

John Dicks  
Director, Customer Enquiries  
ICL Pathway Limited  
Forest Road  
Feltham  
Middlesex TW13 7EJ

10<sup>th</sup> August 1999

Dear John

Re: Review of Acceptance Incident 218 - Training

An analysis of the evaluation against the business impacts identified in the Acceptance Incident is attached.

Although many of the criteria have been met, it is regarded as significant that the training and go-live process relies on the deployment of POCL HFSO resource. On the basis of this evaluation, we are not prepared to reduce the severity rating from 'high'.

POCLs view is that without this resource there would have to be a complete revision of the training approach in order to ensure helpdesks were not rendered ineffective by the high level of calls following the first and, to some extent, subsequent balances.

POCLs view is that HFSO resource was not deployed as an extension of training. The cost impact and diversion of resource which this requires must be addressed by ICL Pathway.

It is also POCLs view that the related adequacy of HSH support must be integrated with this Acceptance Incident and removed as an additional source of concern.

The training improvements identified as part of the qualitative research by Post Office Business Consultancy must also be addressed as part of a rectification plan.

Yours sincerely

**GRO**

Bruce McNiven  
Director  
Horizon Programme

c.c. Mike Coombs, Chris French, Ruth Holleran, John Meagher

## Horizon Incident Number 218 - Evaluation

### 1. Criterion : 534/1

"Pathway's Training solution shall take account of users experience in terms of automated products and platforms (ECCO+, APT, ALPs) and their differing abilities to learn".

2. BUSINESS IMPACT	SUMMARY OF SUCCESS CRITERIA MEASURE	EVALUATION
1. The Office Managers ability to undertake daily balancing and produce a cash account is adversely impacted resulting in a failure to support accurate POCL accounting. This is a high severity impact on POCL's ability to perform its normal business functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Reduction in the number of offices unable to complete the cash account balance process and produce a cash account balance (relative to the sample).</li><li>■ Continuing or better level of success in the pass rate of the Performance Standard Assessment (PSA) test.</li><li>■ Performance Standard Assessment (PSA) to reflect live operation and standard practices; Horizon users complete PSA again on day 10.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Data from BSM telephone survey for balance related to the 4<sup>th</sup> August contained the following; 22 offices produced an account, 1 office had a two week cash account. This criteria is therefore met.</li><li>■ Criteria met.</li><li>■ Criteria met.</li></ul>
2. The consequential effect is that the amount of time taken to produce the cash accounts is excessive in relation to the time taken on the previous (manual) system and significantly in excess of POCLs expectations for the service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Reduction in time taken to produce a stock unit balance , the office balance and finally produce a cash account (relative to the sample).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Balancing statistics for the 4<sup>th</sup> August Cash Account indicate an overall reduction in time taken to complete balances in both sub offices and ECCO offices. Even at the reduced level, concerns remain about overall balancing times.</li></ul>

BUSINESS IMPACT	SUMMARY OF SUCCESS CRITERIA MEASURE	EVALUATION
<p>3. The consequences are also that the number of cash account related incidents reported to POCL NBSC is considerably greater than expected. (About a third of the calls coming to NBSC Help Desk indicate a lack of understanding of the cash accounting and balancing process). HSH are responsible for resolving these service incidents but are unable to cope with the content and volume of calls which are therefore having to be dealt with by NBSC. As the Manger's training course is deficient, NBSC and presumably HSH staff who receive this training course, are also inadequately trained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Reduction in demand on support - Measured through a reduction in the number of calls (at the peak time on Wednesday evening and Thursday morning) for advice and guidance to support stock unit balancing, office balancing and production of the cash account received at the HSH and/or at the NBSC.</li><li>■ Reduction in the length of calls from the additional 25 offices.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The overall number of calls in weeks 1, 2 and 3 by the LT2 offices showed a reduction on the LT1 mirror offices for the equivalent three weeks. The average number of calls made by offices during the non-peak days also showed a reduction. However, it should be noted there is a significant increase in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week cash account for both LT1 and LT2 offices when there is no support at these outlets, suggesting that some of the outlet managers still do not have the confidence or ability to complete the process unsupported.</li><li>■ The evidence to analyse this criteria is limited and was regarded as indicative only. The broad conclusion is that the evidence is insufficient to make a substantive judgement regarding first cash accounts but there is overall evidence to suggest a reduction in call times for 2<sup>nd</sup> cash accounts. However, it again has to be noted that the length of calls for both LT1 and LT2 offices was significantly higher on 2<sup>nd</sup> cash accounts than the 1<sup>st</sup> cash account suggesting the critical requirement for training to be supported/delivered by HSH. It also underlines the necessity of the HFSO support to</li></ul>



		balancing in week 1.
BUSINESS IMPACT	SUMMARY OF SUCCESS CRITERIA MEASURE	EVALUATION
4. The practical effect of the incident is also causing the HFSO's to devote a disproportionate amount of time to support the outlets on cash accounts. The number of HFSOs that would be required to support National Roll-Out would be significantly greater than currently envisaged (initial indications are that two to three times as many HFSOs as planned would be required. This compounds the major impact on POCLs resources.	■ No specific success criteria was identified to address this business impact. Overall, POCL would wish to reduce the cost of extended training support at outlets through HFSOs.	■ POCL are now planning for 100% support of first cash accounts and recognise that significant additional support may be required for second and subsequent balances at some offices. This is a cost and resource drain on POCL. It is also a change to the original HFSO role which was to support the KPI delivery for POCL and to accelerate the learning curve at outlets. POCL concerns on this impact remain.
5. There is also an impact on TP who are having to process a significant increase in errors on Class and Pivot (up to 3 times as many weekly errors). This is having a significant impact on resources in TP during the live trial. These errors will also raise liability issues between the POCL and subpostmasters, and POCL and client organisations.	■ Reduction in both the number of incidents where Receipts do not equal Payments and Incidents where balance B/F does not equal balance due to PO on previous Cash Account. ■ Reduction in the number of errors reported by TP - both CLASS and PIVOT errors (relative to the sample).	■ Overall, the incidents of receipts not equal to payments have reduced and the residual causes are under investigation or have been resolved. Criteria met. ■ The level of CLASS errors between 26 <sup>th</sup> May and 21 <sup>st</sup> July has reduced. Without full information, the indications are that PIVOT errors have also reduced.





### **3. Qualitative Measures**

**3.1** Although the small sample size of 18 responses limits the validity of the findings, some significant improvements were found in comparison to Live Trial 1 (a sample of 102). Overall, attitudes towards Horizon are better at the LT2 offices compared to the LT1 experience. The key outstanding issues to emerge from research were as follows:

- The course is still considered to be too short and intensive. ICL have proposed a pre-training course but details are awaited.
- The need to further stream the training groups. This issue has not been addressed by Pathway beyond the streaming required by POCL for ECCO+ staff. Pathway's response is to do this wherever possible. There are impacts on the number of training places.
- Variation in trainer quality. Discussions taking place between POCL and ICL Pathway to look at how there can be a greater quality assurance for trainer ability and consistency of delivering the course specification.
- There are significant problems with technical and software faults in the training sessions. POCL regard these are significant issues which will require rectification.