

IN CONFIDENCE

- Paper numbers: Investigation 3415

PENSION AND ALLOWANCE FRAUD

Name: Lisa Margaret Brennan NINO: **GRO**

Rank: Postal Officer Nationality: **GRO**

Office: **GRO** IC 1

FAD Code: 018 420

Age: 33 Years DOB: **GRO**

Service: 12 Years 9 Months DOC: 18 September 1989

Home Address: **GRO**

Wages: £253.45 per week

Retail Line Manager : Jan Mullin.

Suspended by Jan Mullin (Retail Line Manager) on Thursday 13 June 2002.

Magistrates Court: Liverpool

National Investigation Manager

These papers refer to a suspected Pension and Allowance over claim at the above office and were raised on 30 April 2002 following a mainstream check at Lisahally.

Huyton is a Directly Managed Branch and the Branch Manager is Kate Rosenthal. There are ..staff employed at the office, .. are full time and .. are part time. The office uses the MUTE system and all staff have an individual date stamp allocated to them.

The mainstream check was for weeks 41 to 45 inclusive of the accounting year 2001 - 2002. The following discrepancies were found, week 41 - £139.70 over claimed, week 42 - £199.60 over claimed, week 43 - £165.97 over claimed, week 44 - £250.08 over claimed and week 45 - £299.89 over claimed. The suspected deliberate errors for these weeks total £1010. Schedule can be found at Appendix B. A CS213 check

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was requested for weeks 46 to 49 inclusive and a pouch division was requested for weeks 8 and 9 of the current cash account year. To date the pouch check from Lisahally has not been returned. The pouches checked locally revealed no discrepancies in week 8. The check for week 9 revealed that in the group 5 a voucher with a value of £115.75 had been claimed but was not to hand. The branch manager checked the pensions and allowances belonging to B date stamp for week 10. This check revealed that a group 7 voucher with a value of £250.60 had been claimed on 31 May 2002 but was not to hand. This pouch has been sent on its course and will be in Lisahally. The horizon user on all these transactions was LBR001 and belonged to the suspect offender named in the preamble of this report. (Copies of the 205A and schedules can be found at Appendix B).

It was arranged to visit this office on Thursday 13 June 2002 and to speak to the Lisa Margaret Brennan. It was also proposed to have the stock used by her to be audited. I visited the office with Mr Anthony Frank Gardner on this date.

The audio tapes used during this interview summarised to Appendix B. A file copy is at pages to , whilst further copies, together with copies of this report are at Appendix C. The master tapes are being held in Liverpool, whilst working tapes are at Appendix B. A transcription has been saved to computer disk and a hard copy will be produced if and when necessary.

The interview with Ms Brennan concluded that she had been employed by the Post Office for approximately 13 years. She had previously been a permanent member of staff at Garston Branch office for 1 year, Woolton Branch Office for 4 years and for the last seven years been permanent at Huyton. The outstanding period was spent as a floating member of staff and will have worked at any office which required staff. Ms Brennan works 30 hours per week and her normal days of attendance are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. She also said that she worked the occasional Saturday. However she did work on Friday 31 May 2002, when she had to "pay back " her hours due to the office being closed on one of her normal working days. Ms Brennan performed a full range of counter duties and admitted that she had a competent knowledge of post office transactions and procedures. She could explained how to pay out a pension and allowance voucher and the reversal procedure if a mistake had been made. Ms Brennan explained that pension and allowance vouchers were checked by counting the number of dockets and not checking individual amounts against the number of vouchers. She also demonstrated that if the mistake was not noticed and the correct amount had been paid out, she would have surplus cash in her draw. Ms Brennan could not remember the last time that she went on annual leave. The office records show that she was on annual leave between 13 and 18 May 2002, which was during cash account weeks 7 and 8. It was then explained to Ms Brennan that during the checking of her stock, a discrepancy in her pension and allowances was found. The auditor had found that a group 5 voucher for the sum of £26.30 had been claimed as £226.30. She was asked how she had balanced the previous evening. Ms Brennan replied that she had balanced within a couple of pounds. She was then asked for an explanation for this £200 discrepancy. No explanation was provided. Ms Brennan was then shown a number of horizon print outs relating to the discrepancies and asked for an explanation (copies can be found at Appendix B). She could offer no explanation for these discrepancies. Ms Brennan was then shown the 205a's from Lisahally relating to weeks 41 to 45. A number of discrepancies bearing the same

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modus operandi was read out to her and again she could offer no explanation. Ms Brennan would only say that as she worked so fast that she was making mistakes and that she had not taken the money. It was then put to her that if these mistakes were due to working at a quicker rate, why did they only appear in the pension and allowances and not in any of her other work. It was also said to her, if she had depressed the key twice then the mistakes would always be the first number of any voucher that she was paying out. A number of examples from the 205a's were read out to her, including one group 13 voucher for £35.05 being claimed as £135.05. Ms Brennan was asked to explain why if the key had been depressed twice this voucher was claimed as £135.05 and not £335.05. Ms Brennan could offer no explanation for this.

In conclusion, Ms Brennan made no admissions to taking any money. She did however agree that the discrepancies all bore B date stamp, which was the date stamp allocated to her and her user code which was LBR001. She also said that no other member of staff knew her password and therefore they could not access her system. Ms Brennan was suspended by the Jan Mullin Retail Line Manager.

An abridge version of this report and copies of all relevant documents has been sent to the Retail Line Manager (Jan Mullin) and a further copy can be found at Appendix C.

This report is submitted for the present position to be seen and for consideration as to whether the evidence is sufficient to support a prosecution

S Bradshaw
June 2002



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Mobile:

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