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To David X Smith/POCL/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE  
cc John Meagher/POCL/POSTOFFICE, Keith K  
Baines/POCL/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE, Min  
Burdett/POCL/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE, Keith  
Falconer/POCL/POSTOFFICE@POSTOFFICE

Hard Copy To  
Hard Copy cc  
From Graeme Seedall/POCL/POSTOFFICE  
Date 18/11/99 17:22

Subject Brief on Reference Data issues relating to AI 376

Dave,

I was asked to:

1. Describe the 3 root causes that Pathway concede will not be detected by the current design for the EPOSS/TIP reconciliation feature.
2. Taking this into account, describe the predicted risk to POCL of going live with this feature.
3. Discuss this predicted state with Keith Falconer and gather his views on the acceptability of this state.
4. Describe the additional criteria that might be stipulated to allow Keith's ruling to be upheld and yet support roll out
5. Provide a brief to defend against Pathway's assertion that "Reference data issues are all POCL's fault".

Points 1 -3 were addressed in my previous e- mail to Keith (copied to you). Points 4 & 5 are incorporated into the attached briefing paper which Keith has approved and which I hope will be suitable for Dave Miller. However you may wish to compare it first to Keith's own words contained in an e-mail which I have separately forwarded to you.

Regards,  
Graeme

Business Integrity Manager  
TMT  
Post Office Network

Post Line:  STD Phone:  Mobile:   
External eMail: graeme.seedall@

 Refdatabrief.

## Summary Brief on Reference Data Issues in relation to Acceptance Incident 376

Pathway assert that the end-to-end reference data process is broken and constitutes significant threat to the roll out programme and to POCL and Pathway business aspirations .

The reference data issues that Pathway allude to fall into two broad families:

(i) Issues relating to

- ⇒ original data quality (such as incorrect outlet-product profiles, incorrect cash account types etc.)
- ⇒ transfer protocols (such as empty or incomplete files, invalid headers, "no change" changes etc.)
- ⇒ higher volumes than design assumptions which were based on POCL forecasts (such as correction files, standard changes, bespoke outlet-product relationships etc.)
- ⇒ an operational need for tighter processing time scales than anticipated (for example as driven by the roll out schedule, or aggressive future dating of changes)

(ii) Issues relating initial or changed data where the downstream impact of that data corrupts the integrity of the core processes (such as accounting) supported by the application software.

The first family does not directly impact on downstream data integrity. The risks are mainly on Pathway and generally relate to the sizing of their system infrastructure or data maintenance processes and the cost of increase. These should be considered as outside of the scope of Acceptance Incident 376 or Contractual Acceptance as a whole.

The second family however places risk mainly on POCL core processes such as outlet accounting and downstream central accounting and client reconciliation and settlement.

A case study is provided by PinICL 990930051 which relates to a change made to product 196/197 (Giro change giving) in September 1999

TIP personnel requested the Reference data team to make a change to the accounting sense of product 196 which was duly carried out.

The change is wholly allowable according to the rules expressed at the interface and the business intention was to correct an erroneous accounting sense.

Pathway identified that the change would lead to a clearly unintended effect of "netting out" two products intended to aggregate on to a line on the outlet cash account. They suppressed the change and raised a PinICL querying the POCL intention. (This is not a formal process).

Queries of this type do not currently pass through formal incident & problem management processes and in the ensuing delay in resolving the issue, further sets of changes were issued which led to Pathway accidentally lifting the suppression of the change to product 196.

The effect was as Pathway had predicted resulting in c. 1050 errors produced by the TIP Cash Account compare process over a period of 3 weeks. Under the clauses of CCN 560 this equates to c. £245k penalties against Pathway.

Pathway's analysis of this problem has led them to conclude that it and others like it would not be detected by the proposed EPOSS/TIP reconciliation feature.

The position maintained by Keith Falconer is that all errors on the outlet account data or the daily transactional data streams must be detected within the Pathway domain. (i.e. it is not acceptable to have an ongoing safety net within our domain that detects errors undetected at the point of transmission over the interface.) Thus to accept the Pathway provided EPOSS/TIP reconciliation feature it must be proven that the feature is capable of tracking all known (or potential?) errors.

However, it is true that the reconciliation feature provides POCL with a significant amount of protection which it does not currently have. Additionally there already exists a criteria stipulating a stability level of less than or equal to 0.6% of outlet accounts processed by TIP to contain errors as a prerequisite to roll out. If it can be shown that the risk of "catastrophic exception" to the expected TIP interface stability norm can be reduced, through a package of measures, to a level whereby local corruption may be encountered at an acceptably low level and that global or near global corruption is rendered virtually non-existent, then our accounting process would be deemed acceptable.

On this basis the following steps are proposed prior to re-commencement of roll out:

- ⇒ The Reference Data interface agreement must be re-introduced, agreed and brought under contract control.
- ⇒ Pathway must analyse all possible reference data changes in relation their impact on the target application(s) and derive a set of rules which protects the applications from all unintended effects.
- ⇒ A robust management process is defined, agreed and brought under contract control to enforce this set of rules.
- ⇒ A "reference data proving" test environment is created and maintained within the Pathway domain, on which all reference data releases are subject to formal (jointly agreed) test.
- ⇒ All recommendations emerging from the joint end-to-end reference data process review Tactical stage which relate directly to accounting integrity are implemented.
- ⇒ In principle agreement is reached on the deliverables and costs for the joint end-to-end reference data process review: Strategic stage. To include as a minimum that ...
- ⇒ The Pathway owned target applications are reviewed such that they are more resilient to reference data changes and less reliant on protection mechanisms expressed in the above rule set.
- ⇒ The different approaches taken by the two organisations to accounting principles is reviewed and harmonised where deemed appropriate.

Proposed Criteria for continuing roll out which relate to reference data:

Version 0.5

**Roll-out 2000 Criteria - Monitoring Report**

Update for 17 Nov Checkpoint Meeting

	Week Commencing					21/10	28/10	4/11	11/11	Total	Red/Amber/ Green
AI 298/1	The number of system stability incidents for the four week period 21/10 to 17/11 shall be less than 547.					119	201.5	112.5		433	Amber
		24/9- 2/10	3/10- 6/10	7/10- 13/10	14/10- 20/10	21/10- 27/10	28/10- 3/11	4/11- 10/11	11/11- 14/11	Total/ Average	Red/Amber/ Green
AI 376/1	The percentage of cash accounts containing discrepancies shall not exceed 0.6%		44.92%	42.97%	32.04%	2.24%	0.90%	0.40%		16.05%	Red
AI 376/2	No cash account discrepancy will be as a result of a cause previously reported to POCL as having been remedied			0	0	0	0	0		0	Green
AI 376/3	All new causes of cash account will be analysed and have a rectification plan, submitted to POCL, within 10 days (Number without analysis/rectification plan)	5	1	7	2	4	1			20	Red
AI 376/4	The Accounting Integrity Control Release would have identified all new Cash Account Discrepancies reported prior to 24 <sup>th</sup> November (number not identified)									3	Red
AI 376/5	Those elements of the Rectification Plan for AI 376 which are scheduled to be complete by 24/11 shall be complete									On Track	Green
	Week Commencing			4/10	11/10	18/10	25/10	1/11	8/11	Total/ Average	Red/Amber/ Green
AI 408/1	Service Levels for answering Level 1&2 calls to the Help Desk is met in at least four of the six weeks as follows:										
a)	95% of first level calls to be resolved in 5 minutes			97%	95%	96%	96%	96%			Green
b)	100% of first level calls to be resolved in 10 minutes			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			Green
c)	95% of second level calls to be resolved in 30 minutes			96%	100%	99%	99%	100%			Green
d)	100% of second level calls to be resolved in 45 minutes			98%	100%	100%	100%	100%			Green
AI 408/2	Service Levels for answering 80% of calls to the Help Desk within 20 seconds is met in at least four of the six weeks			69%	82%	82%	66%	72%			Red
AI 408/3	Service Levels for cash account calls (no ring backs required) is met in at least four of the six weeks			5%	1%	0%	0%	0%			Amber
AI 408/4	Service Levels for Cash Account repeat calls is met in at least four of the six weeks			0%	0%	0%	0%	0%			Green
AI 408/5	Service Levels for 95% compliance on Cash Account call scripts is met in at least four of the six weeks			N/A	40%	N/A	36%	70% 24%			Amber
AI 408/6	The Contractor's Horizon System Helpdesk Service shall provide first, second and third level Services as described in Schedule G01									No Data	Amber

Version 0.5

## Roll-out 2000 Criteria - Monitoring Report

Update for 17 Nov Checkpoint Meeting

## Issues:

	Criteria	Issue	Actions	Responsibility
1.	AI 298/1	Pathway dispute whether the Blue Screens (possibly Energis switch fail) should be included (78 failures counted: 65 in CAP 32 and 13 in CAP 33)	Pathway to respond to POCL's clarification of position	Pathway (John Dicks)
2.	AI 376/4	Three out of the eight new causes would not have been identified by the Integrity Control release. This is Pathway's analysis - POCL unable to corroborate.	See issue below.	
3.	AI 376/4	POCL have not had access to Pathway's design documentation, and so POCL will not be in a position to concur with Pathway's analysis.	Pathway to consider whether POCL can have access to the documents	Pathway (John Dicks)
4.	AI 408/3	The method of reporting is in dispute. POCL believe that these should be reported as integers not percentages, and that if there are any incidents in the week, this is a failed week.	Pathway have agreed that their next report will show numbers	Pathway (Paul Westfield)
5.	AI 408/3	During the week of the 18 <sup>th</sup> October, Pathway report a ring back in the text of the report, but not in the Service Level table.	ATMs have discussed reason and agreed that the ring back on the 18 <sup>th</sup> October should not be included.	Pathway (Paul Westfield an POCL (Dave McLaughlin)
6	AI 408/5	The agreed method of measurement has not been followed and may not be workable.	POCL and Pathway have discussed an alternative means of monitoring based on a newly introduced HSH report showing the sequence scripts were used for each call. As only two weeks is left of the original monitoring period POCL and Pathway now need to agree the duration of the new monitoring process. Pathway's initial view is 2 weeks, POCL's initial view is 6 weeks.	(to be determined)
7.	AI 408/6	POCL and Pathway have not agreed how this should be measured.	Provide documentary evidence to support position	Pathway (Paul Westfield)