

Memo



Royal Mail

The Real Network

26th June 2006

Investigation Team Post Office Limited

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ROYAL MAIL GROUP plc v JOSEPHINE HAMILTON
CASE NO: POLTD/0506/0685

Noted.

In my opinion the evidence gave rise to offences of theft / false accounting against the offender.

The alleged offence came to light when the high levels of cash holdings at the Office was noted. When on the 6th March she was required to return sums of at least £25,000 on the 8th the offender went off sick.

When interviewed the offender in the presence of her Solicitors presents a prepared statement and refuses to answer questions. She denies stealing from the Post Office and purports to suggest that the training was somewhat lacking and systems rigid or shambolic. In essence she is implying that if there was a shortfall this must be due to mistakes.

Before advising could the Officer deal with the following:-

- 1 With regards to the Horizon Final Cash Accounts these appear to have been signed by the offender. The cash account schedule produced shows an increase in cash in the 4 or 5 months prior to the interview. It is not clear what the standard cash holding should be but presumably this would have been somewhere between £15,000 and £20,000 could this be clarified. Is there any evidence other than the offenders signature to suggest that she was responsible for completing the accounts (rather than just signing). Can a statement be obtained from other members of staff stating who was responsible for completing the accounts.

I note that the Office appeared to convert to Branch Trading some time after October 2005, could the Officer confirm when this was. If it is suggested that the money may have been stolen prior to that date what would have been the position when converting to Branch Trading. Would a visit have been made to the Office to explain the procedure or is the position as the offender says ie a DVD was delivered.

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Cont...

I take it the offender would not have been responsible for completing the accounts for Week 11 bearing in mind her sick leave. If she did not complete the accounts for the week-ending the 9th March 2006 when the loss was discovered, in the absence of other evidence it may be difficult to establish that the accounts were wrong at the date they were last completed ie the period ending in February.

- 2 Could statements be obtained from other members of staff as is suggested by the Officer confirming that they were not responsible for the fraud and that the offender was responsible for completing the account.
- 3 Could the Officer also obtain a statement explaining what training was given to the Defendant. Could someone with due knowledge assess the Horizon call fees and give a view as to whether or not matters reported particularly in the last year could have led to the discrepancy in the accounts.

The file should be returned in due course.

J A McFarlane
Principal Lawyer
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