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# Royal Mail Group

## ROYAL MAIL GROUP – CONFIDENTIAL

### Record of Taped Interview

#### Record of Taped Interview Summary

Person interviewed: ANGELA MARY SEFTON (AS)

Place of Interview: BOOTLE CROWN OFFICE

BOOTLE

Exhibit No:

Number of pages: 109

Signature of interviewer producing record

Date of Interview: 20.1.12

Time commenced: 11.18

Tape reference no.: 073505

Time concluded: 12.00

Duration of Interview: 42 MINUTES

Interviewing Officers: STEPHEN BRADSHAW (SB)

KVIN RYAN (KR)

Other persons present: SARAH GIBSON (SG) - SOLICITOR

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
00.10		<p>Usual introductions made, caution administered and explained. Forms GS001 &amp; GS003 completed. AS declines the presence of a Post Office friend but accepts a Solicitor.</p> <p>Recap of events on the 6<sup>th</sup> January. SB explained he received a phone call from AS' work colleague Anne asking to speak to him out of hours regarding work issues. Following an audit on the 6<sup>th</sup> January Anne handed SB a letter signed by them both stating they had been suppressing giro deposits from a business customer. A search took place of AS' home address when nothing was seized.</p>
7.09	SB	<p>The only question we sort of asked you was that could you point out where the giro deposits were you said they were in the cupboard and that was in the secure area of the counter area and while we were in</p>

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
7.53	AS	<p>there a total of 40 deposit slips with a number of cheque envelopes were recovered and we didn't discuss anything else. Was that a true record of what went on on the day?</p> <p>It is.</p> <p>SB read out the letter:-</p> <p>In 2005 we had a change of computer systems by the Post Office. It occurred that we had a £4,000 shortage. The Post Office said they would leave the shortage in abeyance for 6 months so that all work could be checked. Nobody could find the shortage so the Postmaster was asked to pay it back in full. Ali (indistinct) who's the Sub-Postmaster told us he would pay half of the shortage but we would have to pay the other half and any future shortages would have to be paid for by us for the Post Office and the ATM. At first we tried to make shortages good ourselves by using our own credit cards. We also didn't take any holidays and would pay our holiday money towards the debt. However eventually we ran out of our own funds to pay it back. We began to cover shortages by delaying the process in the business deposits to Alliance &amp; Leicester/Santander but we cannot go on any longer. We cannot explain how shortages happened but over the year the figure has built up to £34,250 approx. We have now reached breaking point because of this. Our lives and our (indistinct) are deeply affected by this. We are now in personal debt because of this total mess we find ourselves in. We have both worked in the Post Office for over 20 years and in all that time I've never ever had a problem until this situation and it's signed by Angela Sefton and Anne Nield. Is that your signature?</p> <p>AS</p> <p>It is.</p>

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	SB	And you wrote this letter without?
9.19	AS	I did yeah.
	SB	On these shortages what would you like to tell us about, what can you tell us about how this has all occurred? Going back to 2005 you had this shortage, how has it built up to £34,000?
	AS	It's hard, when we were short in the balance we ran out of money eventually our own money to put in so we used to delay the deposits going through to the giro bank and over the years the figure got bigger and so we were terrified of saying anything.
12.45		AS said they could be anything between £40 to £800 out at the branch trading statement.
13.20	SB	Did the Sub-Postmaster at any time give you money to make good these shortages?
	AS	No only initially in 2005.
	SB	Right so what instructions did he give you about making good these losses?
	AS	He said to us Anne has got a copy of a contract that he gave us years ago, it's not dated and it says in the contract that we're liable for any shortages on the till and whoever is working at that time it would be shared out the shortage would be shared out between whoever it was and we'd have to put the money in. Now I didn't sign that contract because I didn't agree with that because I think it's his, he's the postmaster he should stand for any shortages but he says I'm not here so it's you know I didn't make the shortage you did.
15.40	SB	You said you started holding back the giros right so just explain to us

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		what you mean by holding back the giros. You've got a shortage of £1,000.
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Ok so you've started, explain to me how you looked after that shortage?
	AS	Somebody come in a company would come in and pay £1,000 in for instance and say we were £1000 short, well we'd keep hold of the giro deposit until we got another payment in to cover the £1000 and then we would send in the first, we would do it on a rotation we never ever kept any payments back, we delayed them but we never ever kept any back it was on a you know a rotation basis and the reason it's come to sort of one company is because at the beginning all the paying ins were done with the date stamp and now 99% of transactions are done either on a swipe card or a bar code and that's the only company left more or less that use that type of giro deposit and that's why it's that company.
	SB	Right which company is that?
	AS	Animals in Need.
17.39	SB	So are you saying that the ones then that these, this business customer Animals in Need, they're the ones that are paying in sufficient amounts for you to cover the shortages?
	AS	Yeah.
19.03	SB	In simplistic terms is last weeks went in this week, this week went in next week?
	AS	Yeah.
19.12	SB	So when we were there?
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Right we recovered 40 giro deposit slips ok?
	AS	Yeah.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	SB	These are SB4 to SB43.
	AS	Yeah.
19.38	SB	There's also a list there SB44 you got a copy of the list in front, they're the outstanding ones, they're the 40 that's listed.
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Ok can you explain why we've got 40 'cos it's building up to £34,000?
	AS	Yeah that's right.
	SB	Of how you come to be in such a mess of shortages of £34,000?
	AS	Well I can only, it certainly wasn't because we were taking money out of the drawer and I can swear that on my life. It's either happened, I mean if we knew where the shortages occurred, you know we could try and fix them but it's, I can only think that it's either transposed figures or we've given money too much over the counter and over the years it's added up.
20.46		It was put to AS that £34,000 was an awful lot of wrong change to give out and that her till would be out.
21.40		AS explained they have a Bank of Ireland ATM.
23.25		AS said they may receive one transaction correction a week but that it was hard to say. It was put to her that they would receive many more if they had been making that many mistakes.
25.41	AS	Can I just mention this, the Farmers Arms the pub down the road, they paid us, the manager paid in you know X amount and then they came back and he said my Head Office has been on the phone to me, we paid

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
		in say £200 I can't remember what the figure was, say £200, you've only put that through as £100 so you'll be short that week and you should get it back, we never heard a thing about that, we never ever got money back with transaction corrections it was very rare.
27.08	SB	Well you can say then is that whatever went in is correct.
	AS	Well we assumed it was correct 'til he brought it to our attention, it wasn't us that picked up on the mistake it was the company who owned the Farmers Arms.
	SB	Yeah but what they're saying is that only £100 has gone in.
	AS	Whatever the figure was I can't remember.
28.09	SB	34,000 is an awful lot of money for all these mistakes?
	AS	I know it is.
28.16	SB	When did this Sub-Postmaster take over I'll ask you?
	AS	1999.
29.43	SB	So when you done a balance did you show the shortages?
29.48	AS	No 'cos we were frightened to show the shortages. I mean if I thought that I could have got help with this in the beginning without looking like we'd you know, we didn't take it, I would have contacted someone but I didn't know that I could.
	SB	So you never contacted the business helpline?
	AS	No.
	KR	Did you raise it with anybody?
	AS	No were just too frightened to raise it with anyone.
30.40		When asked how she would achieve a balance AS said they would add it onto the figure they were carrying of shortages.

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
32.37	SB	Take these deposits out of the occasion 'cos what you've said is it started 'cos you had shortages right, you've had a shortage in the account so when you come to do it when you do the balance you count up all your stock and you count up all the money.
	AS	That's right.
	SB	Right before you do that you get what's known as a balance snapshot.
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Which tells you the amount of money you should have in the Post Office?
	AS	Yeah yeah.
	SB	Right so if me and Kevin come in and we counted that money like the auditors would do on that day, we find you're £500 short.
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Ok forget these deposits for now, you then produce your branch trading statement, if that's still the case it then comes up and shows that it's £500 short at the bottom isn't it?
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Ok but what you said is you didn't short any shortages on your branch trading statement.
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Right so how did the £20,000 become £20,500 on your branch trading statement?
35.53	AS	By delaying a payment.
	SB	Right so as soon as you got your first shortfall then, what you've done is you've took £500 out of delayed payments and put it in?
	AS	Yeah.
	SB	Ok.

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Record of Taped Interview – Continued

Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
	AS	Initially we didn't at the very beginning we didn't we used our own credit cards and stuff, we tried to pay the balances ourselves when they were short.
36.23	SB	What I'm getting at is did you ever increase the cash on hand figures?
36.35	AS	No.
41.07	SB	But at the beginning you actually done, you never at any time made the figure to read what it should have been by not physically putting money in?
	AS	No not at the beginning no we put our own money in.
	SB	Ok you sat not at the beginning right so when could you not physically put any of your own money in?
	AS	When we ran out of.
	SB	When was that about?
	AS	It was probably about after 12 months it may not have even been that long.
41.42	SB	So from about 2006 then?
	AS	Yeah.
41.59	SB	And what happened then?
	AS	Well that's when we started delaying to putting the giro deposits through to cover the shortages.
42.35	SB	Have you stolen any of this £34,115.50?
42.41	AS	No absolutely not.
42.50		AS said her and Anne had a set of keys then when Anne went on holiday Denise covered. AS was also asked to train Nicky. She said the retail staff would come behind the counter for change but only when they were present. AS continued that all cash has been secured since they

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	TEXT
44.39	SB  AS	<p>were given a further set of keys 2 years ago.</p> <p>So are you saying that prior to 2009 me and Kevin could have come in and gone into the safe?</p> <p>No the safe was always locked. That was always done with the alarms and everything but you could have come in and took money out of the coin cabinet 'cos that was just under a lock and key.</p> <p>Master tape seal signed on number 073505</p> <p>Interview terminated at 1200</p>