

**ICL Pathway**

**Acceptance Proposal**  
**Acceptance Incident 218**

Ref:CR/ACD/218  
Version:1.0  
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## **0 Document control**

### **0.1 Document history**

ICL Pathway

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Version	Date	Reason
0.1	20/8/98	Initial draft for comments

**0.2 Approval authorities**

Name	Position	Signature	Date
J H Bennett	Managing Director		
J C C Dicks	Customer Requirements Director		
W M Foley	Business Development Director		

**0.3 Associated documents**

Reference	Vers	Title	Source
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**0.4 Abbreviations**

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## 1 Purpose

This document sets out ICL Pathway's proposals that Acceptance Incident 218 may be categorised as closed and that the Clearance Plan has been successfully implemented.

## 2 Summary

ICL Pathway believes that no effort has been spared to develop training events suitable for the wide range of users in the POCL network. However, we strongly maintain that the success of a programme of this size cannot be achieved by training alone. A change management approach must exist for pre-entry and steady state environments as well as for formal training.

ICL Pathway believes the Clearance actions now proposed demonstrate its intent to provide further investment to ensure the success of the Horizon change programme. ICL Pathway will discuss the implementation of these steps with POCL as a matter of the greatest urgency.

## 3 Criteria

No Criteria are formally cited on the Acceptance Incident, although reference is understood to be made to Criterion 534/1:

"Pathway's training solution shall take account of Users' experiences in term of automated products and platforms (ECCO+, APT, ALPS) and their differing abilities to learn."

The Acceptance Incident reads: "The Managers Training Course is not acceptable due to deficiencies in the accounting modules. In the live environment the training given did not equip the users to perform the completion of office cash accounts. This is a basic POCL function that is central to running and accounting for the POCL network."

## 4 POCL position

Based upon the minutes of the Acceptance Board Meeting of 18 August 1999, POCL contended that:

"the reason for the incident was the requirement to recognise the differences in users' ability".

"a number of offices could not cope with the first live balance without HFSO support which had never been intended by POCL"

"POCL now have had additional proposals from Pathway but they cannot accept this as a mature plan – it is lacking in details of cost and time for example".

## 5 Pathway position

Pathway believes that it has made exceptional efforts both over time, and in particular during the Live Trial, to provide a Manager's training course that effectively supports POCL business needs.

Significant changes to the business processes specified for producing Cash Accounts were introduced into the Live Trial at short notice. The fundamental issue from early Live Trial exposure was that the balancing process was too complicated for a high proportion of sub post offices. It needed to be simplified, in terms of the necessary POCL business rules to be followed, and made easier to operate, in terms of quantity of work to be performed and the HCI of some display screens, commensurate with this group's knowledge of POCL business rules and initial IT skills.

### 5.1 The Need For A Management Of Change Programme

POCL is introducing Horizon to the entire UK counters network. This covers a wide spectrum of offices from single position to 20-position, from automated to non-automated, from 20-year-old staff to 85-year-old staff or agents. ICL Pathway has always clearly stated that this is, by any standard, a massive change programme. Training is but a part of the overall POCL change management programme for their network. ICL Pathway has continued to stress this point in correspondence between Bruce McNiven and John Bennett (copies attached in section 4).

Moreover, besides introducing automation through Horizon, POCL is using the change opportunity to introduce conformance of business practices throughout the network.

### 5.2 Differing Requirements of Users

The development of training courses – in particular the Manager's course - and associated material has been on-going since May 1996. A chronology of that development is included as Appendix 6. POCL has been closely involved through formal reviews and regular meetings with the specification and development of all training courses and has approved the course specifications and sat in on the dry run of all events. Significant change has taken place to the training events since May 1996:

- Courses were extended from a half-day to one day and from one day to one and a half days in recognition of the need to provide more detailed training
- The training course population has increased from 67,000 to 72,000
- The number of training events to be provided was increased by ICL Pathway from 12,000 to 12,600 to provide contingency for lower than expected attendance. This was to cover a POCL concern that mandating training would not be totally effective

- Post the HM Treasury review and the cancellation of the benefit card, the specific benefit card training has been replaced by training of a similar time to allow more time for balancing.

In recognition of the need to be ready to adapt courses in the light of real experience, ICL Pathway has made every effort to make changes to the training to POCL's satisfaction before and throughout Live Trial, such that every course has been significantly changed. Furthermore, at POCL's request, an additional 24 outlets were installed in July, to form a basis on which the effectiveness of the training improvements could be – and indeed have been – demonstrated. At every stage POCL has had complete approval authority for the changes being made and has registered its satisfaction with the results of these changes.

ICL Pathway has endeavoured to keep the user uppermost in mind. This has guided the design of the system with use of touch screens, clear on-screen instructions on next steps and easy-to-use documentation, and the approach to training that delivers competent users to the programme.

### 5.3 Improvements to Balancing

It is clear that the day-to-day use of the system works well for the majority of users. However, there have been significant problems in the use of the stock unit balancing and the cash account part of the system. These arise principally on Wednesday nights and have caused disruption in post offices and a significant number of help desk calls.

A number of factors have contributed to this:

- the length of the end-to-end balancing process
- problems with the printing of the cash account and the time taken to print (20 minutes to print two copies)
- the need for a progress indicator on the print screens causing staff to believe that nothing was happening and to press a series of keys or buttons
- staff not following the Quick Reference Guides to ensure conformance to process
- screen freeze and printer hanging problems which stopped the system
- uncertainty about POCL business rules and how to apply them in the Horizon context
- overload of the Horizon Systems Help Desk

When this disruption became apparent, ICL Pathway proposed a number of changes to the system to make balancing easier. A joint workshop took place to evaluate these changes, change requests were raised and the changes were implemented on 12 July. In parallel with the system changes, the training courses were modified to place far greater emphasis on the balancing part of the system and changes were made to the various

documentation sets to ensure consistency. Specific details of the changes are appended as Appendix 7.

A further joint workshop has since taken place on 26 July where a further 60 possible improvements to the system were discussed. The outcome of this workshop is currently under normal business process review within POCL.

## 5.4 Additional Proposals from ICL Pathway

A joint workshop on Management of Change took place on 13 August in a final attempt to arrive at an acceptable Clearance Plan for Acceptance Incident 218. At this POCL said actions were needed in seven areas. Of these ICL Pathway contend that the first three are Management of Change related and the other four are business as usual actions associated with training.

### 5.4.1 Management Of Change

#### 5.4.1.1 Pre-Entry Event

It was agreed at a joint workshop on 13 August that about 20% of the user population would need a pre-entry Horizon appreciation event. This would demystify computers, introduce standard balance terminology, explain the 'manual to automated' change, give the user hands-on experience using the in-built training mode.

*Action: ICL Pathway has offered, jointly with POCL, to develop and run 370 half day events for a maximum of 3,700 office managers. This is a new event, not yet developed and not envisaged within the contract.*

#### 5.4.1.2 Post Installation Care

Most management of change programmes provide for post-installation user care: this gives support during the initial take-on period when users are at their most vulnerable and when confidence in new systems and processes may be low. ICL Pathway is responsible for migration, a task that is sub-contracted to POCL who is naturally best placed to undertake this task. POCL has defined a Horizon Field Support Officer (HFSO) to perform this role. In addition, POCL have allocated an HFSO to each office for the day of migration and the following day. POCL has been reviewing the use of the HFSO at the first balance, i.e. the first Wednesday after migration.

*Action: ICL Pathway believes that after the first Wednesday, any support should be part of business as usual, with the help desks backed up by normal retail line support providing sufficient guidance: there will always be a first 'unaccompanied' balance. The danger with any level of continued in-office support is that the user will rely too much on the support and not accept personal responsibility for the new approach and subsequent learning.*



#### 5.4.1.3 Post Installation Competency Strategy

The joint workshop on 13 August accepted that not all users out within the large population will 'absorb' Horizon. This may eventually call for closure of the outlet, replacement of the sub-postmaster or training of additional staff.

*Handling fallout is a natural part of any Management of Change programme. Decisions arising are entirely within POCL's remit and while ICL Pathway will support any change under the Operational Business Change process, it cannot be a party to decisions of a contractual nature between POCL and its staff or agents.*

#### 5.4.2 Business As Usual Training-Related Actions

##### 5.4.2.1 Monitoring Of Training Delivery

POCL is concerned that trainer competence is not sufficiently closely monitored by ICL Pathway or its sub-contractor thus allowing perceived "weak trainers" to continue training.

*Action: Training course attendees all complete confidential appraisal forms. These forms are reviewed and assessed by ICL Training and action is taken if any negative views are expressed about the either training or the trainer. ICL Training also undertakes at regular intervals, sampled attendance at training events to monitor the performance of the trainer. This is completely in line with ICL Training's approach across its business and is, we believe, sufficient to ensure the quality of the trainers.*

##### 5.4.2.2 User Competency

POCL considers that the Performance Standard Assessment (PSA) is too subjective and needs to be reviewed and re-defined to ensure it meets expectations. The current PSA had previously been defined and agreed by POCL.

*Action: ICL Pathway is happy to will work with POCL to ensure an agreed PSA is delivered on the training courses.*

##### 5.4.2.3 Post Training Consolidation

Horizon has an in-built training mode that allows the user (post system installation and in a special training mode) to enter and perform transactions on the system to improve familiarity and ease of system use. POCL and ICL Pathway have identified that users are not making use of training mode and hence not taking the opportunity to improve their confidence.

*Action: ICL Pathway recognises this and is proposing a number of steps. These include more time during the formal training events to cover training mode (we have already proposed its introduction during the pre-entry event), POCL mandating and monitoring the use of training mode in live outlets and the HFSO encouraging the use of training mode during his time at the office.*

##### 5.4.2.4 Agreed Training Course Changes

POCL has already submitted to ICL Pathway a number of minor changes to course content following the dry runs of events.



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*Action: ICL Pathway is already implementing these changes and will in the course of normal business continue with POCL to review course content and applicability, making agreed changes where appropriate.*