

SUMMARY OF FACTS PREPARED IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 21.3(1)(b)
OF THE CRIMINAL PROCEDURE RULES 2005

ROYAL MAIL GROUP LIMITED v ALISON HENDERSON

The Defendant was the Postmistress at the Worstead sub-Post Office. She is 50 years of age (dob **GRO**) and had been a sub-Postmistress for 13 years.

An audit was conducted at the Worstead sub-Post Office on 10th February. The audit revealed a shortage of £11,957.78.

The sub-Post Office is situated in the village of Worstead approximately 30 miles north west of Norwich. The branch has limited opening times between 8.30 am to 17:00 hours on Mondays and Tuesdays and on Wednesdays and Thursdays the office is open from 8.30 am to 12:00 hours. The office is closed on Fridays and Saturdays.

Arrangements were made to interview the Defendant. That interview took place on 11th March 2010 at the Norwich Mail Centre. The interview was conducted on tape and in the presence of the Defendant and a friend who she nominated to attend the interview.

During the course of the interview, the Defendant confirmed that she was the only person working at the branch under the User No. IDAHE001. Her daughter however did attend the office on occasions to cover during the holiday relief.

The Defendant maintained that the safe was always locked with working cash being in the drawer of the Post Office.

The Defendant was referred to the branch trading statement for 6th January 2010, in particular the cash in hand figure of £16,712.83. The Defendant was asked that when the trading statement was completed was that amount of cash in the safe, to which she replied, "*I should imagine so, if that's what's there.*" (15.34)

The Defendant confirmed that she would have counted the cash. The Defendant was later asked whether she completed the branch trading statements in the same way each month and she replied, "*Yeah.*" (16.52)

The Defendant was then shown a schedule of cash in hand figures that the Investigation Manager had prepared based upon the branch trading statements he had obtained. It was pointed out to the Defendant that up until the time of audit when it was discovered that there was £8,000 in cash in the Post Office, there had been an average sum of about £20,000 in cash held at the office. ~The Defendant confirmed that it was a shock to discover the shortage at audit.

It was pointed out to the Defendant that £12,000 therefore must have gone missing in a four week period.

The Defendant later said that she could not recall having a problem in the accounts but that she quite often did and that her method was to pick through and sort it out. She said, "*you know if your stamps and whatever are out then you have to go through and recount.*" (24.35)

The Defendant was later asked what had happened and she replied, "*I don't know and I can't say any more, I'm not prepared to say any more, I've got no other answers to give you.*" (33.31)

The Defendant denied that she had stolen money from the Post Office. The interview subsequently concluded.

Documents associated herewith:

1. Summary of taped interview
2. Financial Assurance Audit Cash Sheet
3. Final trading statement of Postmaster dated 10th February 2010
4. Audit report
5. Schedule prepared by Investigation Manager
6. Branch trading statement dated 8th April 2009, 3rd June 2009, 8th July 2009, 8th October 2009, 12th November 2009, 14th December 2009, 10th February 2010, 16th February 2010.