2 11/3 11/4 14/25 15/1 15/2 28/10 12/2 12/10 12/16 13/2 28/11 28/12 28/14 13/9 14/21 15/17 28/20 28/23 29/25 15/18 15/23 16/9 20/3 31/1 32/20 49/23 55/1 20/4 20/5 20/21 21/1 57/4 57/8 57/11 57/11 21/11 21/20 24/8 57/16 57/17 57/20 24/14 24/20 25/16 61/1 67/14 67/15 26/15 28/18 28/19 87/15 107/16 28/20 28/22 29/16 he's [1] 87/14 95/18 29/22 31/2 31/24 32/2 head [2] 72/22 91/23 33/5 36/19 36/22 hear [4] 1/3 5/1 6/18 37/25 38/13 38/15 58/7 43/13 43/15 43/17 heard [5] 7/18 10/19 43/17 43/19 44/1 24/9 51/12 101/25 44/20 45/7 45/24 hearing [23] 4/22 5/7 102/8 47/21 48/12 50/18 6/24 7/2 15/11 17/6 50/24 51/2 51/2 53/17 19/23 24/17 24/18 53/25 54/9 54/12 26/7 26/20 27/25 28/3 54/21 54/23 55/6 31/5 31/6 31/17 31/23 55/17 55/24 56/24 32/19 33/16 34/6 60/22 66/15 67/2 68/2 36/15 100/12 111/17 68/21 69/6 80/13 86/9 hearings [1] 6/7 94/23 104/25 105/16 held [9] 4/11 4/14 hadn't [6] 20/24 33/5 4/17 29/5 42/20 52/7 66/17 66/25 67/10 83/5 83/7 83/14 93/15 Helen [2] 12/2 12/6 halfway [2] 29/8 63/9 Hello [1] 58/7 Hamilton [2] 86/23 help [9] 2/16 14/25 86/25 16/24 23/13 28/14 hand [1] 108/11

29/17 39/1 39/3 55/2

**Helpdesk [3]** 9/5

20/23 30/21

handwritten [1]

28/24

helpline [11] 9/5 12/18 13/4 20/1 20/5 20/14 21/14 22/2 22/8 103/9 103/11 104/4 23/4 28/12 helps [1] 106/10 hence [5] 55/18 56/5 59/25 66/4 67/21 her [2] 15/25 21/1 Herbert [1] 78/11 here [19] 11/17 13/17 15/14 20/11 20/21 22/21 31/14 40/7 40/11 41/6 49/8 51/11 how [16] 23/16 26/1 54/8 79/19 80/10 85/4 36/21 47/24 68/10 85/19 100/25 108/8 hide [2] 23/25 68/21 high [3] 63/13 79/21 highlighted [1] 63/8 highlighting [1] him [9] 30/1 32/3 36/7 48/20 61/5 99/18 **HR [1]** 6/12 100/2 100/11 100/15 hindsight [4] 32/24 38/20 61/23 69/17 his [25] 8/1 12/11 12/25 13/2 14/6 14/24 15/1 23/1 25/10 28/15 31/17 36/14 46/10 46/18 49/17 51/1 54/13 56/24 57/1 57/3 | I again [1] 42/16 57/7 57/13 62/11 100/3 100/10 historical [3] 72/21 92/20 95/23 hold [6] 6/7 82/21 82/23 83/22 84/2 holds [2] 84/6 92/10 Hollingworth [2] 12/3 12/6 **Honour [1]** 49/17 hopefully [2] 98/24 Horizon [90] 7/22 9/1 9/5 10/21 11/9 12/18 13/4 18/1 20/1 20/2 20/5 20/11 20/13 20/22 21/3 21/8 21/13 13/12 31/15 69/3 21/14 21/15 22/2 22/8 30/20 31/9 31/18 32/16 33/12 34/5 36/8 48/24 66/13 37/18 45/14 46/24 47/11 52/21 54/10 54/18 61/8 61/18 62/4 | I chose [1] 10/23 62/18 69/5 73/8 74/15 I clearly [1] 68/16 75/5 75/6 75/7 75/9 87/3 87/7 87/8 88/10 88/13 88/17 88/18 91/1 91/23 92/11 93/7

104/21 107/11 107/24 104/17 107/25 109/25 110/6 110/12 110/16 110/17 110/20 110/24 Horizon-related [3] 75/5 88/10 109/25 housekeeping [1] 69/24 69/11 75/5 80/13 80/20 81/3 81/10 92/4 I drew [1] 66/4 95/5 95/7 96/6 96/11 **HOWARD [3]** 1/7 1/11 112/2 however [7] 8/17 19/13 27/12 39/3 52/21 82/23 91/12 **HSH [3]** 20/22 22/8 33/2 huge [2] 6/3 6/8 hypothetical [1] 67/5 I actually [1] 16/19 I also [2] 41/7 63/25 I always [1] 17/5 I am [5] 34/3 49/13 49/16 50/5 72/18 I analysed [1] 43/11 I apologise [3] 65/11 68/16 69/17 I appreciate [1] 23/17 l are [1] 52/4 lask [2] 58/16 71/9 **I be [1]** 108/6 I believe [5] 8/18 20/24 53/20 64/6 99/17 I call [1] 70/19 I can [10] 10/25 92/10 101/9 102/13 24/11 26/1 26/3 26/16 105/13 109/15 110/14 94/9 I can't [3] 47/24 I cannot [1] 80/21 I checked [1] 19/25 I contacted [1] 15/15 I could [7] 25/7 32/15 I should [1] 65/1 38/21 53/24 72/2 77/19 97/12

94/4 98/9 102/4

I described [1] 107/3 102/12 102/18 102/21 | I did [3] 11/23 54/3 102/24 103/3 103/5 68/4 I didn't [6] 23/21 25/1 104/6 104/8 104/13 38/20 50/21 50/21 I discussed [2] 24/18 36/17 I do [11] 33/9 48/25 58/17 63/23 71/8 71/17 72/1 80/22 85/20 101/2 108/1 I don't [7] 26/1 30/2 66/12 80/23 100/14 104/9 105/1 I double [1] 43/13 I evaluated [1] 41/17 I examined [1] 42/23 I feel [1] 104/25 I felt [2] 14/17 14/19 I first [1] 23/7 I follow [1] 110/25 I gave [1] 68/15 I had [7] 11/4 15/17 15/18 43/15 44/20 45/7 67/2 human [2] 97/7 102/9 I have [12] 9/9 16/12 42/12 44/17 46/14 46/22 48/14 52/16 56/11 63/1 76/2 108/22 I head [1] 72/22 I just [2] 65/14 68/14 I kind [1] 32/1 I know [1] 16/1 I looked [1] 54/14 I made [1] 67/20 I managed [1] 3/18 I may [3] 57/20 93/12 101/2 I mean [1] 103/24 I needed [1] 14/19 I now [1] 69/13 I personally [1] 21/11 I really [1] 56/9 I recall [2] 31/18 69/9 I recognise [1] 105/22 I recognised [2] 69/14 107/23 I referred [2] 65/8 I represent [1] 58/24 I reviewed [1] 18/9 I right [1] 88/14 I said [1] 60/24 I saw [1] 45/13 I say [5] 62/17 63/16 68/25 69/17 110/3 I started [1] 23/14 I still [1] 25/22

I deliberately [1] 69/4

27/20 27/23 54/21 50/13 19/3 29/24 36/11 inquiries [2] 7/7 7/12 66/1 76/5 incorrectly [1] 97/13 Inquiry [41] 2/1 2/5 60/16 64/23 69/16 I suggest [1] 69/7 increase [14] 95/11 identifying [2] 33/1 2/7 5/16 6/11 7/6 15/9 105/11 I think [41] 22/17 96/14 101/21 102/1 24/6 26/24 31/13 36/2 isolate [1] 30/8 103/21 39/3 45/1 55/16 56/5 ie [1] 86/15 102/15 102/15 102/17 37/11 37/16 38/13 isolated [1] 25/4 56/20 57/4 58/20 ie for [1] 86/15 103/4 104/2 104/5 40/5 40/15 45/2 45/14 issue [3] 22/22 23/10 60/13 60/14 61/6 61/9 if [77] 1/14 5/4 6/24 104/7 104/10 104/12 52/11 58/13 66/18 73/14 61/10 62/21 64/2 64/6 8/22 10/25 11/5 11/15 69/5 69/8 73/11 77/15 issues [16] 2/7 13/20 107/15 65/22 69/21 72/20 13/12 13/14 18/3 19/8 increased [2] 102/3 77/24 84/16 85/2 20/7 21/12 22/12 74/4 75/14 75/24 20/2 20/4 21/17 21/20 85/10 85/15 85/19 22/23 22/24 22/25 103/3 76/15 78/4 78/22 79/1 21/21 25/8 25/12 incur [1] 19/10 89/12 89/14 89/17 23/11 30/9 32/17 33/1 81/14 87/5 87/12 88/4 27/20 28/18 30/11 incurred [3] 10/17 93/12 97/8 98/3 99/10 59/10 73/13 102/21 89/14 89/20 90/4 30/11 30/17 30/18 13/23 13/24 100/5 100/8 107/7 102/23 91/19 93/11 97/5 32/6 32/9 33/23 37/5 Inquiry's [1] 81/23 it [196] incurring [1] 18/23 100/19 102/19 106/12 44/10 51/9 52/20 54/9 indeed [8] 14/23 24/4 insinuation [2] 60/11 | it's [47] 1/11 5/6 5/11 107/22 111/4 54/12 55/23 56/4 33/18 37/14 48/14 8/16 10/11 15/12 I thought [1] 64/11 56/21 57/8 57/16 49/13 66/17 68/4 **inspector** [1] 12/3 15/12 16/2 16/5 17/12 I took [2] 25/14 61/19 58/17 59/11 60/17 independent [7] 6/15 installed [1] 93/16 19/4 26/4 33/22 36/11 I understand [2] 63/4 63/12 66/24 16/2 34/4 34/8 36/19 instance [1] 24/9 41/4 52/12 58/20 59/2 50/14 91/17 66/25 67/2 69/6 69/25 37/21 64/8 59/5 62/21 63/6 63/9 **instances** [1] 44/9 I vaguely [1] 68/17 71/18 72/2 73/20 74/7 64/6 72/5 73/19 74/11 independently [2] instead [1] 17/24 I visited [2] 23/9 77/19 77/19 77/22 16/13 77/3 **instructed** [1] 78/12 78/1 79/11 80/7 82/6 23/15 79/1 80/17 80/22 83/6 index [2] 10/6 11/6 **integrity [6]** 20/3 82/19 85/25 86/24 I want [6] 57/8 57/17 84/11 85/8 86/5 87/10 indicate [3] 23/6 35/5 20/7 20/12 20/14 21/2 87/12 87/22 87/24 57/21 68/5 77/13 92/1 93/11 94/19 89/19 90/13 98/21 60/21 21/15 77/17 97/11 100/22 101/2 101/14 105/8 105/10 indicated [3] 41/20 intended [1] 6/14 I was [19] 2/18 3/11 103/15 105/19 106/3 53/16 66/6 106/10 106/12 106/14 intentionally [1] 14/18 18/9 20/21 106/6 106/10 106/13 106/15 107/1 indicates [1] 34/22 100/15 27/10 29/14 29/15 109/14 110/14 indication [1] 89/24 interdaily [1] 27/23 item [2] 11/6 110/14 29/21 38/9 43/1 45/13 **immediate** [1] 19/17 interim [3] 23/18 Item 16 [1] 11/6 individual [7] 13/11 52/16 53/5 53/12 66/1 its [8] 2/2 25/24 30/4 30/7 32/7 41/17 immediately [3] 17/1 43/2 53/17 66/7 73/5 73/6 30/13 87/3 66/9 90/24 **interview [2]** 7/10 38/24 39/1 45/10 46/1 I wasn't [1] 67/2 individual's [1] 93/3 29/6 51/25 98/8 implementation [1] I will [3] 2/4 56/23 104/3 individuals [1] 94/18 into [24] 3/13 10/9 itself [3] 77/24 86/4 82/19 important [2] 18/19 inflating [2] 80/15 13/11 17/14 19/2 103/25 I would [10] 8/9 20/22 26/16 30/25 25/23 82/1 14/16 15/25 52/2 improper [1] 60/13 influence [2] 16/18 32/7 34/20 35/18 56/21 57/16 62/5 70/1 January [3] 22/11 25/4 35/19 40/7 42/19 improvement [1] 90/16 90/17 information [53] 6/25 47/10 49/24 50/8 51/2 51/17 73/1 107/18 I'd [7] 10/19 25/1 **JJ [3]** 28/7 28/18 7/3 21/23 23/3 46/15 54/16 69/9 75/23 **improving** [1] 101/4 26/5 53/8 73/17 80/4 29/8 inaccuracies [1] 52/19 53/25 54/9 55/6 76/17 82/6 85/1 98/18 99/10 76/11 77/16 77/25 introduced [1] 92/12 | job [2] 6/5 73/4 I'II [1] 89/8 79/2 80/2 80/6 80/10 introduction [8] 92/7 **JOHN [5]** 1/7 1/11 inaccurate [2] 42/14 I'm [21] 2/6 25/25 82/5 82/8 82/21 82/22 102/12 102/18 104/6 45/23 46/10 112/2 104/18 32/22 58/25 61/9 joined [1] 2/12 83/5 83/6 83/19 83/20 104/8 107/11 107/24 inbox [1] 100/10 61/24 63/12 64/3 Jones [21] 1/6 1/7 incapable [1] 106/8 84/7 85/4 85/22 86/22 107/25 64/10 64/25 64/25 1/10 1/11 36/4 37/9 90/11 91/18 91/19 investigate [2] 38/17 include [3] 40/24 71/3 73/12 80/1 82/4 45/23 46/3 46/10 65/13 93/6 91/25 92/11 92/16 76/14 85/14 89/5 95/3 46/13 46/16 46/19 included [10] 19/13 92/22 92/24 94/24 investigated [1] 102/14 103/20 108/3 58/12 63/15 63/16 95/1 95/18 95/20 49/22 50/3 51/16 103/17 l've [13] 15/4 15/25 95/21 95/24 96/3 96/4 investigation [3] 56/23 58/24 63/12 63/18 68/12 68/21 16/19 18/15 27/13 66/15 70/5 112/2 69/12 88/6 88/11 98/11 98/22 99/5 56/6 103/14 107/19 55/25 56/3 60/24 100/4 102/1 104/11 Jones's [3] 31/12 including [3] 58/25 involve [1] 101/16 61/14 64/16 76/19 40/4 52/10 94/17 101/14 106/25 108/10 109/3 involved [5] 2/16 98/24 102/8 journalist [1] 82/10 incomplete [3] 82/24 informing [1] 14/5 14/19 56/7 73/7 idea [1] 55/25 91/4 105/17 initial [1] 89/24 110/21 journey [1] 4/1 identification [2] **Joyce [1]** 14/12 inconclusive [1] initially [1] 60/1 involvement [2] 2/8 74/4 78/20 Judge [1] 49/17 83/14 initiated [1] 93/1 59/6 identified [10] 9/4 Julie [3] 27/1 33/10 Ireland [1] 75/18 inconsistency [2] inpayment [1] 42/25 26/2 32/24 39/21 64/2 93/24 98/16 input [1] 19/2 irrespective [1] 61/12 75/11 75/20 July [7] 26/20 29/5 inconsistent [2] 57/9 inputting [2] 17/14 16/21 76/9 91/10 93/2 33/20 34/6 36/6 71/14 80/3 17/24 is [231] identifies [1] 39/4 INQ0000721 [1] ish [1] 59/5 100/8 incorrect [6] 17/24 identify [6] 13/19 jumped [1] 23/8 42/6 46/8 46/12 50/10 89/10 isn't [9] 8/4 17/12

J	LCAS0000113 [2]	little [5] 8/22 17/4	25/18 27/7 30/25	24/20 32/14 38/11
I ————	33/22 41/4	33/23 94/6 104/15	35/20 38/4 70/5	44/21 45/15 48/25
June [3] 26/9 26/9	LCAS0000570 [1]	live [2] 59/24 108/17	manage [2] 2/21 5/24	
42/17				
just [38] 4/21 6/4	48/2	locate [1] 84/5	managed [4] 2/20	57/17 57/18 57/24
1	least [8] 57/14 67/17	longer [2] 18/15	3/18 4/6 4/8	60/15 63/12 64/6
10/11 10/25 11/1	68/3 104/16 108/6	18/17	management [3] 3/1	64/11 64/18 68/6
13/12 19/11 20/18	109/5 109/17 109/17	look [26] 7/3 10/8	74/21 74/23	68/10 70/4 70/9
21/2 21/16 23/13			1	
26/23 27/6 33/23 34/8	leaving [2] 32/5	10/11 11/15 23/14	manager [29] 3/3 3/5	109/15
	53/20	23/19 24/20 30/21	3/7 3/11 4/2 4/5 4/8	mean [2] 44/15
37/9 37/13 40/13 45/9	led [1] 12/6	32/13 32/15 37/4	4/11 4/14 4/18 5/1 5/4	
49/3 50/4 51/10 59/19	Lee [1] 11/18	40/10 44/16 53/5	5/16 5/22 6/18 8/1	
62/12 64/6 65/14				means [1] 92/18
68/14 71/3 73/17	left [1] 4/18	53/16 53/25 65/2		meant [3] 20/18 21/3
84/18 87/19 92/1 94/8	legal [3] 58/17 74/20	77/19 77/23 80/5	15/8 15/15 16/2 28/16	37/12
	81/1	85/14 86/5 89/11	33/16 34/10 36/19	meeting [4] 27/1
97/2 97/2 98/6 99/22	Leicester [2] 18/5	94/25 95/2 97/3	38/11 60/19	28/25 29/4 29/4
101/5	19/5			
Justice [9] 26/2	l .	looked [11] 16/11	Managers [3] 3/19	member [2] 27/3
32/24 39/4 60/14	length [2] 83/24	21/14 22/14 26/4 53/9	5/18 55/14	27/11
I	104/19	54/12 54/14 61/14	managing [2] 3/24	members [1] 12/14
60/25 61/6 61/12	lengthy [2] 82/19	75/23 81/12 87/19	73/7	memory [1] 22/15
61/21 62/3	83/8			Microphone [1]
1,7	l .	looking [11] 11/3	Manchester [1] 2/19	
K	let [2] 58/17 64/18	18/9 25/12 33/4 36/24		106/19
keep [2] 94/20 101/4	let's [1] 56/16	44/14 44/15 53/12	manner [1] 92/16	might [12] 16/17
	letter [13] 14/1 14/4	54/16 95/9 108/22	manual [5] 28/20	16/23 18/24 38/7 38/8
kept [1] 28/14	14/11 14/13 28/3	looks [2] 29/22 80/3	28/21 29/18 66/2	38/19 74/12 80/4
key [2] 10/7 85/24	l .			
keyed [1] 19/4	33/20 33/25 39/12	loss [3] 19/18 55/8	67/20	85/12 90/1 101/20
<b>keys [1]</b> 19/9	39/14 40/16 40/25	93/5	manually [1] 44/20	101/24
	58/11 100/10	losses [25] 2/10 8/25	many [10] 29/16	mind [2] 67/4 108/7
kind [5] 2/22 16/5	level [2] 10/9 62/13	9/11 9/14 9/21 9/22	61/13 80/13 92/4 95/5	
23/8 23/13 32/1	levelled [1] 59/22	10/17 10/21 13/22	95/7 96/6 96/11 110/2	
King's [1] 87/13				
kit [1] 9/1	levels [2] 43/16 52/6	31/10 35/22 41/10	110/3	misbalance [1] 12/13
know [13] 2/3 16/1	light [1] 102/23	55/13 55/13 55/17	March [9] 9/16 12/1	misbalances [2]
54/6 57/17 66/12	like [21] 8/9 14/16	55/18 55/21 55/22	12/6 14/8 47/6 47/16	12/15 13/23
	25/2 29/22 38/25	55/23 56/4 56/4 59/24	51/18 71/5 95/1	misplaced [1] 69/15
72/14 79/25 90/16	56/21 57/16 62/5	60/4 60/4 60/18	Marine [18] 2/10 8/4	miss [1] 69/4
90/18 91/12 103/9				
104/9 108/2	68/25 69/17 73/17	lot [1] 31/3	11/13 12/5 22/1 22/10	
knowing [1] 54/6	80/3 80/4 81/23 88/7	lots [1] 23/11	26/8 39/8 41/22 42/9	59/25 109/3
knowledge [2] 1/21	88/12 88/21 90/16	low [1] 107/15	42/16 42/20 43/22	mistake [6] 17/13
	90/18 98/18 104/25	lunch [2] 70/1 70/3	43/25 44/5 44/10	64/17 67/9 67/23
72/11	likely [4] 81/17 82/24		52/24 61/23	68/10 93/11
known [2] 18/15				
72/20	101/16 110/20	M	Marine Drive [4] 2/10	
	<b>limitation [1]</b> 96/18		22/1 42/9 61/23	67/14 67/18
L	limitations [11] 78/16	<b>M25 [1]</b> 3/16	master [4] 77/5 77/7	misunderstood [1]
lack [2] 98/11 98/16	78/18 78/19 81/22	<b>M40 [1]</b> 3/16	77/8 86/1	57/20
	81/24 85/17 85/24	<b>M6 [1]</b> 3/16	match [1] 89/13	mitigation [1] 33/10
Langham [3] 27/1	86/8 89/4 97/21 98/7	made [33] 5/15 10/13	material [3] 6/21	<b>Mm [1]</b> 100/9
27/5 33/10		11/21 17/6 17/13		
Langham's [1] 27/7	limited [17] 6/21 6/25		37/25 83/12	moment [1] 11/2
large [7] 8/25 9/10	37/25 61/10 82/2 83/5	20/22 21/12 22/1 22/3		<b>Monday [1]</b> 51/12
9/23 42/24 46/1 46/3	83/12 84/6 90/23 91/9	24/14 28/11 29/16	104/1	money [3] 54/24
47/22	91/11 92/21 93/25	33/10 35/24 39/23	matters [4] 72/21	55/24 55/25
	95/24 96/8 106/8	40/19 40/25 42/6 42/7		monies [1] 56/10
larger [1] 11/17		43/19 51/19 60/12		
last [10] 1/14 9/10	106/12		may [35] 1/6 1/14 8/2	months [2] 18/14
11/16 11/17 90/16	Limited's [1] 91/3	64/1 64/16 64/21	16/25 20/16 30/9	18/15
90/18 90/23 91/7 91/8	line [7] 10/23 11/17	65/16 67/9 67/20	56/12 57/20 61/22	more [18] 14/19
109/23	12/17 13/3 15/7 28/15	68/10 77/15 82/9	66/3 66/9 66/22 67/8	22/15 37/13 42/10
	52/14	99/17 106/7	67/21 67/22 67/23	49/5 50/25 61/24
late [3] 10/14 29/25	lines [2] 31/19 67/13	Mail [2] 82/15 83/7	68/3 68/10 68/23	75/14 87/25 88/1 88/4
30/23				
later [2] 88/24 93/22	list [7] 13/22 40/7	majority [1] 5/2	73/10 82/8 83/7 86/6	89/12 100/18 100/24
latter [4] 95/12 95/14	40/11 40/14 58/12	make [7] 48/16 50/18		104/21 107/15 110/3
96/15 96/21	77/6 77/7	62/5 73/10 90/19 91/6	90/21 93/12 98/19	110/4
	listed [3] 40/16 58/11	108/9	99/9 99/16 101/2	<b>Morgan [1]</b> 48/5
lawyers [1] 59/7	84/9	maker [3] 6/22 7/1	105/3 109/2 110/23	
LC [6] 28/11 28/13	l .	16/15	l .	morning [6] 1/3 24/7
28/18 28/19 28/20	listings [1] 47/9		maybe [3] 32/8 56/12	32/8 56/13 56/21
29/12	litigation [3] 41/1	makes [1] 68/10	87/6	111/13
	47/20 48/22	making [8] 6/6 24/10	me [25] 15/17 23/8	most [1] 24/8
1	İ	İ	ı	ı - <del>-</del>

14/12 7/20 8/4 8/25 9/21 М necessary [1] 32/8 **notice [3]** 18/3 18/24 MS [13] 1/8 14/4 need [5] 1/24 76/3 111/9 11/14 12/6 12/11 motorway [1] 3/15 14/13 16/10 27/5 27/7 78/24 80/23 105/16 notices [7] 9/3 10/16 14/17 22/1 23/9 23/15 move [7] 80/1 82/4 38/1 58/20 58/22 60/9 needed [4] 6/6 14/19 17/10 17/12 17/22 23/16 23/19 24/12 86/21 88/1 90/10 99/3 65/1 112/4 112/6 50/25 51/24 18/7 18/14 24/14 25/17 26/8 29/5 99/6 needle [1] 30/16 33/16 34/10 38/5 Ms Langham [1] **November [3]** 43/12 moving [2] 87/24 38/17 38/24 39/8 needn't [2] 27/17 27/5 44/25 59/8 91/24 Ms Langham's [1] 36/3 November 2003 [1] 44/23 45/24 46/11 Mr [135] 46/23 49/24 50/8 27/7 needs [1] 62/21 43/12 Mr Altman [1] 87/13 now [27] 1/25 27/17 53/23 55/11 61/10 Ms Oglesby [3] 14/4 negative [1] 19/17 MR BLAKE [4] 70/23 16/10 38/1 35/12 47/18 51/4 54/6 61/25 72/17 72/24 net [1] 34/25 105/7 107/8 112/12 network [10] 3/2 3/5 56/21 57/20 59/3 73/3 73/5 74/13 74/25 Ms Oglesby's [1] Mr Castleton [72] 2/9 14/13 3/8 3/9 3/12 3/15 3/21 59/19 60/23 61/5 75/16 75/16 77/2 78/6 9/15 12/24 13/9 13/18 8/1 22/4 55/14 63/11 64/10 65/12 78/12 79/20 80/12 Ms Page [3] 58/20 14/4 14/5 14/11 14/20 58/22 112/6 never [10] 10/19 15/4 69/13 76/3 79/10 82/11 82/13 82/15 14/24 18/22 24/20 Ms Price [1] 65/1 15/4 21/12 24/8 52/17 79/11 82/8 84/13 89/9 83/5 83/14 83/21 84/6 24/25 25/9 25/18 56/3 60/11 60/25 67/4 94/25 99/11 99/25 86/12 87/9 90/17 Ms Train [1] 60/9 26/15 26/25 27/3 much [11] 65/1 69/21 new [1] 7/3 103/10 104/20 90/21 90/23 91/3 91/9 27/11 27/18 27/24 70/24 72/9 75/3 77/22 next [4] 11/24 29/20 nowhere [1] 53/10 91/11 91/23 92/10 28/4 29/24 30/22 31/3 88/21 100/24 104/25 number [39] 37/20 92/14 92/19 92/25 43/9 69/25 31/7 31/15 31/22 111/1 111/14 95/17 95/19 99/18 NFSP [1] 27/11 42/1 46/14 47/2 47/5 32/19 33/10 33/11 multi [2] 30/6 32/6 Nick [2] 82/9 99/17 58/24 61/15 63/7 99/23 101/13 101/22 33/20 34/1 34/2 36/6 multi-user [2] 30/6 nine [1] 22/11 74/24 76/15 77/14 102/25 103/24 103/25 36/14 36/17 36/22 no [43] 1/24 9/2 9/2 78/3 78/4 78/6 78/8 107/10 107/13 109/18 32/6 37/4 39/12 40/1 41/1 9/3 9/10 9/19 11/11 79/12 79/14 81/13 must [1] 60/9 110/5 42/3 44/3 45/24 46/21 my [53] 10/10 11/18 12/14 15/25 16/19 82/12 82/16 84/1 Office's [2] 98/10 47/21 47/21 48/19 84/22 84/23 85/9 87/2 102/6 14/17 15/4 16/4 16/20 20/9 20/21 25/1 25/6 48/25 49/7 49/19 87/14 89/8 89/20 20/16 22/9 22/20 25/9 29/13 31/16 Office/Royal [1] 50/18 50/23 51/15 24/19 25/11 30/2 31/2 36/19 38/13 42/12 92/14 96/5 97/14 82/15 52/18 54/23 55/6 56/2 officer [2] 2/15 2/17 37/5 38/10 41/11 44/17 45/13 48/17 97/15 102/2 103/3 57/13 58/25 59/15 103/12 106/25 108/10 Offices [1] 82/14 41/19 42/8 42/23 50/21 52/8 53/24 59/22 60/9 60/12 43/18 45/15 46/2 54/23 55/25 56/1 56/7 109/6 109/24 often [1] 6/2 60/15 60/23 60/24 48/10 52/3 52/9 52/15 59/20 59/21 61/2 61/3 **Number 1 [1]** 96/5 **Oglesby [15]** 8/2 61/3 63/21 67/12 68/2 52/20 52/21 53/4 63/1 66/14 69/4 79/25 number **5 [1]** 106/25 11/21 12/18 14/4 Mr Castleton's [19] 57/14 58/10 63/11 85/14 93/11 106/1 number 6 [2] 78/3 14/12 15/16 15/22 7/23 7/25 8/3 8/11 65/9 65/20 66/14 110/9 111/4 78/4 16/10 25/10 27/19 8/20 11/22 15/21 21/7 numbers [16] 75/25 67/19 67/25 68/16 **nobody [1]** 54/21 32/2 38/1 54/4 59/5 24/24 25/5 27/5 27/16 69/1 69/5 69/10 69/14 88/1 88/2 88/3 94/16 60/2 **nodding [1]** 105/14 38/25 40/9 51/6 53/18 76/15 80/22 80/25 non [4] 75/16 106/7 97/6 97/9 98/21 101/3 Oglesby's [1] 14/13 55/12 60/1 62/20 101/7 102/11 102/14 88/19 93/12 93/17 110/17 110/20 **oh [1]** 111/6 Mr Fraser's [1] 61/15 97/24 99/12 107/22 non-conviction [1] 103/7 103/10 107/15 omitted [1] 45/24 **Mr John [1]** 46/10 108/7 109/22 106/7 107/23 on [150] Mr Jones [16] 1/6 myself [7] 23/20 32/4 non-Horizon [2] once [1] 96/23 1/10 36/4 37/9 46/3 40/23 58/14 61/9 62/8 110/17 110/20 one [30] 7/22 13/14 46/13 46/16 46/19 obtained [2] 44/23 64/4 14/21 17/4 17/6 18/8 non-post [1] 75/16 49/22 50/3 51/16 81/10 nonsense [4] 97/11 23/8 24/16 27/14 56/23 58/24 63/12 N **obtaining [1]** 81/4 33/25 51/10 53/19 102/10 107/1 107/4 66/15 70/5 name [5] 1/9 1/13 obvious [1] 17/1 nor [2] 15/5 91/7 53/22 59/1 61/14 62/5 Mr Jones's [3] 31/12 16/1 70/25 80/23 **obviously [5]** 6/5 normal [1] 43/2 63/5 64/21 65/17 40/4 52/10 namely [1] 57/10 54/5 82/2 88/23 111/9 normally [3] 8/16 68/22 69/24 71/4 75/1 Mr Justice [3] 26/2 National [7] 18/6 occasions [2] 61/15 15/7 53/22 75/17 76/17 85/10 32/24 39/4 18/16 19/25 20/8 27/2 North [1] 3/14 63/7 97/6 103/5 108/11 Mr Justice Fraser's 27/4 27/8 occur [2] 38/3 38/16 111/8 Northern [1] 75/18 **[3]** 61/6 61/12 61/21 occurred [3] 43/20 nature [4] 5/25 7/8 ones [2] 89/13 89/17 not [116] **Mr Morgan [1]** 48/5 10/18 61/17 67/24 68/9 note [4] 89/3 96/17 ongoing [1] 3/25 Mr Recaldin [3] 71/2 NBSC [3] 9/5 22/17 occurring [1] 24/1 only [9] 7/18 7/22 105/15 110/15 108/7 111/7 22/19 October [2] 48/11 24/16 51/16 61/14 noted [1] 35/21 Mr Stephen [1] 59/3 near [1] 59/5 notes [7] 28/24 28/25 111/18 69/3 83/21 105/11 **Mr Wallis [3]** 87/20 near-ish [1] 59/5 29/4 51/4 51/20 51/20 **off [5]** 17/18 19/5 110/11 93/22 99/23 21/1 69/5 106/19 nearest [1] 61/20 onwards [6] 85/16 80/22 Mr Whittam [1] 105/3 nearly [2] 56/13 offence [1] 101/11 **nothing [8]** 14/18 88/13 90/7 103/9 Mrs [2] 14/12 14/12 79/17 offer [2] 40/1 69/3 21/22 32/15 33/5 107/19 109/22 Mrs Joyce [1] 14/12 necessarily [5] 4/24 office [86] 2/9 2/11 54/17 60/20 66/20 open [1] 35/11 Mrs Oglesby [1] 4/24 15/6 18/2 19/7 2/12 4/19 4/23 5/12 67/7 opened [1] 34/18

(39) motorway - opened

47/19 56/3 56/16 57/2 90/11 52/12 52/13 Ο 59/10 61/17 65/4 page 24 [1] 91/25 paragraph 29 [1] **people [8]** 9/20 14/19 operate [2] 51/1 73/18 76/13 76/14 page 3 [2] 9/25 41/4 38/12 24/24 29/6 38/15 81/6 53/23 77/3 78/10 78/17 79/9 page **31 [1]** 71/19 paragraph 31 [1] 101/20 101/24 operating [3] 32/6 82/5 82/20 82/23 84/1 page 4 [3] 28/5 29/7 78/23 per [9] 79/17 86/9 53/14 53/22 84/15 86/20 87/4 87/5 45/20 93/12 97/6 97/24 paragraph 34 [8] opportunity [2] 32/12 87/10 88/5 89/2 89/22 page 47 [1] 49/2 40/6 57/3 57/6 57/19 101/25 102/9 103/6 48/12 90/2 92/25 97/6 99/5 65/2 65/6 68/8 69/11 107/4 page 489 [1] 48/8 opposed [2] 42/6 percentage [10] 100/22 103/1 103/6 page 5 [5] 15/13 paragraph 34a [1] 86/13 19/21 51/8 72/3 72/7 105/6 105/16 108/19 95/11 95/12 95/14 27/16 opposite [1] 24/3 outcome [1] 36/23 page 54 [1] 33/22 96/14 96/19 96/21 paragraph 37 [1] or [85] 5/4 6/4 10/20 page 6 [1] 31/14 80/6 97/1 97/5 97/14 107/3 over [22] 8/25 9/10 13/23 15/22 17/25 page 7 [2] 39/16 11/12 11/24 13/25 paragraph 43 [2] perform [1] 27/21 18/15 18/21 20/16 14/2 29/7 29/20 31/23 52/11 85/16 86/6 **performed** [2] 34/6 22/12 22/22 24/8 24/9 33/24 35/19 36/21 page 8 [1] 11/16 paragraph 50 [1] 52/23 24/14 25/17 26/6 40/11 45/21 51/13 page 9 [2] 40/6 77/23 87/11 performing [3] 5/22 27/23 28/20 30/11 51/17 52/22 84/11 pages [2] 11/24 36/9 37/12 paragraph 54 [1] 33/9 33/10 38/5 38/10 85/11 87/12 98/25 14/10 90/7 Perhaps [2] 86/5 39/1 44/18 45/10 98/25 paid [1] 45/25 89/11 paragraph 56 [1] 48/15 51/3 54/13 overall [4] 44/14 period [12] 9/1 17/11 panel [1] 49/23 90/13 57/14 57/22 59/17 98/15 100/23 110/18 22/10 51/17 78/21 paper [1] 42/13 paragraph 59 [1] 60/9 60/11 61/20 overlooked [1] 81/1 papers [4] 16/10 17/2 91/20 81/13 83/8 83/25 62/14 62/17 66/11 oversight [7] 40/23 64/1 79/6 paragraph 6 [2] 6/10 92/17 95/19 98/2 99/1 67/17 68/3 69/15 72/4 57/6 57/18 58/14 65/9 periods [1] 52/23 paperwork [2] 15/19 7/6 73/3 73/11 73/11 65/13 68/15 18/10 **permanent** [1] 5/17 paragraph 60 [1] 73/18 74/2 74/14 75/5 overturned [6] 75/15 paragraph [54] 6/10 92/2 permanently [1] 75/9 75/14 76/1 76/1 75/17 95/13 95/15 7/6 12/3 14/15 15/13 42/20 paragraph 61 [1] 79/21 79/24 80/15 96/20 96/22 19/22 24/5 27/16 28/6 92/9 person [4] 26/25 82/13 83/16 86/16 31/14 33/7 36/3 37/10 paragraph 62 [1] own [2] 6/9 16/18 59/17 81/15 91/5 87/6 87/7 90/19 90/25 37/15 38/12 40/6 41/6 94/9 personal [1] 5/5 91/6 92/6 93/5 93/8 42/15 46/11 48/21 paragraph 63 [1] personally [2] 21/11 93/8 93/22 97/21 pack [1] 12/1 51/14 52/12 57/3 57/6 94/13 38/15 98/16 101/12 101/13 page [64] 1/14 1/15 57/19 59/12 63/10 paragraph 65 [1] persons [1] 59/17 102/5 103/1 103/4 9/25 11/12 11/15 64/20 64/23 64/24 95/2 pertains [1] 82/22 103/5 103/7 103/15 11/16 11/16 11/25 65/2 65/5 65/6 68/8 paragraph 71 [2] Peters [6] 74/19 103/15 104/2 105/19 13/25 13/25 14/2 14/3 69/11 69/15 77/20 108/20 108/23 74/19 76/13 76/13 106/3 109/9 110/12 14/10 15/13 19/21 77/23 78/23 80/6 parameters [3] 74/1 76/25 76/25 order [3] 12/24 66/11 22/6 22/20 28/5 29/2 85/16 86/6 87/11 90/7 74/18 98/22 PFAs [1] 74/7 74/1 29/3 29/7 31/14 33/22 90/13 91/20 92/2 92/9 part [20] 3/25 15/10 Phase [3] 2/7 73/11 ordered [1] 51/23 33/24 34/1 39/16 94/9 94/13 95/2 106/9 16/8 20/13 21/1 23/22 89/12 ordering [1] 50/25 39/17 39/19 40/6 25/10 26/7 38/24 53/4 Phase 4 [1] 2/7 108/20 108/23 organisation [1] 40/11 41/4 41/5 45/20 paragraph 10 [1] 57/1 57/7 61/2 64/12 Phase 5 [2] 73/11 83/16 45/21 46/7 48/3 48/8 51/14 65/9 68/16 69/2 69/10 89/12 original [4] 6/22 7/1 49/2 51/8 51/10 51/13 paragraph 11 [1] 78/10 93/8 **phone [2]** 20/4 29/16 16/15 72/4 51/15 52/11 52/13 Participants [3] 24/5 photocopies [1] originally [2] 50/6 58/20 58/22 71/10 paragraph 12 [3] 56/15 56/17 89/7 46/22 74/22 71/10 71/18 71/19 physical [5] 17/17 41/6 46/11 48/21 particular [6] 16/3 other [26] 23/22 72/3 72/7 77/23 80/7 paragraph 13 [1] 21/7 33/4 66/1 83/11 19/1 26/14 30/15 52/3 24/13 24/23 25/16 80/8 82/6 84/11 86/23 42/15 99/8 physically [4] 42/9 28/18 32/23 33/9 86/25 87/12 90/11 44/1 44/4 52/1 paragraph 16 [1] particularly [2] 2/25 33/11 38/9 40/2 42/8 91/25 95/2 112/6 15/13 30/9 picked [2] 17/20 42/13 43/23 53/24 page 10 [1] 11/25 partly [2] 74/14 75/10 18/25 paragraph 19 [1] 64/7 65/25 66/11 77/4 page 11 [1] 13/25 19/22 parts [1] 111/10 picture [1] 100/22 83/15 86/13 90/4 page 12 [1] 14/3 passage [1] 105/22 Paragraph 21 [1] place [16] 12/5 13/10 91/14 97/21 97/22 page 13 [2] 80/7 80/8 31/14 pause [2] 13/12 14/17 14/22 26/20 101/24 108/12 page 14 [3] 1/15 40/12 27/21 30/6 30/18 31/4 paragraph 22 [1] others [2] 26/4 86/16 14/10 82/6 32/3 44/22 56/8 74/16 33/7 pausing [1] 34/8 our [8] 2/25 5/9 12/8 page 15 [1] 71/10 payments [3] 41/21 75/1 92/5 92/15 paragraph 24 [2] 55/15 56/13 57/23 page 19 [2] 86/23 37/15 106/9 49/6 51/25 plain [1] 106/7 74/19 101/4 86/25 **PCDE [7]** 73/20 75/2 please [75] 1/6 1/9 paragraph 25 [2] out [49] 2/18 7/5 10/1 page 2 [1] 29/2 76/18 77/9 77/10 77/20 77/23 1/15 8/9 8/12 8/13 14/16 15/9 22/1 22/3 page 20 [1] 22/6 87/24 90/3 8/23 9/25 11/5 11/13 paragraph 27 [2] 23/8 23/13 26/17 page 22 [1] 46/7 11/16 11/24 13/25 36/3 37/10 pending [1] 76/1 33/23 41/15 43/15 page 23 [2] 22/20 paragraph 28 [1] penultimate [1] 14/3 14/10 15/12

53/13 53/25 95/23 98/4 98/9 98/9 21/4 31/23 32/19 31/4 32/2 32/3 32/6 P post [88] 2/9 2/11 101/9 102/21 102/24 41/16 82/2 100/18 51/10 59/1 64/11 please... [59] 15/13 2/12 4/19 4/23 5/12 105/23 106/8 107/24 103/1 111/8 76/18 103/19 103/24 19/21 22/5 22/6 22/19 7/12 7/20 8/4 11/14 pre-'99 [1] 98/4 **producing** [1] 25/9 104/1 105/7 28/2 28/5 28/6 29/1 12/5 22/1 24/12 24/14 pre-1999 [5] 92/21 programme [4] 3/8 putting [1] 30/18 29/2 29/8 31/12 31/14 25/17 26/8 29/5 33/16 95/23 98/9 105/23 3/10 3/13 3/20 33/21 33/23 33/25 34/10 38/5 38/17 106/8 **Project [1]** 4/5 39/14 39/16 40/4 40/6 question [22] 29/9 38/23 39/8 44/23 pre-2000 [1] 101/9 proof [1] 49/24 41/3 41/4 41/6 45/17 32/22 37/1 38/14 48/6 45/24 46/11 53/23 pre-appeal [8] 7/7 prosecuted [9] 90/20 45/20 45/21 46/6 49/7 52/23 56/18 55/11 61/10 61/25 10/11 15/10 16/8 90/23 91/6 91/9 91/13 47/25 48/2 48/6 48/9 58/10 60/15 62/21 72/17 72/24 73/3 73/5 16/24 17/6 19/23 26/7 95/6 95/7 96/6 96/12 48/18 49/2 51/7 51/8 62/25 80/12 81/24 73/19 73/21 73/24 pre-Horizon [4] 87/7 prosecuting [3] 86/3 51/10 51/13 52/10 82/3 85/25 87/22 96/5 74/13 74/25 75/16 98/9 102/21 102/24 86/13 91/14 52/12 57/24 58/2 59/2 98/19 105/3 105/20 75/16 76/21 77/1 precaution [1] 9/9 prosecution [11] 63/4 63/9 63/11 70/19 106/20 77/10 78/6 78/12 preceding [1] 94/24 73/15 74/14 74/16 70/25 77/7 80/7 82/16 75/8 75/9 75/10 83/15 questioned [14] 1/8 79/20 80/12 82/11 precisely [1] 63/14 86/21 87/12 90/12 48/19 50/23 58/22 82/13 82/14 82/15 prepared [2] 45/18 86/11 90/17 90/24 91/21 92/4 95/2 96/17 63/2 70/23 105/4 83/5 83/14 83/21 84/6 49/22 91/3 100/20 100/23 86/12 87/8 87/9 88/13 preparing [1] 45/2 108/5 112/4 112/6 prosecution's [1] pleased [2] 12/9 112/8 112/12 112/14 90/17 90/21 90/23 prerequisite [1] 77/8 75/17 12/25 112/16 91/3 91/9 91/11 92/10 present [2] 29/6 prosecutions [37] **pm [4]** 70/12 70/14 78/6 78/8 78/13 78/21 questioning [1] 92/14 92/19 92/24 67/23 70/16 111/16 56/23 95/17 95/19 98/2 presumably [1] 79/11 79/13 79/16 **PMR [3]** 9/1 9/8 9/19 98/10 99/18 99/23 21/15 79/18 81/13 82/12 questions [17] 2/4 point [24] 3/22 8/21 101/13 101/22 102/6 previous [4] 34/23 83/19 83/23 84/2 56/11 56/12 56/14 9/12 9/17 14/16 16/25 102/24 103/24 103/25 84/15 84/17 84/21 56/17 58/17 58/18 35/10 35/17 97/23 23/19 24/16 26/23 58/19 58/20 63/1 104/21 107/9 107/13 84/22 84/24 86/9 previously [5] 13/9 39/18 50/16 50/23 65/15 67/13 67/16 107/24 109/18 110/5 20/6 72/20 76/7 76/20 86/11 87/3 87/7 88/2 53/8 55/17 57/23 62/5 69/21 81/6 98/20 Post Offices [1] **PRICE [3]** 1/8 65/1 92/5 92/15 92/24 62/19 63/17 64/19 105/2 93/19 97/10 97/14 82/14 112/4 67/25 68/3 68/3 81/11 quickly [1] 94/6 post-1999 [1] 98/2 primarily [1] 18/25 97/25 101/22 102/3 106/17 principle [1] 21/9 quite [7] 5/11 24/3 post-appeal [1] 7/12 102/15 103/3 104/3 pointed [2] 57/2 65/4 61/12 82/19 98/14 107/5 107/10 post-conviction [5] printout [2] 34/22 points [6] 18/12 105/8 107/9 73/19 73/21 73/24 35/5 prosecutions' [1] 24/19 36/16 46/16 76/21 77/10 **printouts** [3] 11/9 82/18 54/2 67/20 post-date [1] 104/21 34/5 46/24 **prosecutor** [1] 74/13 **POL [2]** 24/10 59/7 prior [6] 18/10 92/7 raise [2] 20/7 38/24 post-Horizon [2] protect [1] 55/15 POL00069955 [1] raised [1] 102/23 prove [3] 28/21 29/19 87/8 88/13 92/13 93/20 100/16 45/17 raises [1] 46/17 101/23 posted [3] 47/13 52/2 POL00071227 [2] raising [2] 33/1 36/17 47/14 47/16 probabilities [3] proves [1] 51/21 28/4 39/15 ran [1] 53/18 **postmaster [3]** 10/20 59/16 60/5 60/17 provide [8] 38/8 POL00071234 [2] range [2] 4/25 10/12 15/3 91/8 probability [2] 53/12 84/16 84/19 85/17 8/12 22/5 ranging [1] 5/11 postmasters [9] 3/24 54/3 89/9 94/15 97/25 POL00082324 [1] rate [2] 79/21 79/24 9/6 23/18 32/25 53/17 probably [3] 28/17 108/9 29/1 rather [6] 5/17 30/13 72/23 91/12 92/5 provided [23] 8/10 55/19 61/13 POL00083351 [1] 10/2 15/24 21/25 45/9 63/17 63/17 70/2 96/10 problem [5] 12/16 59/2 77/24 13/2 29/13 55/3 49/23 62/6 62/23 postmistresses [1] POL00107458 [1] 73/16 75/7 80/17 85/4 **rationale [5]** 8/19 92/6 106/16 51/8 15/20 16/7 16/22 60/6 potential [7] 44/16 problems [13] 9/2 85/10 85/22 86/22 **policies [1]** 5/13 reach [2] 54/2 85/9 74/5 74/8 74/9 75/12 9/20 12/10 12/12 89/14 89/17 90/5 policy [1] 5/9 93/21 96/3 97/3 99/20 reached [4] 9/23 76/5 103/18 12/19 13/1 13/5 15/1 populating [1] 77/9 12/23 53/8 55/17 potentially [17] 10/16 21/9 22/13 25/20 100/25 population [3] 76/11 reaching [1] 23/13 13/20 18/21 19/10 38/18 105/6 provides [2] 92/23 89/22 103/19 read [13] 10/5 12/23 23/10 25/22 30/19 proceedings [4] 2/8 96/2 position [10] 19/17 13/6 13/15 13/15 17/1 38/20 44/13 54/6 70/15 86/23 86/25 providing [3] 2/2 19/20 20/25 51/1 23/3 23/4 23/7 48/13 process [14] 5/3 6/13 76/24 86/7 61/13 61/22 62/13 72/25 98/10 102/6 61/14 82/20 108/23 66/7 66/24 76/12 7/5 16/20 17/5 19/12 published [1] 72/15 102/25 102/25 107/10 reading [2] 13/14 104/18 30/5 33/4 73/9 74/3 pulled [1] 74/25 positions [2] 27/23 16/16 75/23 77/1 77/16 pouch [3] 42/23 43/4 purpose [2] 21/17 102/7 reads [3] 12/4 59/12 109/9 89/9 43/7 possible [6] 5/21 82/10 **practice** [1] 43/3 processed [2] 21/21 **purposes [3]** 1/23 21/18 52/19 54/8 91/4 real [5] 31/10 55/18 pre [20] 7/7 10/11 43/6 45/1 93/3 92/19 55/23 56/4 60/18 15/10 16/8 16/24 17/6 **processes [1]** 10/10 **pursues [1]** 57/22 possibly [3] 25/8 realised [1] 68/9 19/23 26/7 87/7 92/21 produced [9] 20/19 put [14] 30/6 30/7

90/11 90/21 91/16 62/2 82/15 83/7 R 96/18 104/15 104/21 relying [1] 18/17 104/22 105/17 105/24 remain [1] 63/3 93/10 93/21 93/22 Rule [1] 78/4 really [17] 2/21 10/8 94/24 95/1 95/4 95/16|running [2] 28/20 106/1 109/23 remainder [2] 22/17 10/18 18/11 23/18 recreate [1] 65/22 103/8 96/7 96/24 96/25 98/1 28/21 23/22 25/6 25/23 reducing [1] 3/21 remains [2] 26/6 35/4 106/25 rural [1] 3/23 32/22 33/3 33/5 39/3 refer [4] 20/11 20/16 Response 1 [1] Remediation [3] 39/5 53/10 56/9 62/23 72/16 72/19 72/22 80/11 74/6 110/14 69/16 said [17] 24/6 28/11 reference [11] 1/24 remember [6] 15/24 **Response 2 [1]** 82/8 reason [4] 55/11 67/9 28/16 28/19 28/20 26/12 28/4 29/3 41/24 30/1 48/20 48/25 result [5] 24/11 31/24 68/24 97/22 37/20 45/18 60/24 67/16 83/23 98/1 46/14 47/2 47/5 48/2 68/16 68/17 reasonably [1] 60/24 65/12 69/8 72/1 89/8 removed [3] 9/21 resulted [7] 14/8 109/15 69/19 81/14 90/22 59/17 59/20 78/9 78/14 82/17 referred [7] 65/8 reasoning [1] 57/1 94/8 102/20 104/15 65/23 73/20 82/6 reopened [4] 62/8 83/16 86/10 92/25 reasons [7] 8/19 9/17 salient [1] 32/1 86/16 94/9 94/22 62/14 62/20 62/21 resulting [2] 78/21 64/21 65/18 83/1 83/2 same [9] 14/2 18/19 referring [2] 20/21 repeat [3] 76/3 94/7 79/18 89/21 results [5] 33/19 36/5 25/18 47/7 63/25 64/5 21/3 105/17 rebuild [1] 23/21 refers [2] 46/3 46/13 36/23 39/11 74/4 64/9 72/6 100/4 repeatedly [3] 29/17 rebuilding [1] 25/12 reflect [2] 55/8 83/6 Savings [2] 18/6 31/8 55/2 **Retail [8]** 3/5 8/1 **Recaldin [7]** 70/19 report [24] 11/25 18/16 reflected [6] 39/24 10/23 12/17 13/3 15/7 70/22 71/1 71/2 108/7 saw [2] 45/13 101/1 40/20 42/2 43/21 44/2 14/2 32/25 34/21 39/4 28/15 55/14 111/7 112/10 say [47] 6/10 7/7 7/14 88/24 44/24 45/5 45/10 return [2] 32/1 73/10 recall [9] 11/9 30/2 15/14 19/24 24/5 reflecting [1] 83/24 45/13 45/16 45/21 returned [5] 43/8 31/15 31/18 33/9 26/12 26/23 28/12 refresh [1] 22/15 46/25 47/3 47/6 50/15 51/3 51/17 51/19 48/24 51/4 69/9 80/21 31/14 33/8 34/1 36/4 refused [1] 76/1 59/9 59/11 61/7 61/21 51/22 receipt [8] 11/11 62/11 65/24 66/16 review [2] 5/6 34/9 37/16 38/12 40/7 41/6 regard [1] 110/6 41/24 43/1 43/5 43/9 43/10 54/12 57/8 66/21 67/8 regarding [3] 12/11 reviewed [1] 18/9 47/1 47/4 47/7 57/17 60/23 61/5 reported [2] 20/9 revolves [1] 98/25 100/3 102/24 receipts [8] 41/21 62/17 63/16 64/8 regardless [2] 18/24 90/20 **Richard [1]** 105/5 43/24 45/25 46/8 68/25 69/13 69/17 94/21 reporting [1] 55/1 right [40] 2/13 3/16 46/13 46/20 49/5 78/2 79/1 91/2 95/5 Regional [1] 4/14 4/3 4/15 4/19 5/8 6/19 reports [12] 22/13 50/12 95/6 96/1 96/6 96/11 7/18 8/4 8/6 10/3 regular [1] 13/3 37/18 38/9 44/18 received [14] 9/8 101/2 103/2 104/1 regularly [2] 12/18 44/18 61/15 62/7 17/12 20/20 22/14 15/17 27/13 39/24 104/10 104/16 105/13 62/10 62/12 62/23 26/9 26/11 32/4 36/11 42/21 40/19 42/1 42/9 42/18 45/3 50/19 55/7 56/20 106/4 107/14 108/18 rehearing [3] 6/16 65/25 66/6 43/18 44/1 44/9 47/22 110/3 16/13 37/21 represent [2] 31/10 58/16 60/8 63/5 64/11 50/19 56/25 saying [9] 12/24 64/16 64/25 67/6 Reinvention [3] 3/8 58/24 receives [2] 49/5 29/24 30/1 30/23 31/7 3/10 3/12 67/12 68/5 69/20 70/4 representative [1] 50/11 relate [5] 22/22 22/23 32/21 54/8 57/21 64/6 27/1 72/17 88/14 108/14 recently [3] 22/16 says [8] 9/18 14/14 108/18 109/8 109/21 22/24 90/25 93/4 representatives [1] 27/13 48/13 29/12 51/15 87/15 110/25 related [21] 7/22 58/18 recheck [1] 33/12 93/13 96/16 108/24 22/11 32/16 64/12 request [28] 9/7 rigour [1] 30/18 **rechecking [1]** 10/12 Scheme [1] 73/8 75/5 75/6 75/7 86/17 14/17 77/24 77/25 ripped [1] 51/21 recognise [4] 69/13 88/9 88/10 90/25 78/3 78/4 78/16 80/6 schemes [1] 72/23 risk [1] 55/19 99/11 99/13 105/22 91/18 91/23 103/8 scope [1] 78/16 80/12 81/25 82/5 82/9 **RLM [1]** 29/10 recognised [4] 58/17 **robberies [5]** 88/7 score [3] 2/22 5/6 5/8 103/9 109/11 109/18 82/22 83/8 83/25 68/23 69/14 107/23 109/25 110/6 110/13 84/14 90/14 91/25 88/12 88/15 88/22 scorecard [1] 2/22 recollection [4] 16/5 **Scotland [2]** 75/19 110/16 92/3 94/22 94/24 95/4 93/8 27/5 38/23 45/15 90/2 relates [1] 101/10 98/2 98/19 99/16 robbery [1] 86/16 recommendations Scottish [1] 51/20 relating [8] 2/10 22/9 99/17 100/4 102/1 robust [1] 86/3 **[1]** 7/15 screen [21] 8/12 23/3 26/16 45/11 requested [5] 14/21 role [17] 2/16 3/9 recommended [1] 15/12 19/21 22/5 48/22 52/9 83/10 20/6 34/5 90/14 95/18 4/14 4/17 4/21 5/16 27/19 28/25 31/12 33/21 relation [6] 3/9 13/18 requests [7] 33/11 5/17 5/19 5/22 6/17 record [4] 11/8 28/2 91/10 91/13 92/11 77/14 80/2 98/23 99/4 20/13 38/10 38/10 39/14 40/4 41/3 45/16 110/5 110/10 51/7 52/10 59/2 63/4 99/7 99/9 38/24 55/15 73/6 96/17 recorded [8] 22/21 77/20 78/25 80/8 89/6 relationship [1] 16/1 research [1] 90/1 94/21 60/13 61/21 92/17 90/13 100/20 relayed [1] 23/12 roles [2] 4/11 4/17 respect [5] 85/21 93/4 95/21 105/12 scroll [9] 8/22 11/5 85/21 86/8 99/8 102/6 rolled [2] 35/19 87/4 relevant [4] 17/19 106/3 rolling [2] 35/12 59/11 63/4 80/18 86/5 22/10 93/2 94/4 respectively [1] recording [3] 26/14 92/1 97/2 97/2 reliability [1] 98/8 41/11 35/21 46/8 84/7 **scrolling [1]** 40/13 rollout [1] 101/23 reliance [1] 69/14 responding [2] 64/3 records [20] 9/6 scrutiny [1] 14/24 relied [5] 92/22 93/7 64/4 root [2] 104/8 108/1 42/13 84/2 84/5 91/3 response [22] 80/11 rose [1] 87/3 sealed [1] 19/12 93/15 95/25 98/4 92/18 92/20 92/20 search [5] 77/6 77/7 80/16 80/19 82/8 relook [1] 25/6 route [1] 38/21 92/23 95/23 96/2 96/8 Royal [5] 60/14 60/25 77/8 92/23 96/2 rely [1] 90/25 82/19 82/20 85/11

S sets [1] 84/1 singly [1] 10/20 110/23 111/5 stage [1] 38/3 setting [4] 21/7 21/25 sir [31] 1/3 56/11 software [3] 9/2 9/8 **standard** [3] 8/14 **searching [2]** 61/16 22/3 38/14 56/19 57/25 58/3 58/7 21/9 30/5 32/3 61/19 58/9 58/23 63/2 64/15| solely [1] 83/4 **Several [1]** 76/14 **stands** [1] 35/12 second [10] 12/1 64/24 65/8 69/3 69/17 solution [1] 13/20 shaded [2] 101/6 start [10] 8/9 18/11 36/23 48/3 51/15 103/10 69/23 69/25 70/11 some [29] 17/3 17/4 23/19 30/8 56/5 64/18 71/13 77/21 78/1 80/9 Shall [1] 57/25 70/17 108/4 108/5 18/6 18/14 18/15 73/18 106/20 111/5 99/12 99/25 108/13 108/21 108/25 18/16 18/21 23/12 she [5] 14/5 55/18 111/12 Secondly [1] 98/24 64/3 64/4 65/4 109/13 109/20 110/8 23/12 28/24 33/15 started [4] 12/12 section [2] 46/5 46/6 **short [7]** 9/23 28/12 110/14 111/2 111/4 39/7 59/9 61/16 61/18 21/1 23/6 23/14 **sector [2]** 3/22 3/23 56/18 58/5 70/13 112/8 112/16 73/17 75/22 79/6 starting [7] 22/5 28/5 security [3] 56/6 77/4 107/17 111/9 84/25 85/17 89/4 29/1 41/5 49/3 52/13 **Sir Wyn [8]** 108/13 107/13 shortage [10] 14/8 108/21 108/25 109/13 91/19 92/10 99/25 81/11 see [39] 1/3 8/20 34/15 34/19 35/2 35/9 109/20 110/8 110/14 101/8 101/20 106/1 starts [2] 10/10 69/11 8/23 8/24 11/13 12/10 35/14 35/17 35/19 111/2 106/13 111/10 **state [2]** 23/15 49/4 12/25 14/1 14/3 22/7 35/25 93/5 **somebody [1]** 74/11 stated [1] 28/14 **sit [1]** 108/8 23/15 25/8 25/12 29/3 someone [7] 23/24 **shortages [1]** 28/15 **situation [2]** 14/18 **statement [84]** 1/13 29/8 30/18 32/11 **shortfall [16]** 19/10 38/4 38/5 38/6 38/16 1/20 2/3 5/15 6/10 7/6 17/22 33/24 37/5 38/24 73/8 86/14 86/17 91/7 six [2] 18/15 22/12 53/2 57/24 15/9 15/11 15/13 23/2 39/17 45/17 48/3 48/8 91/10 93/2 93/25 94/3 size [2] 3/21 5/25 24/5 26/24 27/17 **something [9]** 5/17 51/11 55/3 58/7 59/5 94/11 101/16 101/17 31/13 33/7 36/2 37/10 skeleton [2] 51/6 25/13 49/22 56/22 62/9 62/22 78/1 80/2 103/8 103/13 103/18 51/11 62/15 77/5 89/11 37/11 37/15 37/21 80/16 87/15 93/23 110/21 slightly [7] 79/10 103/2 103/15 38/12 40/5 40/14 101/23 103/7 105/13 **shortfalls** [7] 25/14 79/14 80/18 86/7 92/2 **sometimes [1]** 19/14 40/25 41/3 44/8 45/2 110/16 52/18 53/3 90/20 94/19 98/19 46/10 47/20 48/10 **somewhat [1]** 79/13 seeing [1] 64/5 91/13 109/12 109/18 slip [3] 43/1 43/5 48/13 48/21 52/11 soon [1] 9/20 seeking [4] 14/24 43/9 **sorry [18]** 6/23 13/13 57/4 58/13 60/7 63/13 shorthand [1] 105/14 14/25 23/25 55/2 63/16 63/18 65/3 65/7 **shortly [4]** 26/11 slips [1] 46/23 24/18 31/21 63/4 seem [4] 13/10 16/23 44/22 75/4 89/7 slot [1] 6/5 64/25 67/2 75/17 65/16 68/15 69/5 69/8 84/13 93/20 76/13 76/23 94/6 70/6 71/10 71/13 should [13] 1/12 slots [1] 6/6 **seems [1]** 11/6 94/19 97/4 98/6 30/24 32/12 35/21 71/22 71/23 73/20 slow [1] 94/19 seen [15] 24/8 25/1 38/17 42/5 44/5 65/1 **Smith [1]** 78/11 102/17 106/21 110/15 74/6 75/24 76/16 26/6 37/13 44/25 45/7 69/8 69/18 71/2 82/25 **snapshot** [1] 41/13 111/6 77/21 78/2 78/24 80/7 47/10 62/14 66/15 107/6 **snapshots** [2] 41/9 **sort [5]** 10/7 10/11 80/9 81/14 82/6 82/7 66/17 67/1 67/2 67/10 shouldn't [1] 37/9 43/25 10/13 16/7 91/22 85/16 85/22 86/6 86/9 97/23 98/14 so [101] 3/20 3/23 86/21 86/24 87/6 **show [1]** 19/17 sought [2] 68/20 Senior [2] 4/2 5/18 5/3 5/11 5/11 6/17 7/2 106/24 87/10 88/5 89/3 90/8 **showed [3]** 41/12 sense [1] 109/2 43/18 43/25 8/22 12/2 12/22 14/24 **soul [2]** 61/16 61/18 90/12 93/13 94/14 sent [4] 9/7 17/18 16/3 17/4 17/17 17/22 sound [2] 22/14 **shown [2]** 31/8 36/13 97/24 99/12 99/24 39/12 45/15 shows [6] 19/8 34/24 18/3 18/8 18/14 18/19 59/15 99/25 105/19 106/10 sentence [9] 63/5 19/8 19/14 19/16 22/7 source [1] 81/16 47/1 47/4 47/7 51/25 107/22 108/20 63/6 63/14 63/15 sic [1] 96/4 25/10 29/4 29/11 **South [2]** 2/19 3/17 statements [6] 64/8 63/17 64/12 64/17 **signature** [6] 1/16 29/16 29/24 32/14 space [1] 9/24 71/3 72/10 72/14 64/18 93/13 1/18 48/11 71/11 33/5 33/23 40/10 44/7 speak [2] 12/2 15/22 111/8 111/10 separate [4] 11/7 71/19 72/7 44/17 45/9 49/4 49/7 **speaking [2]** 16/15 statistically [2] 11/10 36/20 84/14 49/14 50/7 53/12 94/6 102/19 104/11 signed [1] 42/3 **Separately [1]** 4/17 53/24 56/9 57/23 58/1 specific [6] 9/12 30/2 statistician [2] 102/4 significant [6] 5/13 September [4] 1/1 19/10 42/22 88/4 61/4 61/24 62/19 31/16 59/21 66/5 102/14 71/23 80/11 107/16 103/4 104/2 62/21 64/5 66/20 67/7 94/21 **statistics** [10] 73/15 September 1999 [1] similar [2] 60/15 64/2 74/19 76/12 76/21 77/17 80/17 84/16 specifically [2] 36/14 107/16 Simon [4] 70/19 77/1 77/1 77/8 77/10 48/24 87/15 101/20 103/22 seriously [1] 42/14 70/22 71/1 112/10 77/21 77/23 78/17 105/1 105/7 105/12 **split [1]** 3/13 service [3] 2/23 2/24 simple [3] 67/9 105/8 78/20 79/11 79/12 **splitting [4]** 28/19 stats [1] 102/13 6/12 79/16 80/8 80/9 82/2 105/10 29/10 29/14 30/17 stenographer [2] **services [2]** 11/19 simply [11] 16/16 84/20 84/25 87/11 **SPM [1]** 101/13 94/7 94/20 59/15 19/11 30/13 30/21 87/23 88/11 88/13 **SPMs [1]** 94/23 Stephen [1] 59/3 set [23] 7/5 10/1 15/9 54/11 66/7 67/25 68/7 93/17 93/25 97/5 spoken [1] 15/25 steps [2] 11/1 15/10 36/20 36/23 41/15 spreadsheet [4] 76/7 98/7 104/18 105/14 97/11 97/12 97/13 stick [2] 73/21 74/7 47/19 74/18 74/20 97/19 98/9 98/9 98/18 76/9 81/18 86/2 since [9] 12/18 13/4 still [6] 19/23 25/22 74/22 78/10 78/17 43/12 62/16 62/17 98/21 99/5 100/14 49/6 91/17 105/13 spreadsheets [6] 82/5 82/23 83/22 100/15 101/14 102/10 74/24 75/4 76/8 77/4 72/25 80/15 82/1 108/16 84/23 86/20 87/5 stock [6] 27/20 28/19 82/15 102/23 103/6 103/15 79/3 81/9 87/10 88/5 89/2 108/22 109/14 109/21 stack [1] 53/21 29/10 29/14 30/17 single [2] 27/19 105/16 108/19 73/14 110/2 110/11 110/17 staff [1] 12/14 32/7

70/4 71/19 71/24 72/2 62/12 62/13 62/22 S sums [1] 47/22 task [1] 38/8 supply [2] 82/11 **Taylor [1]** 12/7 76/21 78/4 78/20 62/23 64/5 72/13 stocks [4] 13/11 30/4 team [8] 3/18 13/19 82/16 79/17 80/6 82/5 82/7 74/11 77/2 77/18 30/7 30/8 support [5] 9/19 20/1 15/6 17/7 17/19 56/6 86/23 87/11 87/20 78/12 79/2 80/20 81/3 stolen [1] 54/23 20/8 22/4 32/20 77/4 107/19 87/22 88/5 88/21 81/5 81/11 87/2 88/16 **stop [1]** 10/25 teams [1] 77/4 89/10 89/11 91/25 97/9 104/18 106/4 **supporting [1]** 26/25 stopped [1] 9/21 sure [5] 32/23 50/5 **Technical** [1] 105/6 93/17 95/1 97/3 97/8 106/6 109/2 110/12 Stoy [10] 45/4 45/18 100/21 103/16 105/19 50/18 64/3 103/20 telephone [1] 31/19 110/23 62/6 62/24 63/23 surviving [2] 92/20 tell [10] 48/8 68/6 106/9 108/4 they're [2] 97/19 65/24 66/5 66/15 72/19 73/22 74/9 75/5 theft [4] 12/15 60/10 95/23 103/7 66/20 67/7 thing [1] 49/19 suspended [4] 9/9 76/7 76/24 77/6 102/5 80/15 93/5 strange [1] 16/23 9/16 28/23 29/21 telling [4] 44/7 57/18 things [9] 6/24 18/9 their [18] 5/5 5/18 **struggling [1]** 94/20 suspense [11] 9/7 80/19 109/14 8/19 15/3 16/16 16/17 30/19 54/20 88/7 **subject [2]** 56/12 34/18 34/24 35/4 17/14 18/18 43/9 56/8 88/12 106/3 106/15 temps [1] 9/10 108/19 35/11 35/12 35/18 ten [2] 9/10 92/12 58/19 63/24 75/23 107/2 subjects [1] 88/24 36/15 36/21 37/4 37/7 term [3] 77/6 77/7 82/13 86/18 91/10 think [48] 16/14 **submission** [2] 31/17 21/16 21/17 22/17 suspension [2] 14/1 77/8 91/13 94/21 107/6 53/18 termed [1] 76/5 them [8] 26/13 30/7 39/3 45/1 55/16 55/24 submissions [1] 33/9 **suspicious** [1] 69/1 terminate [6] 8/2 55/3 71/4 74/3 76/17 56/5 56/20 57/4 58/20 **submitted [1]** 31/16 11/18 11/22 15/20 80/14 105/17 60/13 60/14 61/6 61/9 switched [1] 106/19 **submitting [1]** 18/18 61/10 62/21 64/2 64/6 sworn [3] 1/7 48/4 40/9 59/14 themselves [1] 19/16 subparagraph [2] 112/2 terminated [1] 60/1 then [50] 3/3 8/21 65/22 69/21 72/20 45/22 69/12 system [44] 7/23 9/2 **terminating [1]** 55/12 9/16 16/7 19/15 19/18 74/4 75/14 75/24 subpostmaster [8] 9/4 10/16 13/2 18/1 termination [7] 8/16 28/23 29/7 29/21 76/15 78/4 78/22 79/1 8/3 12/9 17/13 24/9 18/8 18/20 19/3 19/15 9/17 14/6 27/15 53/1 30/16 32/6 32/9 32/9 80/23 81/14 87/5 27/6 35/20 43/2 90/18 57/2 65/18 87/12 88/4 89/14 19/19 20/1 20/5 20/8 32/11 35/13 37/9 Subpostmaster's [1] terms [17] 5/22 13/10 39/18 40/11 43/4 43/6 89/20 90/4 91/19 20/13 20/15 20/19 35/23 43/8 43/10 48/5 49/14 93/11 97/5 100/14 20/23 21/13 21/14 21/2 44/14 59/22 subpostmasters [14] 21/18 22/2 22/8 24/12 73/18 75/11 80/23 49/17 50/1 51/13 100/19 102/19 105/2 7/19 24/14 25/17 27/2 25/20 26/16 28/16 81/25 86/3 88/22 98/9 51/21 54/6 57/2 60/4 106/12 107/22 111/4 27/4 27/9 39/1 58/25 60/21 61/8 64/16 67/3 third [5] 28/6 39/17 28/22 30/20 31/9 31/9 99/11 102/11 103/10 80/13 82/13 95/5 95/7 31/18 32/10 32/16 107/22 107/25 69/11 69/12 70/2 71/23 75/24 90/10 96/6 96/11 36/13 37/2 38/18 **Territory** [1] 3/12 76/18 83/2 84/11 89/2 this [118] subsequent [2] 52/21 54/10 54/18 than [14] 30/13 33/11 91/2 92/9 96/1 101/15 thorough [1] 15/18 28/15 91/15 37/13 40/2 42/10 61/8 62/4 92/12 103/8 104/20 105/15 those [84] 2/23 3/25 subsequently [2] 110/24 42/13 49/5 50/12 107/17 5/21 11/4 13/21 18/6 64/13 68/23 system' [2] 40/3 92/8 50/25 61/24 63/17 theory [1] 54/13 19/14 19/18 20/23 substantive [3] 14/15 70/2 77/25 100/25 20/24 21/17 22/19 systems [1] 95/22 there [120] 71/9 71/18 25/12 28/25 30/2 32/7 thank [44] 1/5 2/1 there'd [1] 23/17 succinctly [1] 5/24 58/3 58/8 58/15 58/23 there's [14] 1/24 4/25 33/1 33/2 36/22 40/13 such [6] 17/19 24/15 table [17] 12/19 63/1 69/20 70/5 70/7 24/16 30/11 41/25 41/14 41/21 49/11 40/2 73/9 91/7 98/16 21/25 22/2 34/24 35/5 70/8 70/11 70/21 46/14 47/2 47/5 60/25 53/19 54/2 55/17 sufficiently [1] 83/22 80/17 82/23 83/4 70/24 71/13 71/22 61/2 61/13 88/4 93/11 55/21 55/23 56/3 suggest [6] 61/3 83/13 83/20 84/1 72/9 72/14 72/25 73/7 56/11 58/17 59/6 103/15 62/11 69/7 70/1 84/12 87/18 100/23 75/3 75/20 76/3 76/4 therefore [17] 6/21 60/18 61/14 62/8 101/21 102/2 101/1 108/22 109/23 77/22 80/9 84/25 85/8 25/11 52/1 55/16 62/10 62/15 62/19 suggested [2] 29/10 tables [2] 23/5 23/7 90/4 91/19 91/24 92/1 59/24 60/3 66/9 82/25 62/25 66/1 66/2 66/10 take [15] 13/6 13/17 97/2 99/16 100/21 83/6 86/17 88/20 90/2 67/16 67/22 72/10 suggestion [6] 29/15 18/7 18/14 18/15 100/23 101/19 104/25 98/20 99/3 103/12 72/14 73/13 74/6 29/25 30/3 30/23 18/16 27/18 31/1 103/18 105/18 74/18 74/20 75/22 107/8 110/25 111/2 45/23 50/24 32/13 37/10 40/9 111/7 111/14 111/15 these [25] 4/17 5/23 76/3 76/14 76/15 suggests [1] 46/19 56/20 57/23 71/4 95/3 7/22 22/7 22/21 23/4 that [656] 76/24 77/3 78/8 78/20 **summarise** [5] 59/12 taken [18] 4/23 8/1 that I [7] 53/13 53/15 32/17 32/20 40/15 78/22 81/4 81/10 78/18 81/3 85/23 16/23 28/18 30/20 53/25 60/20 61/20 47/10 47/22 49/9 52/4 81/22 82/14 82/17 94/13 30/25 51/2 51/22 54/4 65/21 108/4 55/10 87/12 88/9 84/20 85/12 88/14 summarised [2] 8/15 55/22 67/20 69/9 that's [58] 3/4 3/6 92/23 93/1 94/4 96/2 88/22 88/24 89/5 72/10 74/16 86/1 90/2 6/20 7/17 8/4 10/7 96/23 98/17 101/3 89/13 89/16 94/15 **summary [12]** 7/16 102/25 103/12 10/9 21/11 23/14 101/20 105/8 102/7 103/21 104/9 9/16 11/14 11/18 taking [5] 26/11 25/14 32/22 36/22 105/24 108/1 109/6 they [44] 1/22 5/7 11/20 14/6 16/9 16/16 27/21 56/8 60/3 89/21 40/5 45/7 45/15 46/6 5/13 5/23 15/6 17/10 109/8 110/4 110/10 26/3 45/21 59/14 **Talbot [1]** 59/4 54/1 55/22 57/14 18/3 19/9 19/13 19/16 110/11 111/10 59/23 talked [1] 84/18 though [2] 94/3 60/13 60/16 63/5 19/16 20/16 28/19 summing [1] 7/14 talking [2] 17/11 34/9 64/23 67/23 68/5 69/1 53/16 56/4 57/5 59/23 100/12 summing-up [1] 7/14 tally [1] 93/21 69/10 69/16 69/18 60/19 62/9 62/11 thought [5] 25/3

Т track [1] 42/17 under [9] 39/12 upheld [2] 8/7 65/18 tracking [1] 44/14 40/15 56/25 57/12 **uphold [1]** 27/15 thought... [4] 25/11 trading [1] 23/17 63/7 65/23 69/3 77/15 **upholding [5]** 40/8 25/22 64/11 69/6 53/1 57/2 64/21 68/24 train [2] 25/11 60/9 110/15 three [13] 3/13 7/18 training [1] 23/10 under-declarations uploaded [2] 72/5 9/9 18/14 44/8 46/2 transaction [2] 17/14 **[1]** 56/25 72/15 46/20 47/22 71/3 **upon [3]** 43/23 69/14 47/9 undercopies [6] 72/10 75/17 87/6 26/13 65/21 66/2 66/3 98/6 transactional [6] 111/8 17/7 23/12 39/20 41/7 67/21 67/22 urban [1] 3/22 through [20] 15/7 41/21 43/15 **URN [2]** 71/6 71/14 underlying [1] 79/6 15/16 15/23 18/8 understand [20] transactions [12] us [33] 1/4 2/16 18/20 18/25 19/15 17/18 19/14 26/14 11/20 15/19 16/6 12/10 12/25 17/22 19/19 20/25 23/4 23/7 26/17 41/17 52/22 16/20 16/22 18/19 37/4 58/7 59/19 72/19 25/23 28/13 48/7 59/9 53/8 53/21 54/15 55/4 20/12 21/8 26/1 50/14 73/22 74/9 75/5 76/7 63/9 71/4 74/20 77/1 66/1 66/10 55/10 61/19 63/22 76/24 77/6 78/19 95/3 transcript [7] 1/23 63/25 76/11 77/18 80/18 80/19 81/3 tills [1] 32/6 47/25 49/3 57/21 88/20 91/17 108/7 81/10 84/19 85/12 time [45] 5/23 5/24 57/24 58/9 89/9 109/3 85/23 87/21 91/21 6/6 6/8 6/9 9/24 11/10 transfer [1] 35/16 understanding [16] 93/23 96/24 97/4 18/7 18/19 20/12 6/17 10/8 15/18 20/16 98/15 99/22 102/5 **transferred** [1] 34/19 20/24 21/8 25/1 40/10 30/3 31/2 37/6 55/20 103/20 107/14 transfers [1] 35/9 42/8 45/7 45/13 52/25 transpired [2] 62/17 57/14 63/11 66/14 usage [1] 43/20 53/7 54/1 54/5 54/20 use [7] 32/4 92/18 62/18 78/15 80/25 88/14 56/13 57/11 62/1 treated [1] 82/25 88/19 109/22 95/22 101/20 101/24 63/20 66/7 68/11 70/3 trial [18] 44/22 45/12 understood [1] 81/15 104/17 106/18 83/8 87/24 88/1 90/16 48/1 50/16 50/17 51/7 used [2] 57/4 75/10 undetermined [1] 90/18 91/8 99/1 99/6 51/11 52/7 52/8 57/11 53/3 user [4] 19/8 30/6 100/1 100/4 102/13 59/7 61/18 64/14 unduly [1] 69/1 32/6 66/7 104/19 105/12 105/22 65/17 66/17 66/23 unexplained [4] 8/25 user-friendly [1] 19/8 106/3 107/21 68/2 68/9 9/14 55/13 55/21 using [3] 65/24 66/2 timed [3] 46/25 47/3 trials [2] 26/3 62/18 Unique [1] 89/8 66/8 47/6 tried [2] 98/24 107/9 unit [8] 28/20 29/11 **usual [1]** 70/3 times [1] 37/20 true [5] 1/20 44/11 29/14 30/17 72/16 usually [1] 93/4 title [4] 11/13 29/3 55/8 63/22 72/11 72/19 72/21 72/22 73/21 86/18 try [2] 23/21 77/17 units [3] 13/11 27/20 today [13] 2/6 73/12 vaguely [3] 48/24 32/7 trying [1] 20/25 73/14 75/15 75/18 51/5 68/17 Tuesday [5] 41/14 unless [1] 36/3 85/19 99/18 99/22 valid [1] 68/24 41/18 111/6 111/12 unreliable [2] 98/11 100/10 100/12 100/13 value [3] 19/11 44/15 111/18 105/18 102/5 102/20 55/16 turn [8] 1/14 36/3 unsafe [1] 76/12 today's [1] 71/23 variation [1] 98/14 48/7 48/18 49/2 71/9 unshaded [1] 101/6 together [5] 54/20 various [11] 5/3 18/3 71/18 72/3 until [6] 4/18 19/16 72/11 73/25 75/1 81/7 29/13 30/14 66/18 20/22 23/11 73/15 Turner [2] 33/17 told [3] 45/10 50/15 75/25 78/17 80/17 34/11 111/17 59/19 81/5 81/8 84/16 Turning [2] 48/2 51/8 untoward [2] 30/12 too [3] 29/25 30/23 two [13] 11/24 14/10 vast [1] 5/2 56/2 94/6 verification [3] 43/7 23/17 29/21 53/17 unusable [2] 51/4 took [16] 11/1 12/5 79/5 79/9 64/7 75/14 75/18 51/20 14/17 14/21 15/10 unusual [4] 10/18 verified [6] 52/22 75/18 87/6 88/22 25/14 26/20 28/10 79/7 105/24 106/2 95/10 102/7 13/8 15/2 24/8 40/7 44/22 54/20 106/9 106/13 two pages [2] 11/24 **unwilling [2]** 90/19 55/18 60/8 61/19 92/5 verify [6] 20/25 53/7 14/10 91/6 92/15 up [27] 7/14 17/20 54/14 92/19 95/20 **type [1]** 16/21 top [7] 8/20 11/13 106/14 18/25 30/17 32/4 types [2] 101/11 22/7 34/21 35/5 48/4 version [1] 72/4 101/14 35/24 36/3 51/19 59/1 63/6 very [27] 5/24 6/2 63/4 72/22 74/22 **topic [1]** 57/13 78/25 80/8 85/8 87/7 9/23 9/23 12/9 12/25 total [9] 14/8 19/8 unable [4] 40/1 84/4 24/21 32/22 48/24 89/5 90/13 94/20 97/2 19/9 19/13 35/12 78/7 90/19 91/6 51/5 56/18 69/20 97/3 99/12 100/20 78/13 85/8 87/17 70/24 72/9 75/3 77/22 unaware [4] 27/10 104/5 107/10 107/17 totally [2] 9/14 88/23 37/17 38/9 62/1 88/21 98/4 100/23 107/24 towards [5] 11/5 104/25 105/9 106/8 uncover [1] 60/20 update [1] 100/3 24/16 41/5 51/14 uncovered [2] 61/8 108/3 111/1 111/5 updated [2] 99/2 52/12 61/17 111/8 111/14 100/6

view [9] 3/22 16/17 23/24 56/9 56/24 57/13 60/8 79/20 79/22 visible [2] 1/16 63/5 visit [4] 6/7 10/23 42/24 43/9 visited [3] 23/9 23/15 42/16 visiting [5] 2/15 2/17 2/17 2/20 18/11 visits [1] 26/8 volumes [1] 42/22 **voluntary [2]** 3/20 3/24

## W

wait [2] 19/15 19/18 waiting [1] 30/14 Wallis [5] 82/9 87/20 93/22 99/17 99/23 want [9] 56/6 57/8 57/17 57/21 61/4 65/14 68/5 77/13 77/17 was [302] wasn't [21] 14/22 15/1 17/8 21/4 21/18 27/11 31/6 32/13 33/17 39/5 51/1 54/8 64/4 64/14 67/2 68/14 84/19 85/4 85/5 91/23 103/11 way [17] 3/17 6/14 25/4 25/21 29/19 32/4 33/20 37/1 39/17 55/3 73/18 88/17 95/21 98/5 103/5 103/20 105/6 we [137] we'd [2] 24/17 53/9 we'll [5] 10/25 57/23 75/3 97/2 111/12 we're [9] 11/17 17/11 18/17 73/14 80/2 80/5 93/22 94/25 100/12 we've [14] 16/11 30/6 37/13 37/24 84/18 85/11 87/19 97/23 98/14 101/25 103/12 104/25 105/16 109/12 Wednesday [5] 41/16

(45) thought... - week

41/18 42/1 42/4 42/22

week [34] 9/1 12/12

28/11 28/20 28/21

29/13 29/16 29/18

30/15 30/15 34/14

34/14 34/17 34/17

34/21 34/23 34/25

35/15 35/17 35/19

35/25 36/1 39/21

41/19 42/11 50/7

35/1 35/1 35/6 35/7

35/8 35/8 35/10 35/15

W weekend [1] 6/4 weekly [4] 41/8 41/16 43/23 46/20 weeks [13] 9/10 13/22 33/12 33/15 36/8 39/8 40/18 41/9 41/14 43/14 43/21 44/4 46/19 weeks' [1] 12/20 well [13] 2/25 4/24 48/18 53/4 56/16 58/16 64/10 66/9 66/25 68/17 68/19 69/18 111/5 Welsh [1] 64/2 went [16] 15/23 55/25 56/4 56/10 62/2 76/12 76/13 76/14 80/20 81/3 87/7 89/20 91/2 107/10 107/17 107/24 were [144] weren't [4] 4/23 62/7 67/1 106/3 west [6] 3/14 3/14 3/15 3/16 3/16 3/17 Western [1] 3/12 what [66] 2/16 3/9 8/13 13/6 13/17 16/6 16/21 18/20 20/18 20/21 21/2 21/16 23/14 23/15 23/16 23/23 24/25 28/10 31/6 31/22 32/18 32/20 36/22 36/25 37/17 48/8 49/19 54/6 54/12 55/10 55/23 56/23 57/10 57/20 60/16 62/9 62/22 65/8 65/25 66/4 69/7 69/16 69/18 72/19 73/23 74/5 74/9 76/5 76/7 77/6 80/2 85/23 94/7 95/11 95/12 95/13 96/14 96/19 96/21 102/6 103/13 107/20 108/23 109/11 109/14 109/24 what's [2] 18/25 19/2 whatsoever [3] 21/12 36/20 56/1 when [35] 6/6 8/10 13/6 13/15 17/1 17/13 17/14 18/9 18/24 23/7 23/14 30/7 32/5 36/17 38/3 40/8 48/19 51/22 51/23 56/22 60/14 61/16 62/2 62/8 62/13 63/13 63/16 66/22 68/1 68/7 76/10 90/16 91/7 99/4 104/10

where [28] 10/19

101/7 108/1

17/23 24/9 25/16 30/6 wide [2] 4/25 5/11 30/22 43/14 44/9 44/16 49/4 49/23 50/5 53/2 53/9 55/17 55/25 will [14] 2/4 19/9 56/3 56/9 60/5 63/6 64/18 75/7 81/8 83/13 84/6 86/18 101/11 101/12 whereas [2] 66/5 88/12 whether [28] 20/18 21/4 24/13 24/23 26/5 37/1 38/4 38/6 38/14 38/18 43/16 55/6 56/14 74/2 79/20 79/23 83/15 83/16 87/2 91/5 91/12 96/24 103/2 103/4 103/7 104/1 107/10 110/12 which [74] 1/15 2/7 2/23 5/17 6/14 6/25 7/5 8/7 8/10 9/15 10/2 10/10 11/16 14/13 14/21 16/10 16/23 17/18 22/11 22/13 23/25 24/13 29/1 34/24 37/25 38/7 38/8 41/10 44/9 45/25 46/23 50/23 51/2 51/3 51/14 57/1 57/4 57/21 WITN09890300 [1] 63/5 63/7 64/13 64/22 64/24 65/16 68/22 69/24 74/23 76/19 78/14 82/17 82/21 83/23 84/2 84/9 84/18 86/9 86/11 86/14 86/16 89/4 92/16 93/3 93/7 94/14 97/6 97/10 101/9 102/12 103/2 108/19 109/11 109/17 109/18 110/5 Whittam [4] 105/3 105/4 105/5 112/14 who [20] 3/19 11/21 14/21 15/15 23/24 29/4 36/19 42/21 58/18 58/20 64/3 74/11 74/18 76/24 80/19 80/21 81/15 91/5 107/12 107/13 who'd [1] 53/18 whole [2] 8/23 93/8 wholly [1] 74/14 whose [1] 7/1 why [30] 29/11 36/18 40/21 55/18 55/22 56/5 57/17 57/21 58/10 59/25 65/18 66/4 67/21 67/23 68/5 68/6 68/14 77/18 80/4 84/19 85/12 89/16 94/15 97/22 98/15 99/22 100/10 100/12

widespread [2] 92/17 95/22 32/11 56/20 56/23 70/10 72/14 82/19 89/7 89/11 98/21 99/4 99/6 99/14 WILLIAMS [4] 63/2 108/5 112/8 112/16 Wise [1] 23/1 wish [3] 36/4 48/16 58/18 wished [1] 87/2 within [9] 11/16 21/24 25/7 28/3 38/5 38/10 59/17 73/25 91/10 without [4] 35/20 43/6 72/1 110/24 WITN08560100 [5] 1/24 15/12 31/13 40/5 52/11 WITN09890100 [1] 71/6 WITN09890200 [2] 71/15 77/22 WITN09890208 [1] 100/21 71/24 witness [40] 1/13 2/3 | 90/6 94/1 106/12 5/15 44/8 46/10 47/19 year [8] 33/13 71/14 48/13 51/16 57/4 63/16 63/18 65/2 65/7 65/16 69/25 70/5 71/3 years [9] 68/18 83/9 76/15 77/21 78/2 78/24 86/20 86/24 87/10 88/5 89/2 90/7 90/12 93/12 94/14 97/24 99/12 99/24 99/25 102/5 107/12 107/20 108/20 111/8 111/10 witnesses [1] 52/4 wonder [1] 68/10 word [2] 29/22 104/17 words [7] 30/2 42/8 43/24 57/4 69/15 87/13 106/11 work [5] 2/2 6/3 28/13 76/9 98/3 worked [4] 2/18 26/2 74/19 97/5 workers [1] 82/14 working [10] 2/18 3/8 16/1 36/21 37/5 37/7 54/18 59/17 60/17 73/6 works [1] 16/3 would [50] 8/9 10/5 12/23 14/16 15/3 15/5 yet [3] 9/8 75/21 89/6 15/7 15/25 16/4 19/16 you [427]

25/20 26/4 26/11 28/16 30/11 43/7 44/11 44/12 46/23 48/16 49/9 50/4 50/12 105/13 50/12 52/2 53/22 56/21 57/9 57/16 57/23 62/5 62/11 62/15 69/11 69/12 70/1 74/11 74/12 74/14 74/16 80/25 81/1 81/5 81/11 81/12 90/16 90/17 103/18 107/20 110/12 wouldn't [2] 24/3 107/12 writing [1] 34/3 written [2] 99/18 99/25 wrong [7] 28/22 Z 47/18 61/1 62/4 63/12 97/8 109/2 wrongdoing [1] 61/2 wrote [2] 63/13 99/23 zoom [2] 33/23 WYN [12] 63/2 108/5 108/13 108/21 108/25 109/13 109/20 110/8 110/14 111/2 112/8 112/16

Y yeah [5] 13/13 87/22 78/21 82/12 82/16 84/9 109/16 110/4 92/7 92/13 93/20 97/17 101/22 101/24 109/6 yes [81] 1/5 1/17 1/19 7/4 7/9 7/11 7/13 8/6

1/22 2/14 4/7 4/10 5/2 10/4 11/4 11/23 14/23 16/12 17/9 20/16 21/6 22/17 24/4 25/22 26/4 26/10 26/19 26/22 27/10 28/1 31/21 37/23 39/10 41/2 44/13 45/4 45/6 45/7 47/24 49/1 55/9 57/25 58/2 58/2 58/8 58/21 65/8 67/2 67/19 67/25 69/20 69/23 70/11 70/20 72/2 77/12 77/13 85/3 91/17 94/17 94/21 97/4 97/5 97/16 97/20 98/13 100/17 104/14 105/13 105/22 106/12 108/13 108/21 108/24 108/25 109/4 109/7 110/8 110/14 110/19 110/22

you'd [4] 64/10 68/6 81/23 107/11 you'll [2] 78/22 you're [13] 13/14 30/17 32/5 34/9 54/8 67/13 69/25 79/18 80/22 94/6 102/4 103/20 109/14 you've [21] 16/6 37/20 59/8 59/9 59/19 61/18 72/25 75/20 76/5 78/10 79/9 80/9 85/19 88/17 100/18 102/23 104/11 104/15 105/9 106/7 106/23 your [115] yourself [1] 55/5

zero [3] 34/25 35/6 41/11 100/22