1 1 Q. It's been redacted. Okay, that's an error by the Wednesday, 26 October 2022 2 2 (10.00 am) Inquiry staff. We will correct that later. Does it 3 MR BEER: Good morning, sir. Can you see and hear me? 3 look like the witness statement that you did sign? 4 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you very much. 4 A. Yes, it does. 5 MR BEER: And we can you. Thank you very much. 5 Q. Were the contents of it true to the best of your 6 Can I call Anthony Oppenheim, please. 6 knowledge and belief? 7 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes. 7 A. Yes, they were. 8 **ANTHONY OPPENHEIM (affirmed)** 8 Q. A copy of that witness statement will be uploaded to the 9 Questioned by MR BEER 9 Inquiry's website. I'm going to ask you questions, not 10 10 about every part of it, but just selected parts. Do you MR BEER: Thank you, Mr Oppenheim. My name is Jason Beer, as you know, and I ask questions on behalf of the 11 understand? 11 12 Inquiry. Can you tell us your full name, please? 12 A. Sure. 13 A. Anthony Edward Peter Oppenheim. 13 Q. Can we start with your background and experience, 14 Q. Thank you very much for coming to give evidence to the 14 please. I think you were employed by ICL from 1979 and 15 Inquiry and thank you also for the witness statement 15 left Fujitsu in 2018; is that right? 16 that you previously provided to us. We're very grateful 16 A. That's correct. 17 for the assistance that you have given and are giving in 17 Q. So you were a company man for the majority of your 18 18 the course of the investigations by this Inquiry. career, just shy of 40 years? 19 You should have a hard copy of the witness statement 19 A. That's right. It wasn't the first job, but the 20 in the folder behind you in volume 1. Could you take it 20 majority, certainly. 21 Q. By training, you are an engineer and an economist? 21 out, please, and in tab A1 there should be a witness 22 22 statement which, excluding exhibits, is 85 pages in 23 length and dated 7 September 2022 and, on page 85, there 23 Q. So far as concerns this Inquiry, would this be right, 24 24 the most relevant part of your employment occurred should be your signature. 25 A. There would have been but it's got "GRO" on top of it. 25 between 1994 and 2002? 1 A. That is correct. 1 finance for major projects", but it was quickly reduced 2 Q. It began in October 1994 when you joined the Pathway bid 2 to commercial only, so I was brought back in later --3 team --3 you may go to this -- to negotiate with POCL, or POL as 4 it was then, but no, I didn't have day-to-day A. Yes. 4 5 5 Q. -- and I think you were one of the first to join. responsibility. 6 A. That's correct. 6 Q. I wasn't suggesting day-to-day responsibility. Perhaps 7 7 Q. You were then Pathway's commercial and financial you can tell us exactly the level of responsibility that you had after February 2001 and before December 2002? 8 director; is that right? 8 9 A. Virtually none. It was a sort of monthly review of high A. That's correct. 9 10 Q. You say in your statement that you became a member of 10 level reports and that was it, so I was replaced in my Pathway's board on 15 June 1995 and, by that, do you 11 11 previous role by a guy called Colin Lenton-Smith. 12 mean the board of ICL Pathway Limited? 12 Q. Were you involved in any negotiations after A. Correct. 13 February 2001 and before 31 December 2002 concerning 13 14 Q. You left ICL Pathway in February 2001, going back to ICL 14 ICL Pathway? 15 itself; is that right? 15 16 A. Yes, it is. 16 Q. Your involvement with the Horizon System, as it had 17 Q. But you retained some responsibilities for ICL Pathway, 17 become, ended entirely, is this right, in December 2002? 18 namely the commercial and contractual arrangements 18 A. That is correct. 19 between ICL Pathway and its customers and its 19 Q. Can we have a look at your witness statement, please, at 20 subcontractors; is that right? 20 paragraph 14, that's WITN03770100. It will come up on 21 A. No, it was a higher level overarching responsibility for 21 the screen for you, Mr Oppenheim. 22 the commercials only and not the financials, so just to 22 A. Mm-hm. 23 elaborate briefly, Pathway then was one of a number of 23 Q. Look at page 4, please, and then highlight paragraph 14. 24 major accounts that I was responsible for commercially. 24 I think the initial title was "commercial and 25 25 "I was involved in setting up all of the above 3

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1 arrangements ..." 2 That's the creation of ICL Pathway Limited, the 3 relationships with ICL Pathway's shareholders and the 4 engagement of the principal subcontractors, that's what 5 you have been speaking about above? 6 A. Correct. 7 Q. Then you continue: 8 "... the management of Contract Changes between 1996 9 and 1999, and then, in 1999, unwinding the ... Benefits 10 Payment Card part of the contract." 11 Is that a fair summary of the principal parts of 12 your role over time? 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. Can I turn to, in slightly more detail, positions of 15 responsibility and roles within ICL Pathway between 16 October 1994 and February 2001. I wonder whether we 17 could look, please, at FUJ00000060. This is the first 18 exhibit to your witness statement, a document that you 19 will recognise, and, for the note, I think this is part 20 of schedule A14 to the codified agreement of 21 28 July 1999. 22 Does that figure, Figure 1, the Pathway board, 23 accurately describe the five members of the Pathway 24

board and their job titles at that time, as at July 1999?

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the Pathway board that we saw on the previous page, as it was described, the Pathway board, the same thing or a different thing to the Pathway management board that we see in the title to figure 2 on page 2 of the document?

- A. I would say different. It's a, I agree, slightly confusing combination of management and board. This would have been the operating team, as opposed to the board.
- Q. Sorry, it's a poor question from me. To start with, was the Pathway management board different from the thing that we saw on the previous page, which was described as the "Pathway board"?
- A. I suspect so, but it would be quite helpful to see the diagram, of course. I think it is referred to somewhere else but obviously not here.
- Q. We will go to some other documents in a moment. The second thing: was the Pathway management board different from the Pathway management team?
- A. Again, without seeing the diagram, I can't be sure but I think this is probably meant to be the Pathway management team.
- Q. So that heading might, or might ought to have said "Pathway management team", okay.
- 25 A. Well, the heading and then the beginning of 2.1 talk

A. Yes, it does.

Q. So Sir Michael Butler is the chairman, Mr Todd as deputy chairman, you as commercial and finance director Pathway, Mr Bennett as the MD of Pathway and then Mr Christou -- it says "ICL legal and [commercial] director", what's the significance of ICL being written against his name and Mr Todd's name, rather than Pathway against yours and Mr Bennett's names?

- A. Because they were not executives of ICL Pathway, they were executives of ICL and they were board members of ICL Pathway.
 - Q. On the next page, if we go over the page please, there is an introduction to what is called the Pathway management team. Can you see under paragraph 2 in bold there's the heading "Pathway Management Team" and the codified agreement says:

"The Pathway team is in place. The management structure has been agreed and the positions filled. The structure of the team is as follows ..."

Then it says "Figure 2 -- the Pathway Management Board", and we see a place where a diagram or a figure is supposed to appear but is blank, at least in this version. You will see that the title to the missing figure is, in fact, to a Pathway management board. A couple of questions arising from that. Firstly, was

1 about "Pathway team", so I would think that's just 2 an error in the figure 2 description. 3 Q. Can we look at FUJ00000061, please. Again, this is

4 another exhibit to your witness statement. This is 5 an ICL Pathway organogram, a basic organogram, under the 6 heading of "ICL Pathway's directors" and can you see in 7 the bottom left it appears to date from 2000, right at 8 the foot of the page?

A. Yes, I can see that.

Q. Notwithstanding the heading to the document indicating that it concerned ICL Pathway's directors, does it, in fact, depict only directors or other people as well?

13 A. No, I would say this was -- this included, obviously, 14 the managing director and I was a director, but all the 15 others are part of the management team that we were 16 talking about a moment ago.

17 Q. So is this in fact a better description of the 18 management team that we saw missing from the version of 19 the codified agreement that we have just examined?

20 A. It is, except that this is a later version than that --

21 Q. le 2000?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. So, thinking back, would you say this is a fair 24 description of the Pathway management team?

A. Yes, as it was at 2000. It had changed slightly, but

1		yes, as at that date, yes.	1	Q.	Lastly, can we look at a further version of the codified
2	Q.	We see you are on this organogram, the third box down on	2		agreement to see how the Pathway board had changed.
3		the left, and we see that you are in a reporting line	3		This is FUJ00000062 and again this is exhibited to your
4		straight to the managing director.	4		witness statement. This version of schedule 14 to the
5	A.	Yes.	5		codified agreement is dated 21 July 2000 and is version
6	Q.	Is that correct, that your report was straight through	6		1.4. I think you can see that from the bottom right.
7		to the MD at this time, Mike Stares?	7	A.	Yes.
8	A.	Correct, yes, it always was, yes.	8	Q.	Starting with the Pathway board by then, it says:
9	Q.	The people on the left-hand side of the organogram	9		"The ICL Pathway board has been set up under
10		underneath ignoring his PA for the moment on the	10		chairmanship of Richard Christou, ICL Legal and
11		left-hand side of the diagram, Mr Foley, Mr Muchow and	11		Commercial Director, with board representatives from
12		Martyn Bennett. Again, did they report directly to the	12		ICL."
13		MD?	13		We can see in figure 1 the depiction, pictorially,
14	Α.	Yes, they did.	14		of the ICL Pathway board at this time and just looking
15		It's only the people on the right-hand side of the	15		how things have changed by now, Mr Christou, who was
16	Δ.	diagram that appear to report through Mr Coombs, the	16		formerly the legal and commercial director, has become
17		deputy MD, to Mr Stares; is that right?	17		chairman of the board, correct?
18	Δ	That is correct.	18	Δ	He was still ICL, legal and
19		So does it follow that people such as Mr Austin Terry	19	Q.	I'm sorry.
20	Q.	Austin on the right-hand side Mr Flynn, in the middle	20		Yes.
21		of the right-hand side, people responsible for	21	Q.	I missed what you said there, "he was still"?
22		development and implementation, they did not report to	22		He was still legal director of ICL. Previously, he had
			23	A.	
23	٨	you?			been just a board member, but his overarching role was
24	A.	Oh, that is correct. They reported to Mike Coombs who,	24	_	still legal and commercial for ICL.
25		apart from being a deputy MD, was programme director. 9	25	Q.	Back in ICL parent? 10
1	Α	Yes. So in addition to that role, he had taken on	1	O	Mr Escudier has been added. He is described as ICL's
2	,	chairmanship from Sir Michael.	2	۵.	financial services managing director.
3	0	Mr Todd remains the deputy chairman of the board?	3	Δ	Yes.
4		Yes.	4		Again, that's back in ICL itself rather than
5		Mr Stares has taken over from Mr Bennett as Pathway	5	σ.	ICL Pathway.
6	α.	managing director.	6	Δ	So John Bennett and Tim Escudier were peers running
7	Δ	Correct.	7	Λ.	different business units within ICL, correct.
		Mr Bennett is described as "ICL Government Managing		0	
8 9	Q.	Director", can you help us, what does that mean: ICL	8 9	Q.	Can we go over the page please. We now see that in this version of the contract figure 2 has been completed.
10	^	government managing director?	10		The rubric is the same, "ICL Pathway management team" is
11	A.	I think there's a word missing. It's probably	11		the heading, the announcement that the ICL Pathway team
12		"Government business unit" or some such. So he had	12		is in place, the management structure has been agreed
13		moved out of Pathway, ICL Pathway, and into back into	13		and:
14		ICL, taking on a new senior role for a part of ICL's	14		"The structure of the team is as follows"
15		business, which faced off to or dealt with	15		The cross heading still describes this as the
16	_	UK Government.	16		Pathway management board and just take a moment to look
17	Q.	So the descriptions that are given underneath each name,	17		at the organogram.
18		one shouldn't be misled into thinking that's the role	18		Yes.
19		that they are performing in ICL Pathway, that's	19	Q.	Does that organogram describe something called "The
20		a description of their role, in this case, back in ICL,	20		Pathway Management Board", or does it describe something
21		the parent company?	21		called "The Pathway Management Team"?
22	A.	Correct. These are their day jobs and in addition they	22	A.	Management team.
23		are, in a sense, non-exec directors of ICL Pathway. The	23	Q.	We see in documents, hundreds of documents, the phrase
24		same applies to Tim Escudier. Likewise ICL services	24		"Pathway Management Team", capital P, capital M,
25		division whatever	25		capital T. That was a term of art, assentially

division, whatever.

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- , "he was still"?
- ICL. Previously, he had but his overarching role was ICL.
- d. He is described as ICL's director.
- elf rather than
 - scudier were peers running in ICL, correct.
 - ease. We now see that in this 2 has been completed. Pathway management team" is ent that the ICL Pathway team structure has been agreed

- ribe something called "The , or does it describe something ement Team"?
- eds of documents, the phrase m", capital P, capital M, 25 capital T. That was a term of art, essentially.

- A. Yes, and that's how this organogram should have been 1 1 explain it to a naive audience? 2 2 described A. By all means. 3 3 Q. Does that show again that those responsible for, for SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Mr Oppenheim, can I interrupt you. 4 4 example, implementation, customer requirements and Before you give that answer, I hope it won't take you 5 development did not report to you? 5 out of your stride, it would help me if the document 6 6 A. Correct. could be taken down once we have looked at it so that 7 Q. Does that represent the position in reality, those 7 I can see Mr Oppenheim better. I can see you, but not 8 responsible for implementation of the programme, the 8 very well. That's great. Thank you very much. 9 9 development of the programme and customer requirements A. So commercials was a sort of shorthand form of 10 didn't report to you? 10 describing some of the things you talked about in your 11 A. Correct. 11 introduction. So contracts with BA and POCL and the 12 Q. We're going to see that later on you had -- ie later on 12 codified agreement was the one that operated through 13 today rather than later on in the piece -- you had quite 13 most of the piece but prior to that there were several 14 14 other contracts, there was the BA contract, the POCL some involvement in issues concerning the development of 15 15 the project, the implementation of the project and the contract and the combined contract because it was 16 customers' requirements. You were present at a number 16 a tripartite set of agreements, so that was one piece. 17 of meetings at which those three issues were very much 17 Then there was the piece with subcontractors and we 18 the hot topics? 18 had a lot of subcontractors and so that also was 19 A. Yes, that's true. I was involved but I wasn't 19 a commercial/contractual matter which I had overall 20 responsible for them. If I can just clarify, if I may. 20 responsibility for and also you mentioned, I think, 21 21 There were a lot of tensions around the commercials. My funding/financing, so I had responsibility for that as 22 22 main responsibility here was to take care of the well, trying to get the monies lined up for this project 23 commercials vis-à-vis BA and POCL and --23 because it was a PFI project so we needed that as well. 24 24 Q. Just stopping you there, sorry to interrupt you, you may So I won't go on, that is essentially what 25 understand what "The commercials" mean, could you 25 "commercials" mean. 13 14 1 MR BEER: Thank you. 1 2 A. And then the ongoing operation of change control, 2 3 pursuing agreements to agree and such-like. 3 4 Q. So I interrupted your answer there and you were 4 5 5
 - explaining to me why we see your footprint on a number of the documents, a very high number of the documents, when you had no management, or directorial responsibility for issues such as development, implementation or customer requirements and it is simply because they all impinged on commercial issues; is that right?
 - 12 A. Absolutely, spot on, correct.

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- Q. Not because you had any particular management or directorial responsibility or any technical expertise?
- A. I had to acquire sufficient technical expertise to be able to deal with -- to understand the issues, to be able to deal with the commercials because a lot of this -- I repeat, this was a PFI. There was a lot of tension between the parties as to who would be responsible for what and, in some cases, there was a great deal of detail that needed to be understood in order to get the wording right, to get the terms and conditions right, to do with risk management. So I had to understand the detail at a pretty granular level.
- Q. We will come back to examine that understanding later 15

today. You mention there the PFI contract and the consequences of it. In your statement, you tell us that there appeared to have been a conflict between the Benefit Agency's and Post Office Counters Limited's

- A. There were conflicts, yes.
- Q. When was that conflict first appreciated or understood by you?
- A. Right at the beginning. 9
- 10 Q. The "beginning" meaning what, from 1994 onwards?

business objectives; is that right?

11 A. Yes.

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- 12 Q. So it wasn't only after you entered the contract that 13 this conflict emerged? It was evident from day one?
- 14 A. It was implicit and visible in the terms of reference 15 for the contract. If you thought through what at 16 a second level that meant, in terms of the interactions 17 between the parties, I would say we understood that from 18 very early on and it was part of our risk register from 19 very early on.
- 20 Q. When you say part of your risk -- it was written down, 21
- 22 A. I believe it was, but I'm casting my mind back a long 23 time now.
- 24 Q. Was there a document called "risk register"?
 - A. There were risk registers, yes.

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- Q. Who was responsible for maintaining the risk register?
- 2 A. Martyn Bennett.
- 3 Q. Can you recall now the format in which they were kept?
 - A. I think over the period it evolved from probably Excel, at the beginning, during the bid phase to -- I can't remember the particular application that was used, but there was an application which was used in ICL and we used that, but I can't remember the name.
 - Q. It was Mr Bennett who had responsibility for that?
- 10 A. Yes.

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- Q. Was there any team underneath him that was responsible 11 12 for feeding into the risk register?
 - A. He had, from memory, one -- at least one person working for him, Graham somebody. I can't remember his surname.
 - Q. Thank you. With responsibility specifically for the risk register?
 - A. Well, in a sense, they both had responsibility for the risk register. I wouldn't like to say one was responsible for maintaining it and the other one for inputting into it. It was a team task.
- 21 Q. Thank you. Was that ever escalated to the ICL Pathway 22 board for review and sign off?
 - A. Sign off -- I can't remember about sign off. Certainly we talked about the major risks at the board and this one would have been one of those, the inherent conflict. 17
 - A. I don't necessarily recall -- no, I don't recall it being in the risk register. I do recall discussions, certainly at the board, about that. Were those discussions right from the very beginning? I would say no. I think, at the beginning, the discussion was much more around the success -- the success of the programme and the chances of problems on the programme and what those problems might be, what those issues or risks might be.
 - Q. Do you think that there is a possibility that the questions, persisting questions, over whether the system that was being developed best suited the objectives of the Benefits Agency, on the one hand, and Post Office Counters Limited, on the other, got in the way or obstructed the delivery of a system that, in fact, best suited the needs of subpostmasters?
 - A. I understand why you would ask that question. It's difficult to give you a definitive response. All I would say is this: we are going back, as you said at the outset, 25 years and there was no internet then and, in a sense, the choice was do you have an offline system, so you can't do any verification of a banking transaction, or do you have a totally nailed up, online system which required lease lines, very, very expensive.

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And what we were offering was a distributor system,

The conflict -- "conflict" is a bit strong. It's a conflict when there's a problem. At the outset, it's a different set of priorities, perhaps.

- Q. Putting it shortly, we've got a lot of evidence on this from other witnesses and in the documents, but one of the purposes of the proposed system was, from the Benefits Agency perspective, to eliminate fraud?
- 8 A. Encashment fraud, yes.
 - Q. But Post Office Counters Limited's business goal was to seek to make customer experience as frictionless as possible, I think you describe it as, and therefore to encourage usage; is that right?
 - A. Yes. I think that's an accurate description of the difference in priorities.
 - Q. So the Benefits Agency wanted not only a different means of payment but tight controls, therefore. Wasn't, therefore, the Benefits Agency's withdrawal from the programme always likely?
 - A. The reason we felt confident that they would go through with it and we were proved wrong was that, at the time, there was -- we were assured of a very strong political imperative from the government and, in a sense, we relied on that to push it through.
- 24 Q. Did that, to your recollection, enter the risk register, 25 the risk of the DSS withdrawing from the programme?

which is now commonplace but was very, very unusual in those days, and the NAO and the PAC both acknowledged that that was an advantage. It didn't show up necessarily in the gradations of us versus our competitors at the time, but both the NAO report and the PAC review made the point that, actually, this distributor system, which was kind of a halfway-house of being mostly offline, but it could also go online as and

- when verification was needed, was a good approach. 10 Q. You tell us in your witness statement, it is 11 paragraph 46 for the cross-reference, that the 12 withdrawal of the Benefits Agency from the programme 13 increased the pressure on Post Office Counters Limited 14 to move fast, move at speed.
 - A. Yes, I did say that, yes.
 - Q. You speak about an increase of pressure to move fast. Firstly, was there already pressure on the Post Office to move fast in the development and implementation of the programme?
- 20 A. There was. I mean, there was an imperative on all three 21 parties. I would say that, in rank terms, the Benefits 22 Agency wanted the fraud reductions and were instructed 23 to secure the fraud instructions (sic) by HM Government 24 and this was the -- you know, the best way to do that, 25 so there was that political imperative on them.

The Post Office wanted to automate for other 1 2 clients, not just the Benefits Agency, to improve their 3 competitiveness and they also recognised that the 4 Benefit Payment Card, as it was conceived, was going to 5 be their way of securing the maximum footfall, as you 6 said, of Benefits Agency business. 7 Q. Because it brings people into the branch? 8 A. It brings people into the branch and when they're there, 9 they buy other things, exactly. 10 Q. So there was already pressure on Post Office Counters 11 Limited to move fast. Where did that existing pressure 12 come from? 13 A. Well, as I said in my statement, it was there, for the 14 reasons I just said, their own business case relied on 15 attracting new business and certainly maximising the 16 amount of BA business. 17 There was a recognition that the BA business would 18 go down over time because of ACT -- sorry, that's 19 bank-to-bank transfers -- so instead of someone going 20 into the Post Office, they would get a payment through 21 the bank 22 Q. Automated credit --23 A. Automated Credit Transfer. So there was that trend, in 24 any event, and that was plainly what the DSS would have 25 preferred because it's cheaper and it absolutely 1 for the implementation and roll-out of the programme? 2 A. Because of what I just said, which was written down in 3 the exit agreement of the BA from the tripartite set up. 4 Q. Do you think there was a risk that this rush to move 5 fast was detrimental to the interests of subpostmasters? 6 A. Well, firstly, I can't -- I really can't comment on 7 that -- detrimental ... okay. Did it make them -- did 8 it induce them to go faster than they should have done 9 to deliver a safe system? There was pressure, 10 absolutely there was pressure, but then, again, we had 11 had an agreed rollout plan such -- which was not 12 accelerated, in fact it went backwards because there 13 were issues and they needed to be fixed, so from the 14 time that the BA withdrew, I would say that there was at 15 least a three-month slip from what had been contemplated 16 when they withdrew, and when we signed the heads of 17 agreement with the Post Office, which then led to the 18 codified agreement. 19 So I think POCL -- the people I dealt with were very 20 measured and careful and I don't think that they cut 21 corners. No, I don't think so.

1 eliminates encashment fraud. It's easier to administer. 2 So I would say that was always their preference. So 3 POCL wanted to head that off, that trend off, and get 4 the thing automated as soon as possible, but so long as 5 they had the Benefits Agency book business and ACT was 6 on the backburner, actually the incentive on them was 7 not as great as subsequently when BA said "Okay, we're 8 now going to go to ACT as our mainstream way of 9 delivering -- of paying benefits". 10 Q. So why did the withdrawal of the Benefits Agency from 11 the programme increase that existing pressure to move 12 13 A. Because when they did withdraw, they said, "Okay, we're 14 now going to go ACT mainstream and we're going to move 15 away from the Post Office and we're going to do that 16 from" -- from memory, 2003. So they basically gave 17 a window of opportunity to the Post Office to get 18 themselves automated and also something called Network 19 Banking, which I assume we will come on to later, or 20 Universal Bank in place before the default of moving 21 everybody to ACT kicked in in 2003. So there was 22 a window from 1999 to 2003. 23 Q. How do you know this, that the withdrawal of the 24 Benefits Agency increased the pressure -- the existing 25 pressure on Post Office Counters Limited to move fast 1 that was delivered? 2 A. There were -- again, I find it difficult -- "any"? 3 There's always a bit of a trade-off. At one level you 4 can only do so much in a test environment. This is 5 a very complex technical system and a lot of the issues 6 that were experienced were operational, where things had 7 gone not according to plan, for some reason. I'm sure 8 you will delve into that later, but --9 So you can do so much in a test environment and we 10 had massive amounts of end-to-end testing. There were 11 also issues going across boundaries, between the Pathway 12 piece and POCL, TIP, and so on. So, at some point, you 13 do actually have to go into the live environment and get 14 feedback. The question for me is: what do you do when 15 you get feedback and how well do you respond to that 16 feedback? 17 Q. Can we move to a new topic and we're going to circle 18 back round a little later today to look at some of the 19 answers that you have just given by reference to what, 20 in fact, happened on the ground. 21 Can you explain to the Inquiry, in your own words, 22 what the PinICL system was?

Q. -- wasn't, in the need to move quickly, the rush to roll out, any detrimental effect on the quality of the system

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Q. So there --

A. (Unclear).

indicated an underlying fault, then it would result in 24

A. Basically, it was an error fault logging system, so if

something had been reported to the helpdesk that

1		a PinICL A PinICL would be reject and that would go	1	٨	No idea corny As Leav it was pro existing. It
1 2		a PinICL. A PinICL would be raised and that would go	1 2	A.	No idea, sorry. As I say, it was pre-existing. It
3		through the support and development team in order to get either a workaround or a clarification, or a fix, a bug	3		probably existed for years prior to the creation of ICL Pathway.
4		fix.	4	0	In terms of running or operating it, that was done by
5	0	It's right, isn't it, that PinICL was an internal ICL	5	Q.	ICL Pathway, is that right, in the context we're
	Q.		6		
6 7	۸	system?	7	۸	speaking about?
	A.	It was an internal ICL system but POCL were aware of it		A.	In the context we're speaking about, yes. All the data
8	0	and had visibility of it. I'm going to test in a moment what "aware of it" and	8 9		that went into it, the entries that went into it and the
9	Q.		10		outputs that came out of it were managed by ICL Pathway, correct.
10 11	۸	"visibility of it" mean.	11	0	Can I turn to whether Post Office Counters Limited staff
12		Okay.	12	Q.	
13	Q.	It was an internal system, in that it was designed by ICL Pathway?	13		had direct access to the PinICL system. You tell us in paragraph 160 of your statement I think we should
14	۸	•	13		
15	A.	By ICL. It was a standard ICL system which ICL Pathway used.	15		probably turn that up.
16	0	Okay, so it was an off-the-shelf, as it were,	16		Page 53 of your witness statement, that's WITN03770100 at page 53, and 160 at the bottom, please.
17	Q.	•	17		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
18		ie a pre-existing system that existed even before	18		Thank you. If you just scroll up a little bit, please.
19	۸	Pathway was conceived?	19		This is under the cross heading "POCL awareness of
20	A.	My understanding and, again, I'm going back a long			issues within the Horizon System at the time of
		way is that this was the standard that ICL used right	20		rollout". You are dealing with a different issue here,
21 22	0	across its business. Can you recall who designed it?	21 22		but, in the course of dealing with it, you say in
					paragraph 160, second line:
23	A.	No, no. I mean, it was pre-existing, is my	23		"My understanding is that [Post Office Counters
24	0	recollection. We simply adopted it as part of ICL.	24		Limited] had access to our PinICL system and test data
25	Q.	You wouldn't be able to help us with who developed it? 25	25		and that, under the aegis of the Joint [Acceptance 26
1		Incident] Workshop, they were intimately involved in the	1		I probably would have worded this slightly differently.
2		[Acceptance Incident] rectification plans", et cetera.	2		The point here was specific to the Als and those PinICLs
3		It's the part of the sentence that says "My	3		that related to the Als, I believe, were shared.
4		understanding is that [Post Office Counters Limited] had	4		That's different, I can see that, from having
5		access to our PinICL system" that I want to ask about.	5		a contractual right to just go through any and all
6		Are you there intending to refer to a contractual right	6		PinICLs. I don't know, to be honest, whether they did
7		vested in Post Office Counters Limited to obtain access	7		have access, or some members of their team had access.
8		to data held on PinICL, ie a theoretical right in	8		I genuinely don't know that.
9		a contract that could be exercised on demand by Post	9	O	Are you aware of any policy or procedure, or protocol
10		Office Counters Limited?	10	σ.	concerning the issue of access by the Post Office to
11	Δ	I don't recall ever having discussed that. My	11		PinICLs and test data?
12	,	understanding was that, certainly with respect to the	12	A.	I don't, no.
13		Als, all of the relevant PinICLs were shared with POCL,	13	Q.	So, although this is written in an unqualified way,
14		so we had a lead on both sides and they shared	14	σ.	ie it isn't restricted to those PinICLs that were
15		information between them.	15		associated with Als, albeit you are discussing Als at
16	O	Putting the Als to one side for the moment, I'm looking	16		the time, you don't have any evidential basis for saying
17	Φ.	at the PinICL system.	17		that Post Office had, as a matter of course, direct
18	Α.		18		access to all and any PinICLs; is that right?
19		Are you referring there to what I have described as	19	Α	That is correct, yes. I mean, this was written in the
20	٠.	a theoretical right, a contractual right on demand, "Can	20		context of the Als and I can see that what I said there
21		we please see what is on a PinICL", or are you referring	21		is probably too broad a sweep. I was thinking
22		to an understanding that, as a matter of fact, the Post	22		specifically of those PinICLs that related to the Als.
23		Office had direct physical access to PinICLs, just as	23	Q.	In relation to the Als, what is your understanding of
24		a matter of course?	24	٠.	how Post Office Counters Limited secured access to those
25	Α.	I think not, as a matter of course. So, in hindsight,	25		PinICLs that were associated with a AI?
-	==	27	-		28

- A. To be honest, I don't know. You would have to ask my technical colleagues, but --
 - Q. We will get to those, in due course.
- A. Okay, right.
 - Q. Can we look at the documents to see whether Post Office Counters Limited did have a contractual right to look at records in PinICLs, so data that happened to be in PinICLs, and could we look, please, at FUJ00000071, the codified agreement. Can we turn to page 49, please, and can we look at paragraph 801.2. I will read it out:

"The Contractor shall grant or procure the grant to POCL, any statutory or regulatory auditors of POCL and their respective authorised agents the right of reasonable access to the records and shall provide all reasonable assistance at all times for six (6) years after the creation of the relevant Records for the purposes of carrying out an audit of the Contractor's compliance with this Codified Agreement including all activities, Charges, performance, security and integrity in connection therewith. Each party shall bear its own expenses incurred pursuant to this clause. On termination, the Contractor shall within a reasonable time to be agreed by the parties, transfer the Records to POCL or a replacement contractor, as instructed by POCL. The Contractor shall thereafter be released from

- A. Well, that would be the normal implication of statutory, regulatory auditors and keeping records for six or seven years would be the norm.
- Q. So you've got the heading, you've got the time period and then you've got the reference to statutory or regulatory auditors, pointing in the direction that the purpose of this clause was to give POCL a right of reasonable access for that purpose.
- A. Well, that's how I would have read it. You have just pointed me to the definition of "Records" which has broadened that.

What I can say with confidence is that certainly at the time of the AI exercise, which I was very much involved in as joint chair with Keith Baines, I was confident that any and all PinICLs that were relevant were being shared.

Now, what I don't know is whether our POCL colleagues were given direct access into the PinICL system, that's what I don't know. So there's the point about "reasonable access" and what is "reasonable access"? I genuinely don't know the answer to that. You would have to ask a technical support person.

- Q. That's what I'm seeking to explore with you at the moment.
- A. Yes.

any further liabilities under this Clause in relation to such Records "

You will see that "Records" in the third line has a capital R, it's a defined term.

Can we look at page 89, please, of the document. I think it might, in fact, be the previous page.

(Pause)

If you just keep going, thank you. "Records" defined as:

"Full and accurate records relating to the performance of the POCL Services."

I'm not going to turn it up now and chase down what "POCL Services" meant, but it is defined in this codified agreement as:

"The core systems services and all other obligations of the contractor under the Codified Agreement."

Can we go back to page 49 and paragraph 801.2, please. Thank you. This tends to suggest that POCL had a right of reasonable access to the records as we have defined them but, for the purposes of an audit -- if we just scroll up on the page, it's under the heading "Audit" -- would you agree, reading those now, that the primary purpose of the provision appears to be to allow access to the records for the purposes of a financial audit?

- Q. Would you have -- would you read these clauses as permitting Post Office Counters Limited access because they are sufficiently broad to allow access to records and give a right of access to records held within the PinICL system as a matter of course?
- A. From the definition of "records" that you reminded me of, I think it's a reasonable interpretation, but what I would say is that I have no recollection of it being brought up as a contractual matter by Keith Baines or anybody else, ie it was never an issue to my recollection. So either they had the access and that would explain why there was no issue, or alternatively POCL thought they had sufficient sharing of information without direct access, such that it wasn't an issue for them.
- Q. In terms of physical access, was the -- that can be taken down, thank you.

In terms of the situation on the ground rather than the contractual right, on what system was PinICL run, or was the system itself called PinICL?

A. My recollection -- and this was not really my bailiwick, is that this was a part of their support suite of applications that we, if you like, adopted from the mothership. I really don't know the answer to your question.

- Q. Were clients habitually given access to suites of applications provided by the mothership?
- A. No, no, I mean you would need to consider security and I would say almost certainly not. They were intended as internal systems and normally if we're carrying out a project for a client, on an outsourced basis or project basis, I would have thought that there would be an agreement about what information would be shared but it wouldn't extend to direct access into internal systems. That would be my guess.
- Q. You looked, in the course of your joint chairmanship of the resolution of some particularly complex and problematic Als, at PinICLs, back in the day, on a relatively regular basis.
- A Yes

- Q. Did you ever see an entry on a PinICL made by an employee of Post Office Counters Limited?
- A. Not a direct entry. What I have seen is a reference to an individual in POCL support team who had "authorised closure" of a particular PinICL and there were at least two, possibly three of those that I have seen and I refer to in my witness statement.
- Q. We're going to come to those in a moment. You're not referring there to something that a Post Office Counters Limited employee typed in, this is something that an ICL

Pathway employee typed in saying --

- A. Yes.
- Q. -- "I have spoken to Mr X or Ms X, they authorise closure", for example?
- A. Correct. To repeat, this was an internal system and we gave, I believe, reasonable access to it or extracts from it, but beyond that we didn't allow POCL people to make direct entries and take control over it, no.
 - Q. You said "In my view we gave them reasonable access to it", did that mean -- coming back to some of the answers you gave earlier -- you still believed that they had viewing rights of it?
- A. I don't know.
- Q. -- that they exercised?
- A. I don't know whether they had direct viewing rights.

 I will be honest, I'm not sure I ever knew and

 I certainly can't remember. What I would say is they
 had extracts at least which appeared to satisfy them at
 the time, but again you would need to talk to my
 technical colleagues who had the direct interaction
 between themselves and their opposite numbers.
 - Q. Can we look at some of the documents that you were just referring to and a convenient way of doing that will be through your witness statement because you actually cut into your witness statement the relevant PinICLs.

A. Okay.

Q. It is WITN03770100 and it's at page 41. Just to introduce some context, at paragraph 122 you say:

"To understand better what had been going on in the run-up to the joint decision to start volume Rollout in January 2000, in preparing this witness statement I went through [the] PinICLs raised in late 1999 that related to Al376. I do not recall having seen any of these PinICLs at the time although (as explained above) I had been briefed on the issue."

Then you set out in paragraph 123 three PinICLs, those ending 552, 884 and 363. You say that they are:

"... examples of PinICLs that identified Reference Data as the cause of issues. The records show that in each case [Post Office Counters Limited] were aware of what had happened and approved closure of the PinICL, as demonstrated by the quotations below ..."

You deal firstly with 552 and I think we've got the whole of the relevant bits of the PinICL there. It reads:

"This is clearly the result of the missing Primary Mappings on the local travel ticket products in the Southend area. The error in the reference data was corrected on Friday 24th September and therefore [transferred] transactions recorded up to that time

[cash accounting periods 26 and 27] will fail to report to the cash account, causing a receipts [and] payments condition."

Then this:

"Ok to close as per Martin Box of POCL 16/2/00."

Is it that last entry, under your last bullet point there, that you are referring to in your present answers when you say that it is clear that Post Office Counters Limited had knowledge of what was on some of the PinICLs because they authorised closure of them and this is a record of an authorisation to close?

- A. That's part of what I was trying to describe. This is clearly a little bit later than the actual AI workshops which took place in August/September 1999, so this being dated closure in February 2000, so this would have been an operational PinICL that occurred. At the time there were different PinICLs. There had been reference data related PinICLs that we -- as I recall, the first known one was in June 1999. So earlier, I was referring to the approach during the AI workshops where we had a very strong focus on identifying the problems, understanding the root cause and fixing them.
 - Q. If we look at the next one please at paragraph 123.2, if we just scroll down. Thank you, yes, that has all of it on there. Again, the first three bullet points don't

1		matter, but it's the fourth for present purposes:
2		"Okay to close as per Martin Box of POCL"
3		He was a Post Office Counters Limited employee,
4		Martin Box, and so this is a record made by
5		an ICL Pathway employee of their claim that Mr Box had
6		authorised closure of the PinICL, yes?
7	A.	That's my understanding, yes.
8	Q.	Now, of course, that wouldn't be necessary to make
9		a record like that if Post Office Counters Limited did
10		have direct access to the PinICL because they could type
11		in "We agree closure"?
12	A.	They didn't have can I just challenge you a little
13		bit on that. They might have had view access, they
14		might have had, but not write access. They definitely
15		did not have write access.
16	Q.	By "write access" you mean writing access?
17	A.	Writing access, yes. I'm very confident with that but
18		I don't know whether they some individuals may have
19		been given a viewing access, I just don't know.
20	Q.	So is your final position on this then, you don't know
21		one way or the other and we can
22	A.	In terms of viewing, that's correct. I do know that
23		they wouldn't have had write access.
24	Q.	Thank you. Can we look at that can come down, thank
25		you something which is the reverse of to some
		37
1		showed that those entries had been made centrally as
2		opposed to within the branch, so if there's an argument
3		later, the audit trail would have shown where
4		an additional message would have been inserted. And
5		that, for me, was absolutely fundamental, that there
6		would be an audit trail.
7		The other point I quickly make is that no message
8		that had been created in a branch could be amended, as
9		that message was unique and discrete, a bit like block
10		chain. Riposte was a forerunner to block chain.
11	Q.	When did you acquire the knowledge that you have just
12		summarised?
13	A.	At the time. I dealt with Riposte technology to the
14		level, as I was saying earlier, that I needed to in
15		order to understand what could happen, what the risks
16		were, and I also managed the contract with Escher, who
47		were the cumplior of Dinecto, and it was Dinecto that
17		were the supplier of Riposte, and it was Riposte that

was at the heart of what I just described.

effect, or could have the effect, of changing

If I may slightly modify what you stated, the

Q. So to be clear, there was remote access by ICL to the

transactions conducted at branch level, but your

correspondence server, which such access would have the

understanding was that should be identifiable for audit

extent the reverse or the obverse of what we have just been looking at, namely remote access by ICL Pathway to systems to make changes to them at a counter level, without the relevant subpostmasters' knowledge and without the relevant subpostmasters' permission.

To your knowledge, did Pathway have the ability to obtain such remote access without the relevant subpostmasters' knowledge or permission?

A. No. Let me give you a little bit of -- perhaps a longer explanation than you want. The way the architecture worked was that all transactions, all messages, so-called, were exchanged between counters within a branch and then from the branch to so-called correspondence servers. So they were all supposed to be in sync. Now, there was no ability to get access into a branch PC, but what there was was a possibility to get into the correspondence server, make an entry in the correspondence server, which would then propagate back to the branch, so the effect would be the same.

The point though is that it would be clear -- should have been clear, I had understood -- that any entries made in the correspondence server would show up as entries made on the correspondence server, in other words they would appear as a different counter or some such. There would be a marker in the audit trail that

correspondence server sat in Wigan and Bootle, so they were central servers.

Secondly, they would show up with a time stamp as subsequent messages, well after the original -- let's say there was an erroneous message, some kind of doubling up or whatever, there were -- I dare say you will go into that later -- opportunities for error, let's put it that way, inadvertently, to occur and this would have been a way to fix those after a -- I would have expected a helpdesk call from the postmaster to say he had a problem.

There was also this notion of repaired cash accounts, and so on, and so on, strict rules about that. But they would have all been made in the central service and there would have been, as I say, a separate, completely separate, set of messages associated with those changes, so that if there was an argument later the audit trail would have shown.

- Q. You said that that separation and the separate set of messages was fundamental. Why was it fundamental?
- A. Well, for actually the reasons that we're having to discuss, so that there would be no argument later.
- Q. No argument about what?
 - A. Well, who had made what changes, who had made what errors. The idea was --

(10) Pages 37 - 40

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- Q. le whether they were the responsibility of a subpostmaster, or as a consequence of action taken by an ICL employee at or in the correspondence layer?
 - A. Precisely.

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- Q. What controls and safeguards were that system, the use of remote access to the correspondence layer, subject to?
- A. Well, you would have -- I'm sorry to defer on this. You would have to talk to my support colleagues. My understanding from, if you like, my commercial role was that there would be very stringent security controls, access controls for -- I think I was expecting third line only, third line support.
- Q. Yes. When you say "stringent access controls", you mean the barriers or gateways that would have to be passed through in order to obtain access?
- A. Yes, correct, and the other thing I say on top of that is that -- I'm sure you will come on to it this later -the third supplemental agreement and related service control documents stipulated very clearly that, whenever anybody in ICL made a change, they were to inform POCL, or POL as it became, of whatever those changes were and the reasons for those changes.
- Q. How widely known at board level, ICL Pathway board
 level, was it known that such remote access existed?
 - Q. When you say "documented", do you mean separately written up and catalogued or do you mean, by the very operation of the system, there is an audit trail available of the messages?
 - A. There would be an audit trail of the messages. One would obviously need to go and look for them and to know to go and look for them, which may have been a problem here, I don't know. But also the process around the third supplemental agreement was that, whenever such a change was made, POCL were to be informed.
- 11 Q. Would have been, how?
- A. There was -- again, if you were to refer to -- I think
 it was called the TIP incident process, TIP -- TIP
 reconciliation and incident process.
- 15 Q. We're going to go on to that in detail later.
- 16 A. That's the place --
- Q. Hold on a moment. That's a very specific issue arisingout of a specific problem, Al376.
- 19 A. Yes, but this is all to do with, as far as I'm 20 concerned, 376 and --
- 21 Q. The answers that you have been giving are only framed by reference to Al376; is that right?
- A. Well, did you say you wanted to get back to it in detail later?
- 25 Q. Yes.

- A. I don't know, to be honest --
 - Q. Was it the kind of thing -- sorry.
- A. Let me carry on and try and answer that. Did we ever talk about it? I don't remember a minute of it at any of the board meetings, but what I can say is that any system you have to have some kind of third line ability to get into systems to make changes. Now, you want those to be as limited as possible but there is that need. If there's a corruption, sometimes you just have to go in and fix it. Now, this is beyond my knowledge. You would need to talk to support people on just what they knew and how they actually did it in practice, that's the other point.
 - Q. In terms of the breadth of knowledge at board level, which is what I'm interested in at the moment, was this facility so obvious that it need not be discussed?
- A. Yes, because, as I said, any system and all systems, I would contend, have very tightly controlled -- they should be very tightly controlled, very limited number of key personnel -- sorry, not key personnel in the sense of this contract, but trusted people with particular levels of expertise who could go in, do a very limited number of amendments, which would then be documented, and I stress that they should always be documented.

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- A. My answer is in response to 376 broadly. Maybe when we get to it you will see if it needs to be expanded on but that's the context I'm referring to, yes.
 - Q. To your knowledge, did anyone within Post Office Counters Limited know about ICL's remote access to the correspondence layer?
- A. It was a requirement in the supplemental agreement, so
 yes. I mean, you say remote access to the
 correspondence server. This was the support people who,
 in a sense, are logically sat right on top of the
 correspondence server, so the remote point I don't quite
 fathom. They are logically sitting in the data centre
 - Q. We could knock off the word "remote" and just say "access"?

managing these correspondence servers.

- 16 A. Yes.
- MR BEER: Can I turn -- in fact, before we turn to the next
 topic I wonder whether that's a convenient moment, sir,
 for the morning break.
- 20 **SIR WYN WILLIAMS:** Yes, by all means.
- 21 MR BEER: Sir, could we say half past please?
- 22 **SIR WYN WILLIAMS:** Yes, fine. Thank you very much.
- 23 (11.14 am)

24 (Short Break)

25 **(11.29 am)**

44

1	MR	BEER: Sir, good morning. Can you see and hear me?	1		facility
2	SIR	WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you.	2		subpo
3	MR	BEER: Thank you, and likewise.	3		that th
4		Mr Oppenheim, can I turn to consider disclosure	4		J
5		obligations for the purposes of criminal proceedings.	5		the a
6	A.	Mm-hm.	6		".
7	Q.	After the Benefits Agency withdrew from the tripartite	7		reque
8		arrangement, you know, we know, that ICL Pathway and	8		exped
9		Post Office Counters Limited entered a bilateral	9		inves
10		agreement.	10		shortf
11	A.	Yes.	11		mism
12	Q.	I just want to look, please, at paragraph 277 of your	12		I was
13		witness statement, that's page 85, please. It is, in	13		indee
14		fact, the last paragraph of your statement. I hope by	14		prose
15		now, if we go down, the page has been replaced and you	15		It
16		can now see your signature in there.	16		partic
17	A.	Yes.	17		of Po
18	Q.	That is your signature?	18		again
19	A.	That is my signature.	19	A.	I was.
20	Q.	The "GRO", the general restriction order redaction has	20		was ir
21		been removed.	21		foreru
22	A.	Yes.	22		forwa
23	Q.	But, anyway, more substantively, at paragraph 277, you	23		when
24		say:	24		prose
25		"I was aware of [Post Office Counters Limited's] 45	25	Q.	You h
1		going to come to in a second, and the fact that it was	1		your l
2		carried forward from the original agreement to	2		prose
3		a provision. Is it by that means that you knew about	3		fraud
4		the facility of the Post Office to bring private	4		the pr
5		prosecutions?	5	Α.	Yes, I
6	A.	That was the original trigger for that awareness and	6	,	l was
7	,	I remember asking Liam Foley, one of the colleagues you	7		and I
8		will remember, sorry, from the organogram, about it and	8		happe
9		he explained that that did exist. I was very surprised	9		of info
10		at the time.	10	Q.	Why
11	Q.	Surprised about what?	11	Α.	Beca
12	Α.	That the Post Office had that jurisdiction.	12		inforn
13	Q.	And why were you surprised?	13		we
14	Α.		14		referr
15		jurisdiction, other than Crown Prosecution.	15		agree
16	Q.		16		proce
17		from, would this be right, about 1996 to 2002?	17		would
18	A.	That sounds right, yes.	18		that a
19		So you knew that it was the Post Office, unusually, who	19		syste
20		would be a prosecutor rather than, as you said, the	20		Ś
21		police or the Crown Prosecution Service?	21		there
22	A.	As I say, I was aware of it. It never really came up in	22		wrong
23		my working experience over that time.	23		certai
24	Q.	Can we look at the second part of the sentence there	24		the po
25		where you are, is this right, drawing a link between	25		feedb
		47			

facility to mount private prosecutions against subpostmasters determined to be acting fraudulently and that the Codified Agreement ..."

Just interposing there, the codified agreement is the agreement that I just mentioned:

"... required Pathway to provide audit trails when requested to do so to support such prosecutions. My expectation was that each case would be properly investigated before concluding that the cause of a cash shortfall was indeed fraud rather than some kind of mismatch in the system. To the best of my recollection, I was never asked to look into any of these cases -- indeed, I was completely unaware at the time that the prosecutions were going on."

It's the first sentence that I'm interested in particularly. You were aware, that's aware at the time, of Post Office's facility to mount private prosecutions against subpostmasters?

- A. I was. There's a provision in the contract and there was in the original POCL contract, which was the forerunner to the codified agreement, which was carried forward, that we would support the Post Office in -- when requested to do so -- in mounting such prosecutions, with the provision of information.
- Q. You have referred to the codified agreement, which we're

your knowledge of the facility of Post Office to prosecute in the criminal courts its subpostmasters for fraud and a part of the codified agreement that requires the provision of data to support such prosecutions?

- A. Yes, I'm trying to make the case that -- the point that I was aware of the provision to provide such information and I assumed that it would be a rare thing when it happened and that we would provide the audit trail kind of information that I was referring to earlier.
- Q. Why did you assume that it would be a rare thing?
- A. Because I had assumed that inspection of the kind of information that, again, I referred to earlier, whereby we -- where there was a mismatch in the system, as referred to here, and in the third supplemental agreement, in particular, and the subsequent operational processes, that there was an acknowledgement that there would be occasional mismatches. I mean, everybody knew that and the scale of the system was such any remote system will have mismatches occasionally.

So the question then was, well, what happens when there is such an event? And my presumption was, wrongly, that the Post Office would look into those and, certainly at the outset, as I say somewhere else, give the postmaster the benefit of the doubt. We needed feedback when these things occurred, in order to find

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- Q. Why would you assume that the Post Office would give, in prosecutorial decisions, subpostmasters the benefit of the doubt?
- A. Well, I had assumed that, before getting to prosecution, the people that were on, as it were, the other side of the fence from me would look into the evidence, the audit trails that we were talking about earlier, so start with the support people and they would look at it and they would put questions to ICL Pathway and we would respond and we would dig into these things, in the same way as we did with PinICLs. That was the whole point about PinICLs and incidents and also problems, which were combinations of similar incidents.
- Q. You said that you assumed. Is that something that you remember assuming from 25/27 years ago, or is it something that you have looked at now and is an ex post facto rationalisation of what you think you would have thought, had you thought about it at the time?
- A. It didn't occur to me that POCL would rush to prosecution without checking the facts and the fact that we had all of these very, very detailed provisions as to what to do under certain error conditions, operational error conditions, for me was an indication that my opposite numbers understood that these things would 49

generated by the system itself, have given subpostmasters the benefit of the doubt?

A. Benefit of the doubt, certainly in the early stages when they always have teething problems with any new system. So you asked earlier about did they rush to rollout, did we rush to rollout. There was a judgement call made as to the quality, we passed the tests, but the word of caution was always be on the look out for new things that we didn't know about, and that's the same with the introduction of any new, large complex system.

So in the early days, certainly, I would have said, "Let's listen to the feedback, pay attention, work out what's going on here", and, in that circumstance, yes, give the benefit of the doubt.

I'm not sure what -- that would necessarily be what I would have said, say, five years in, when the thing should have been completely bedded in, but, even then, there needed to be an inspection of the audit trails and the facts.

Q. We can take that document down but, in its place, please, put FUJ00000071. Back to the codified agreement and can we look, please, at page 97. If we can highlight/blow up, "Prosecution Support", 4.1.8 and 4.1.9, please. These provisions in the codified agreement provide that:

occur and that there was a process for dealing with them.

And, on occasion, I write somewhere, there's a specific statement in the third supplemental agreement, that it would not always be possible to determine what exactly had gone wrong in a particular case and, therefore, if we had to make an assumption about putting something right we would absolutely inform the Post Office of what that was and then it was up to them to determine whether that was a correct assumption

I was very uncomfortable with the pressure that we were under to actually make corrections. We were invited to make all the corrections. We pushed back on that and, in the case of TIP errors, Post Office then made the errors -- the error corrections. But, I mean, there was just a general understanding between all the technical and commercial people that there would be occasional errors. There's something like 10 million transactions a day going through this system: there will be errors.

Q. You either think now that you would have thought, had you addressed your mind to it, or thought then, that the Post Office in making prosecutorial decisions would, against that context of the likelihood of errors

"The contractor shall ensure that all relevant information produced by the POCL service infrastructure at the request of POCL shall be evidentially admissible and capable of certification in accordance with Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984, the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 and equivalent legislation covering Scotland.

"At the direction of POCL, audit trail and other information necessary to support live investigations and prosecutions shall be retained for the duration of the investigation and prosecution irrespective of the normal retention period of that information."

Would you agree that, in order for ICL Pathway to comply with these provisions, it would be necessary for it to understand what is required in order to make information evidentially admissible and capable of certification in England and Wales, in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984?

- A. That's the requirement as stated, yes.
- Q. It's the requirement as stated but, in order for compliance to occur, it would be necessary for your company to understand what is required in order to ensure that such relevant information is evidentially admissible, ie how do we go about carrying that provision into effect?

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A. I agree, absolutely right. That's what is required of us and that's what we should have done. Now, what I can't speak to is personal knowledge of those details. They are very important details but I was not involved in that. That whole area was, as I recall, Martyn Bennett, risk management -- part of his portfolio.

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- Q. But would you agree that it would -- it, ICL Pathway -only be able to comply with the provision if it knew what the requirements of the law were, so that it could ensure that data was captured, retained and enjoyed sufficient integrity and reliability and be placed in a suitable form evidentially to a court?
- A. So my understanding was -- I never looked at this in detail, this provision in detail myself, but my understanding was that the information provision that was agreed between ICL Pathway and POCL, specifically around the third supplemental agreement and the related control documents, were designed to deliver precisely this and there was a mass -- as I was alluding to earlier -- a mass of audit trail information behind that.

So out of all of that, I would have expected all of the substance to be satisfied. What I don't know about is the form and the detail of those requirements.

Q. You said in the middle of that answer that you didn't,

the law required, either because you knew it or because you had been advised about it. You wouldn't build into your systems a requirement or a process which says if a client ever wishes to use the data, which our system is producing or handling, for the purposes of criminal proceedings, then we would have that data ready for disclosure and for such use in a state that's evidentially sound. You wouldn't design your systems that way.

A. You wouldn't necessarily make any changes to the design of the system which was designed to flag issues and, to the extent possible, identify the root causes and the appropriate course of action and report on them in a day-to-day operational sense.

So if it satisfies those and it satisfied the Post Office requirements, which were very detailed indeed about reporting, then I should have thought that their requirements at the CCD level -- sorry, contract control document level -- would have encompassed this because they were the people who were basically the custodian of this process for the Post Office. If they weren't satisfied with what we were doing, I would have expected them to have told us that and if they had looked at it and felt it was wanting, then it would have come to me as a contractual issue, but it didn't.

I think, concentrate on this requirement in detail at the time. You did tell us in your witness statement that you were aware that the codified agreement required Pathway to provide audit trails when requested to do so to support private prosecutions?

- A. Correct. I was aware of these two paragraphs.
- Q. Being aware of those two paragraphs, to your knowledge, did ICL Pathway seek advice on what the requirements that had been placed upon it were, in order to be able to achieve compliance with the contractual provisions?
- A. I have to say, I don't know. I covered a lot of ground but I didn't cover this ground. This was, as I recall -- as I said before, the remit of Martyn Bennett. Whether he took external advice or not, I'm afraid I can't tell you.
- Q. Would you agree that, in the absence of either such advice or a very good existing understanding of the criminal law, which is perhaps unlikely within IT professionals, compliance with the clause at a practical level would be difficult to achieve?
- A. I don't know. It's -- if all of the basic data was good data, was kept and was made available, then I should have thought that that was what this was pointing to, but I don't know.
- 25 Q. Well, for example, you wouldn't, unless you knew what
 - Q. Well, one approach would be to say "Look, we know, or we have been advised that at this time the criminal law, a provision in Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, says that it may be necessary for an employee of Pathway to say to a court 'There are no reasonable grounds for believing that the data produced by our system is inaccurate by improper use of it', how are we going to be able to say that in a witness statement to a court? Can we design our system in a way that allows an ICL Pathway employee to say such a thing?"
 - A. So, taking your question in the two parts, taking the second part first, the design of the system was first and foremost to ensure accuracy, but also then operationally, if there was an error identified, identify the error, identify the root cause where possible, what fixes would be needed and the processes for managing that all through and reporting on it. So if you have satisfied those then I can't imagine, apart from presentation, that there would be anything more that we would need to do to satisfy this condition, but that's -- that statement is a statement out of not knowing the detail of the law.

Now, as I said, Martyn Bennett would have had this responsibility. There were people in probably second or third line support who would have been charged with

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pulling out the audit trails and producing the evidence.

We also, at the time, had an in-house lawyer. He may or may not have looked at it.

- Q. What was his name?
- A. Warren Spencer. You may recall him from the organogram. So what I don't know is whether these -- my colleagues looked into this at that sort of legal level and satisfied themselves that, based on the operational data that we would be producing, that we would be compliant.

Now, as for getting one of our people to talk to the accuracy -- and I -- I would always hope that there would be a degree of caution inserted in any statement that can guarantee that this is accurate, because with IT systems sometimes they do go wrong, that's just the nature of them, particularly, as I said, where they're distributed, you have breaks in communication between the branch and the centre, you can have a printer fail in the middle of a transaction, there are all manner of things -- or ran out of paper in the middle of a transaction -- all manner of things that can go wrong and if they can then they will, particularly at such a large scale.

So you've got to allow for the possibility that something has gone wrong that we don't actually understand

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that carry this high level statement into practical effect?

- A. I'm afraid I don't know and it's possible that it was missed at the outset until it started to happen. I mean I just do not recall this ever having come across my desk, sorry.
- Q. Are you aware of any policy, protocol or other document that does in fact carry this contractual obligation into effect at a practical level?
- A. No. As I said, there were lots of service incident problem management, and such-like, documents which talked about what you do when something goes wrong, but not in regard to this, no.
- Q. Yes, there are many, many documents that deal with the operation of the system and the rectification of errors within it at an operational level, as you rightly described it. I'm not looking at this through an operational lens.
- A. I understand.
 - Q. I'm looking at it through the lens of a contractual provision that says you've got to be ready to disclose things in a form, effectively, that's evidentially secure for the purposes of the criminal law.
 - A. So "secure" in that context, for me, would mean it's -- it has integrity, it's accurate and it's complete and

Q. You said that Martyn Bennett had responsibility for ensuring the discharge of this obligation?

A. I thought so. This would logically have come under him.
 Alternatively it would have come under --

- Q. Just stopping you there. We can take that down from the screen now.
- A. Okay. Alternatively, it would have fallen to my service director colleague, Steve Muchow, at the time, so it could have simply been given to him to enact, but in terms of satisfying ourselves that we could satisfy this, I would have expected that to have been Martyn Bennett and possibly Warren Spencer.
 - Q. Why would you expect it to have fallen to Martyn Bennett?
- A. Because this was viewed as, I think, to the extent
 I recall it at all, a risk item, but it could also have
 been a support item which would have made it Stephen
 Muchow, so I genuinely don't know.
- 19 Q. Why would it have been viewed as a risk item?
- A. Because it's -- risk was his title but he was also head of assurance, audit and the like, so this would have come under his other responsibilities to do with audit.
- Q. Who, if anyone, would have been the liaison point within
 Post Office Counters Limited in relation to this issue,
 the design of a system, or the enactment of policies

whether that is -- those are requirements, in any event under the contract, as far as I'm concerned. So there was nothing that I thought at the time -- benefit of hindsight is a wonderful thing -- that I needed to look at this provision specifically because I felt that all the other things would, in a sense, provide the detail behind it.

- Q. Did you know Gareth Jenkins?
- A. His -- I know his name and I don't recall actually ever having had dealings with him.
- Q. What did you understand, at the time, his role within ICL Pathway to have been?
- 13 A. I can't remember. He was not someone I can recall 14 dealing with. All the material I have gone through to 15 prepare for this session -- I mean, his name has 16 obviously come up in the context of these proceedings, 17 but I don't recall his name being on any of the PinICLs 18 or any of the Als, so I wouldn't have dealt with him. 19 He was in the support group and I wouldn't have dealt with him -- sorry, development group. 20
 - Q. Do you know why he was selected as a person to give evidence as a witness with expertise or as an expert witness on the Horizon System?
 - Well, bear in mind when I left the programme there were people like Terry Austin still there, senior people,

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1		more senior, as I understand it, than Gareth but, by the
2		time a lot of this happened, I would have said, from
3		what I have seen, that he was probably the most senior
4		person and was, therefore, designated to act for
5		ICL Pathway, but I don't know.
6	Q.	Are you aware of a practice where, in the course of
7		a prosecution of a subpostmaster for theft and/or false
8		accounting, a request was made for data by them about
9		the operation of the Horizon System and, by then,
10		Fujitsu representatives asked for payment for producing
11		the documents that the individual requested?
12	A.	No, I'm not aware of that and I would have said that was
13		wrong.
14	Q.	"Wrong" because it would be in breach of the contractual
15		obligation to provide the data or the evidence?
16	A.	Well, wrong for that reason and wrong morally, as well,
17		I would have thought.
18	Q.	Can I turn to AI (Acceptance Incident) 376 and the cash
19		account discrepancies issue. Can we look at this issue,
20		and this forms a large part of the evidence in your
21		witness statement, so I'm going to spend some time on
22		it.
23		Can we start, firstly, by explaining to those who
24		don't know what a AI is?
25	A.	An Acceptance Incident. So the codified agreement
		61
1		an incident, a bit like an incident as it would be
2		reported from a again, an operational standpoint.
3	Q.	
4		at Al376. That is POL00043691. Can we turn to page 57.
5		Thank you. I'm just going to spend a little bit of time
6		on this because this is the first time the Inquiry,
7		I think, has seen an Acceptance Incident form.
8		You can see in the top left-hand corner that it is
9		described as an "Acceptance Incident form", yes?
10	Α.	Yes.
11	Q.	Then on the right-hand side, the Acceptance Incident
12		number is included. This one is 376.
13	Α.	Yes.
14	Q.	Are those numbers generated by ICL?
15	Α.	You mean the incidents?
16	Q.	Yes.
17	Α.	They have been raised by TIP. TIP is POCL, so what
18	- ••	would have happened there is ICL Pathway would have
19		transferred data, which would have come from the

branches into the correspondence servers, moved into our

TIP, and TIP would have compared, in this case, two sets

so-called TMS system and, from there, transferred to

of data and would have identified that they were

Q. My question was much simpler, I think. It was: who 63

inconsistent with the cash account.

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26 October 2022 requires that we run a trial, a live trial, for a period 1 2 of three months on 300 post offices, at the end of which 3 there would be, basically, an Acceptance Review. 4 Q. Just stopping there, because that language may be unfamiliar to non-IT professionals: an Acceptance 5 6 Review? 7 A. Okay, so an Acceptance Review would be, basically, that POCL would have looked at the system, looked at the 8 9 data, looked at basically everything they could look at 10 and determine if it was working according to the 11 specification, or the requirements, so was it working properly, or were there defects and, if there were 12 13 defects, then how serious were the defects. And there 14 was a classification grid, if you will, of A, B, C 15 severity defects and we were allowed so many As, so many 16 Bs, so many Cs -- in fact, we weren't allowed any As, we 17 were allowed up to ten Bs, from memory. 18 Q. Zero As, ten Bs. 19 A. Ten Bs. So, basically, it was a granular review of the 20 performance of the system, as I say, across 300 post 21 offices and three-month trial period. 22 Q. So the "acceptance" in the phrase "Acceptance Incident" 23 refers to acceptance by Post Office? 24 A. Acceptance by Post Office, correct, and an incident 25 obviously means that something was wrong, it was

attributes the number on the top right-hand side, 376?

A. Oh, I'm sorry. I think that was POCL. The Acceptance

Incidents were, as I recall, recorded and flagged by POCL and they led to the AI workshop that we were talking about.

Q. How did they generate Acceptance Incidents, POCL?

A. I'm not absolutely sure. I mean, they would have identified, if you like, a bundle of similar problems, errors, like these 821, 822, et cetera, et cetera, and they would have recognised that they were all of the same ilk, put them together. We might have called that a problem under normal operational conditions, when you have similar things producing similar bad outcomes, so we would look at that as a problem and, in this context, they were examples of this particular Acceptance Incident, which was designated 376 and we had 218 and others as well.

Q. Hundreds of them, yes.

- I'm not sure there were hundreds, but -- but logically, with 376, I suppose there must have been, yes.
- Q. Yes. My question again was more basic. How did they physically generate a new Acceptance Incident? So not why would they do it --
- A. I don't know.

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25 Q. -- or what would cause them to do it.

1		I don't know.	1	Α.	Yes, yes. It was POCL who raised the Acceptance
2	Q.	Would they pick up the phone and say, "We've got	2	_	Incidents and we had to deal with them. Correct.
3		a series of problems, they are as follows, please	3	Q.	So we will see that the second box down to the left, the
4		generate a new Acceptance Incident", or could they	4		acceptance test name is "TIP Interface". What does that
5		create this form?	5		mean, "Acceptance Test Name"?
6	A.	They would have created this form. Martin Box	6		Sorry, where is that?
7	Q.	I'm sorry?	7	Q.	Second box down on the left-hand side, underneath
8	A.	3.	8		"Acceptance Form" it says "Acceptance Test Name"?
9		was this form, which they would then fill in, as they	9	A.	Yes, TIP interface, right. So this is what I was trying
10		have done here. Martin Box is the same Martin Box	10		to describe before, so there's a daisy chain of data
11		I recognise from that PinICL that we talked about	11		transfers
12		earlier.	12	Q.	Just stopping you there, I'm not asking about the TIP
13	Q.	So are you saying that Martin Box drafted the form?	13		interface, I'm asking what an "Acceptance Test Name" is?
14	A.	No, we would have agreed the form between us. I can't	14	A.	Well, it simply identifies where the problem occurred.
15		remember who instigated it, whether it was them or us,	15	Q.	Okay, so this is locating within
16		probably POCL, and then they would have populated it and	16	A.	Yes.
17		then we would have responded to it.	17	Q.	This box is locating in generic terms where in the
18	Q.	So you think that somebody from POCL could get into the	18		system the problem exists?
19		system that maintained Acceptance Incident forms and	19	A.	Exactly.
20		write text into them?	20	Q.	"Source", box 3. So you see after all of the boxes
21	A.	Absolutely. This would have been their form, not our	21		there is a number in parentheses, and I'm going through
22		form.	22		them in order. I think each time you are diving down
23	Q.	So this is a POCL form, not a	23		into box 10. I'm just taking this very slowly because
24	A.	Yes.	24		you are our first witness on this. What does "Source"
25	Q.	ICL form?	25		mean?
		65			66
1	A.	Well, the person who would have spotted the problem, so	1	Q.	Why would you obviously want something to be less
2		this was, I think, POCL's business support management,	2		serious? Surely you wanted to do the accurate thing?
3					
		I think.	3	A.	Absolutely right, but there was a question if it had
4	Q.	I think. Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July.	3 4	A.	Absolutely right, but there was a question if it had no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should
4 5				A.	
	A.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes.	4	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should
5	A.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you	4 5	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release.
5 6 7	A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes.	4 5 6	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go
5 6	A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes.	4 5 6 7	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as
5 6 7 8	A. Q. A.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee.	4 5 6 7 8	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go
5 6 7 8 9	A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about?	4 5 6 7 8 9	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else.
5 6 7 8 9 10 11	A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know.	4 5 6 7 8 9 10	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the
5 6 7 8 9 10 11	A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	A.	no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"?	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong.
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible).	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side.
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5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible). I'm sorry? I would say no, I can't. I could guess at it, but these were determined by POCL not us. There would have been	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side. Can we move to box 10, the "Description of the Incident". As this is our first AI, I'm going to read it as a whole:
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible). I'm sorry? I would say no, I can't. I could guess at it, but these were determined by POCL not us. There would have been discussion about them but there was very often something	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side. Can we move to box 10, the "Description of the Incident". As this is our first AI, I'm going to read it as a whole: "Description of incident
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible). I'm sorry? I would say no, I can't. I could guess at it, but these were determined by POCL not us. There would have been discussion about them but there was very often something of a disagreement between us as to how severe a given AI	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side. Can we move to box 10, the "Description of the Incident". As this is our first AI, I'm going to read it as a whole: "Description of incident "New Description: AIS contravention/Data
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible). I'm sorry? I would say no, I can't. I could guess at it, but these were determined by POCL not us. There would have been discussion about them but there was very often something of a disagreement between us as to how severe a given Al was. I mean, there was some debate about that. It	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side. Can we move to box 10, the "Description of the Incident". As this is our first AI, I'm going to read it as a whole: "Description of incident "New Description: AIS contravention/Data integrity derived cash account not equal to the
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible). I'm sorry? I would say no, I can't. I could guess at it, but these were determined by POCL not us. There would have been discussion about them but there was very often something of a disagreement between us as to how severe a given Al was. I mean, there was some debate about that. It wasn't an acrimonious debate but there was a debate. We	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side. Can we move to box 10, the "Description of the Incident". As this is our first AI, I'm going to read it as a whole: "Description of incident "New Description: AIS contravention/Data integrity derived cash account not equal to the electronic cash account. Incidents"
5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A. Q. A. Q. A. Q.	Then the "Date Observed", in this case, 19 July. Yes. Box 5, "Witness/Reviewer who observed Incident", and you have said already that Martin Box was a POCL employee. Yes. "Authority" in box 6, what was that authority for or about? I can't recall. I really don't know. And box 7, the "Incident Type". Can you tell us the difference between "Criterion not met" and "Substantive fault"? (Inaudible). I'm sorry? I would say no, I can't. I could guess at it, but these were determined by POCL not us. There would have been discussion about them but there was very often something of a disagreement between us as to how severe a given Al was. I mean, there was some debate about that. It	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21		no impact on the integrity of the system, then it should be classed as a C category and then it could be swept up, dealt with and released in the next release. If it's an A, it's a show stopper, you can't go forward, you have to identify it and fix it as an emergency update, in effect, before doing anything else. If it's a B, again, it sits somewhere between the two, so you really need to determine the impact or potential impact of whatever it is that's been flagged as wrong. You have already addressed box 9 on the right-hand side. Can we move to box 10, the "Description of the Incident". As this is our first AI, I'm going to read it as a whole: "Description of incident "New Description: AIS contravention/Data integrity derived cash account not equal to the

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it's more serious than we really thought it was.

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transactions that constitute a cash account have not

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1 been received by TIP or when electronic cash accounts 2 received where transactions that have been conducted and 3 received by TIP are missing from the respective cash 4 account lines. These issues have come to light when 5 comparing a TIP derived cash account with the electronic 6 cash account sent by Pathway. Not all instances of 7 similar occurrences have been logged by TIP as the 8 physical resource to check each occurrence of 9 a difference within the derived versus the electronic is 10 not available. It was expected that this facility would by now be comparing like with like. This is very 11 12 significant. Missing transactions and missing cash 13 account line entries cause reconciliation failures 14 within POCL back end systems and error resolution is 15 invoked. The cash account produced by the 16 Organisational Unit in these instances must be in doubt 17 and is not a fair reflection of the business undertaken 18 at each Organisational Unit. A subpostmaster may be 19 asked to bring to account an error, but the error was 20 produced via system failure rather than human failure. 21 Many hours of investigation at both the front end and 22 back end have taken place to help resolve these 23 problems. The benefits assigned to POCL back end system 24 in respect of an automated cash account are being 25 questioned." 69 1 2 Q. Reading on just after the sentence "This is very 3 significant", the sentence: 4

"The cash account produced by the Organisational Unit in these instances must be in doubt and [it] is not a fair reflection of the business undertaken at each Organisational Unit."

That's one of the reasons why the issue is very significant, isn't it?

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- A. Well, it's one. It's also -- it then goes on to talk about the impact on the branch and the subpostmaster, so this is, as I said, an absolute show stopper. You've got to then look at actually what caused the problems and what was done about them.
- Q. Put in blunter language, that sentence means that it's not a fair reflection on the subpostmaster because the system is showing a false balance?
- A. It is, that's absolutely right, which is why this needed to be looked at in significant detail.

We had only recently -- this was summarised
19 July -- only recently really got going with
interfacing with TIP on EPOSS transactions. Most of the
previous effort had been on the Benefits Agency up
until June of 1999. It had been virtually all Benefits
Agency, no EPOSS transactions all, so all of the 200, as

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So, just looking at that text for the moment, you will see that, about ten lines in, the author, whoever it was, says that the incident that they are describing is very significant. Would you agree with that?

- A. Yes, I would.
- Q. Why would you agree that, at this stage, the incident was very significant?
- Well, for all the reasons set out in that long paragraph. There's nothing I would disagree with in there.
- Q. It's very serious because what is described undermines not only the very purpose of the system, it means that the system lacks integrity, it lacks veracity and it lacks reliability, doesn't it?
- A. At that point, 19 July, summarising things that have been found up to that point, yes. That position was untenable and there's no way we could have gone on and we didn't.

You then need to look at what actually transpired after that.

- Q. We're going to spend the next two or three hours,I think, doing that.
- A. Okay, fine. But yes, this was a show stopper and I would have had it down as substantive or whatever -- this is a category A. I mean, there's no doubt about

they were, post offices running Child Benefit in the North East and South West were only doing Child Benefit and order book control.

So this was new and it was, you know, clearly a show stopper, as I say. The question was what was done about it and where did we end up.

Q. The next sentence:

"The cash account produced by the Organisational Unit ..."

You have referred to the branch. That's another way of referring to the branch, yes?

- A. That would be my interpretation. It's not a term I'm familiar with.
 - Q. I will read it as branch for the moment:

"The cash account produced by the [branch] in these instances must be in doubt and [it] is not a fair reflection of the business undertaken at each [branch]."

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"A subpostmaster may be asked to bring to account an error, but the error was produced via system failure rather than human failure."

That sentence there in a single sentence describes one of the main issues being investigated now, doesn't it: the Horizon System created the balancing errors by the way that it operated, but suggested that the

the way that it o

1		balancing error was that of a human and not a computer?	1		So POCL are describing the severity of the incident
2	Δ	That was the case then. To what extent did that	2		as high:
3	,	continue to be the case after all of the remedial work,	3		"PWY [that's Pathway] accept the problem exists.
4		that that would be, for me, the key thing, but at	4		Would argue about the severity would it genuinely
5		this stage it's a bad indicator, I agree.	5		affect the accounting integrity as it currently
6	Q.	Although the wording of that sentence about accounting	6		[stands]?"
7	Δ.	is perhaps a little opaque, would you agree that what is	7		You have told us this morning that, on the basis of
8		being suggested is that a subpostmaster may be asked to	8		the earlier text, this was "a show stopper", the point
9		account for an error, even though it was not his or her	9		was "made the system untenable", it was a fundamental
10		error?	10		issue and was undoubtedly high. Do you know why Pathway
11	Α.	Yes.	11		are recorded as saying they would question the severity
12		Would you understand that "account for" doesn't just	12		and were asking
13		mean provide an explanation for, it means, in context,	13	Α.	I think the
14		paying for it or facing the consequences of not paying	14		"would it genuinely effect accounting integrity"?
15		for it?	15		So we're now going back 20-whatever years. I can't
16	Α.	Yes, and I would simply add "and POCL knew that", which	16		defend the proposition that it should be anything other
17		is goes to my earlier remarks about their knowledge,	17		than a major, high severity fault. I think it I can
18		that there were, at this stage, unacceptable errors to	18		only assume that there was an assumption there wouldn't
19		the point where it shouldn't rollout, hence the Al	19		be very many of these, we've got PinICLs that were being
20		process, and subsequently that there was still always	20		fixed and that when those had been fixed we
21		going to be a risk that such a thing could occur and it	21		understood, in other words, the nature of the problem
22		would need to be investigated.	22		and when they had been fixed that would resolve the
23	Q.	Moving on, if we scroll down please:	23		problem. Now
24	-	"Severity: POCL high would effect POCL's	24	Q.	That's a different way of looking at it, isn't it?
25		ability to produce an accurate cash account."	25	Α.	Well, it's
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1	0	as I think you know. Mr Oppophoim. This isn't coving	1		looking forwards to what happened at the moment, would
1	Q.	as I think you know, Mr Oppenheim. This isn't saying	1		looking forwards to what happened at the moment, would
2	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing	2		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of
2	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the	2		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and
2 3 4	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of	2 3 4		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the
2 3 4 5	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or	2 3 4 5		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the
2 3 4 5 6	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it?	2 3 4 5 6		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court,
2 3 4 5 6 7	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it? All I can do is give you a view as to the way that my	2 3 4 5 6 7		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court, you would wish to know about this document here,
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it? All I can do is give you a view as to the way that my colleagues would have thought about this. So when Steve	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	٨	you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court, you would wish to know about this document here, wouldn't you?
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it? All I can do is give you a view as to the way that my colleagues would have thought about this. So when Steve Warwick says "We understand this, we're on top of it,	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	A.	you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court, you would wish to know about this document here, wouldn't you? What I would say is I'm not sure who Pathway was in this
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it? All I can do is give you a view as to the way that my colleagues would have thought about this. So when Steve Warwick says "We understand this, we're on top of it, we've got a fix or fixes in process and there's	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	A.	you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court, you would wish to know about this document here, wouldn't you? What I would say is I'm not sure who Pathway was in this instance. There are no names given other than, at the
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it? All I can do is give you a view as to the way that my colleagues would have thought about this. So when Steve Warwick says "We understand this, we're on top of it, we've got a fix or fixes in process and there's a substantive software update in process that will deal with this", I can imagine they would say, "Look, we're	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	A.	you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court, you would wish to know about this document here, wouldn't you? What I would say is I'm not sure who Pathway was in this instance. There are no names given other than, at the bottom, Steve Warwick, so I don't know who asserted that this argument about severity and, without
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	A. Q.	"We can fix it in the future", or "We're developing a fix for it and therefore when that takes effect the severity might be downgraded"; this is at the point of reporting, saying that Pathway were questioning or arguing over the severity, isn't it? All I can do is give you a view as to the way that my colleagues would have thought about this. So when Steve Warwick says "We understand this, we're on top of it, we've got a fix or fixes in process and there's a substantive software update in process that will deal with this", I can imagine they would say, "Look, we're onto it, it's not going to be a problem, or not a serious problem, we think it's a medium-sized problem", and that would be my interpretation. But it was wrong to assert that, given the facts as they were at that point. I do agree with that. Thank you. Moving on, it says: "Rectification: Steve Warwick" He was an ICL employee? Yes, he led the development of the EPOSS team. " to provide rectification of this issue. [Pathway] understand the problem and are currently working on the	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23		you agree that if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands of pounds from the Post Office, and you believed that you had not done so and instead the Horizon System was faulty and was responsible for the imbalance shown, and you were before a criminal court, you would wish to know about this document here, wouldn't you? What I would say is I'm not sure who Pathway was in this instance. There are no names given other than, at the bottom, Steve Warwick, so I don't know who asserted that this argument about severity and, without knowing that, I can't really answer. I would say it was not representing Pathway because, when it came to the Als, I represented Pathway and we accepted that this was a high severity issue, so this was on the way to getting there. I'm not going to excuse it. I don't agree with it but I don't know who it was that expressed this view. It would have been at a low-level. Putting the issue of the classification of severity to one side, but just looking at the document itself, if you were a subpostmaster accused of stealing thousands

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- for the imbalance shown, you would want to know about this document here, wouldn't you?
 - A. Very likely you would. The point about the possibility of error goes to what I was saying earlier, that one would need to look in detail, before mounting a prosecution, at what had actually happened, what had actually gone wrong. This was very, very early, is the point I would emphasise.

I don't agree with the proposition by whoever it was in Pathway that it would be low severity -- I know you suggest that it should be put to one side, but the point is that it triggered a massive amount of work subsequently, on both Pathway's side and also Post Office's side because one of the problems was, as you referred to earlier, was reference data. So reference data errors were the reason for quite a lot of these mistakes.

Q. Can we move to box 11 and display a little bit more of that, please. We will see that box 11 has not been completed. It's a little difficult for me, at least, to understand who is supposed to complete what here. Under the first box underneath "Signatures", "Witness/Reviewer". From which organisation would you believe that the witness or reviewer would come in order to complete that box?

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- Q. Then, lastly, on this page, I think a date for entrance into an acceptance database. What was the acceptance database?
- A. We had an Excel spreadsheet which listed all the Als, but I -- that's the only one I can think of that was a database and it tracks day by day every movement and the status, so I'm assuming that's what it would be.
- Q. So if, in future, any person, whether they are a prosecutor, a defence lawyer or a court wished to examine whether there were issues -- to use a neutral term -- with the reliability or integrity of the system in its design, implementation and rollout phases, could look at an acceptance database, for example, to see whether such issues were recorded there?
- A. So the acceptance database, I know, dealt with the As and Bs and there was reference to the Cs but I don't think it went into detail around the Cs. At least, it was a level of -- if it did exist -- probably did -it's not something that I ever focused on, but the As and Bs definitely and I think that's probably what we're concerned with here.
- Q. So, in answer to my question, there would be a ready catalogue of issues --
- 25 Yes.

A. POCL.

- Q. The "Horizon Acceptance Test Manager", from which organisation did that person come?
- A. That would be Pathway, I think.
- Q. Then, on the right-hand side, it's got "Pathway". Do you know what or who was supposed to complete that box?
- A. I don't. My guess is it would be the -- when we came to 8 the AI resolutions, the person designated as lead for 9 a given AI.
- 10 Q. Then, on the far right-hand side, "AIM". Do you know 11 what that refers to and who would sign and date that 12 box?
 - A. Sorry, no, I don't.
 - Q. Underneath -- underneath the dates, that is -- the "DSS Acceptance Manager". In July 1999, did the DSS acceptance manager have any role to perform?
- 17 A. No.
 - Q. Is that a relic?
- 19 A. This is a relic. This was a form that was devised prior 20 to the DSS dropping out. Bear in mind this was dated 21 July and they only dropped out in May/June.
- 22 Q. "POCL Business Assurance", on the right-hand side. Do 23 you know who or what that refers to?
- 24 A. I can only assume that it was someone in POCL who was 25 looking over the shoulder of the people we were dealing

Q. -- that such a person could look back on.

- A. Yes, certainly the formulation of -- this is specifically the Acceptance Incident process, the workshop process. That was all very, very carefully documented and I have seen in my review of the papers I have seen examples of that. I think I got them from Fujitsu, rather than yourselves, but I think I referred to them in my witness statement. If not, I can share them with you.
 - Q. Can we go to the second page of the AI, please, so scroll down. We can see in box 4 "Analysed Incident Severity", "High/Medium/Low"; that should be completed, shouldn't it?
 - A. It says in the second box "Low", so --
- 15 Q. Yes, so this is read in the context of the page before, 16 the reporting of the incident severity, and then this is 17 after analysis; is that right?
- 18 A. I --
 - Q. Do you remember the previous page?
- 20 A. I'm just thinking, sorry. I think that must be 21 logically the case.
- 22 Q. And analysed by who?
- 23 A. If this was Fujitsu's response -- sorry, ICL Pathway's 24 response, which I assume it is, it looks like it, then 25 does it have a name at the bottom? Would it be Steve

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1		Warwick?
2	Q.	No, the form well, there is a name at the bottom in
3		some of the boxes of somebody called John Pope.
4	A.	Okay, John Pope was the analyst who worked for John
5		Dicks, who you may recall from the organogram, and he
6		was one of those charged with the resolution of these
7		Als, so he was somebody I worked closely with at the
8		time and he would have gone through with the Steve
9		Warwicks of this world to determine what, you know, the
10		position was. He would have analysed the data.
11	Q.	Does it follow from the answers that you gave earlier
12		that you would fundamentally disagree with the analysis
13		that the severity of the incident was low?
14	A.	I did say earlier, in fairness, as I recall, that one
15		needs to look at what happened subsequently and this is
16		what happened subsequently. I'm sorry I didn't
17		remember. So here he is saying that:
18		"There is no suggestion or indication that there is
19		a fault in the calculation or reporting of the Cash
20		Account"
21	Q.	Just before we get to that, you are reading from box 6.
22	A.	Yes, I am.
23	Q.	Let's read that together:
24		"Pathway has analysed all occurrences where the
25		(TIP) derived cash account does not equal the actual
		81
1		reducing the TIP effort in handling any exceptions.
2		"POCL has removed the aspect concerning the
3		reference data change from core to non core from this Al
4		
_		and re-raised it as Al410 In this case there is
5		no fault within the Pathway system. Pathway has
6		no fault within the Pathway system. Pathway has proposed an approach to POCL to avoid this problem
6 7		no fault within the Pathway system. Pathway has proposed an approach to POCL to avoid this problem through the use of product types within RD", within
6 7 8		no fault within the Pathway system. Pathway has proposed an approach to POCL to avoid this problem through the use of product types within RD", within reference data.
6 7 8 9		no fault within the Pathway system. Pathway has proposed an approach to POCL to avoid this problem through the use of product types within RD", within reference data. So can you to a naive audience translate what
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6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	A.	no fault within the Pathway system. Pathway has proposed an approach to POCL to avoid this problem through the use of product types within RD", within reference data. So can you to a naive audience translate what perhaps Mr Pope has written? Okay, so going back to what was stated at the beginning, that was a very — you know, a very unacceptable — it was an unacceptable position, if confirmed. So if the cash accounts were going wrong, then that was unacceptable. What this is saying is that the cash accounts weren't going wrong but there were problems with "harvesting" all the transactions and reporting them faithfully to TIP. Transactions are needed by TIP for them to reconcile the — for Post Office to reconcile with their clients. So it's very important that they all be complete. Why would some be missing? Because there was a problem with one of the agents, so an agent

cash account ... There is no suggestion or indication that there is a fault in the calculation or reporting of the Cash Account; the incidents relate to an occasional missing transaction when reporting to TIP. This had a rate of occurrence of [around] 1% of outlets per week based on an analysis of the reported TIP incidents. It is agreed this would have been unsustainably high when considered against a target population of 20,000 outlets."

So that's about 200 a week, yes?

A. Yes.

Q. "The agent modification referred to in previous analyses has been operational since [3 August] and is operating successfully.

"An updated summary of TIP incidents was supplied [11 August] as actioned. As noted the root problem has been diagnosed in all non 'serve customer' transactions leaving one further problem under diagnosis relating to occasional scales transactions, which are all in serve customer mode and are corrected by the agent modification noted above.

"In addition Pathway has established routine monitoring for all harvesting exceptions and should any occur will notify them to TIP in advance and has agreed a suitable procedure with TIP, thereby substantially

A. An agent -- an agent basically looks at the data in the -- I think the correspondence server, or it could be the branch, I'm not 100 per cent sure, and it pulls that data into the database, into TMS. TMS is transaction management system, which was ICL Pathway's database that then transferred the data to TIP. So, as I said, this is something of a daisy chain which operates remotely in a world before the internet, when dial-up modems were still, you know, standard.

So you had an ISDN link, had to get the data from the branch to the central data warehouses and then make sure that they were converted into the format that TIP required and we were operating to a draft specification for the TIP interface still, at that stage, by the way, and TIP would sometimes struggle, let's say, with what was being sent across.

Now, the agent is what sucks in all of that transaction data and there had clearly been a problem which required a modification. The modification had been applied on the 3rd of the 8th, which wasn't that long after this Al had been raised --

Q. 19 July.

A. 19 July. So as it said at the bottom of the original paragraph, Steve Warwick's got a bug fix in process on this issue, which, as I said, I think is why he thought

it wasn't going to be such a big deal. 1 Should I just describe what reference data --1 2 2 As reported as a possible, it would have been a big Q. No, we know what reference data is. 3 3 deal. This says, actually when you look at the detail, You know what that is. 4 4 the cash accounts were okay but there was a problem with Q. Thank you. Can we move down the AI, please, and a bit 5 5 more please, thank you. "Clearance Action", block 7: harvesting individual transactions, which would have 6 been an issue for the Post Office reconciling with its 6 "The fix to reconstitute missing transaction 7 clients in a timely fashion. 7 attributes was introduced [3 August]. Pathway confirms 8 8 that at the time of completing this analysis no further So that's the most of it. The bottom paragraph: 9 "POCL has removed the aspect concerning the 9 missing transactions have been noted to date by Pathway 10 10 reference data change from core to non core ..." internal monitoring. That was included in the numbers that had been 11 "Subject to satisfactory processing by TIP of the 11 12 considered at the outset but it was a very particular 12 cash account for week 19 in line with the reduced 13 problem that occurred back in June I believe. 13 incident rate proposed by Pathway, and with the above 14 Q. June 1999? 14 procedure in place to notify any exceptions, Pathway 15 A. June 1999, which I referred to earlier as being 15 assess the severity of the incident as 'low'. 16 a reference to the first of the reference data PinICLs 16 "Ongoing monitoring for the next three months should 17 that we flagged and this had to do with, as I recall, 17 progressively reduce occurrence to a maximum of 18 18 sign change. This will probably come up again later, 0.1 per cent at which point the incident be closed." 19 whereby there's a convention around signage, plus or 19 Mr Pope has written his name -- or his name is 20 minus, and if you get it wrong you get an error 20 written next to "I propose the clearance action and 21 times two, in actual fact. You don't actually nullify 21 incident status described above", incident status 22 22 it, you just get it the wrong way round, so instead of "Resolved", 11 August 1999. So is that essentially 23 adding it you subtract it and that's going to throw out 23 Mr Pope signing this AI off as resolved, three weeks 24 24 a cash account and that's potentially very serious, but after the AI had been opened? 25 all of that is driven by reference data. 25 A. He is proposing that it should be regarded as resolved, 85 1 but it can't be resolved without the agreement of the 1 period September/October 1999, so by the end of the 2 Post Office. 2 three-month period you were up at 2,100 from memory. So 3 Q. Where should we see their signature? 3 it was a decent sample size and it was a very good thing 4 A. Does it not go on? 4 that the 1,800 were rolled out because it gave a lot 5 5 Q. Yes, so underneath "I accept/reject", can you see that? bigger sample size and a lot more feedback. It also 6 A. Yes. 6 exercised, in earnest, the reference data system, which 7 7 Q. That's where we should see -had been subject to a freeze for a period and that was 8 A. So that's where you should see a rejection by POCL. 8 possible when you weren't adding post offices. As soon 9 Q. So the proposal was from ICL Pathway that this can be 9 as you add post offices you have to add new reference 10 10 cleared in three months' time if incidents progressively data because you have reference data by post office, so 11 you couldn't freeze it. There had been a moratorium 11 reduce to an occurrence of a maximum of 0.1 per cent. 12 12 Is that 0.1 per cent per week -because there had been these reliability issues. 13 So I personally think a sample size of 2,100 for A. Yes. 13 14 Q. -- per cash accounting period? 14 three months is not unreasonable. 15 A. Yes, it would be. And I'm guessing the reason that 15 Q. Do you read this as meaning that after the end of that 16 there's no corresponding POCL signature is because who 16 three-month period it would be acceptable for the full 17 17 Post Office estate, some 19,000 or 20,000 branches, for is to say whether it was going to be achieved, this 18 0.1 per cent proposition, within three months. At the 18 the system to continue to operate at an error occurrence 19 point where this was written, no one would have known 19 rate of 0.1 per cent? 20 20 A. If POCL felt they could manage it, because it was not 21 Q. What do you say to the suggestion that a three month 21 affecting the cash account, subject to that condition 22 monitoring period was shortsighted or ill-advised when 22 I would say yes because, as I said, the practical 23 the national rollout was yet to commence and so the 23 reality was we were dealing with 25 years ago technology 24 sample size was small? 24 to gather millions of transactions a day and you're 25 25 going to get some glitches. Just anybody in -- on A. So the -- the sample size was increased by 1,800 in the

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you know, involved in that programme must have realised on both sides of the fence. So you have to allow for that possibility. You can't have 100 per cent SLAs and zero incidences of failure, that's just not the real world I'm afraid. The question is, what you do about it and how you contain it, how you flag it, how you protecting stakeholders when this does happen.

Here, this is not an error. This asserts, in this, there's no errors in the cash account, and there would be errors in the cash -- but that's a different matter.

Q. Can I draw your attention to another document, please, POL00083922, at page 5, please, and if we can just enlarge that, please, because it is on a fax and therefore has reduced in size a little. I wonder whether we can display two documents at once, so keep that one and look at the document we were just looking at which was POL00043691 at page 57. Then try and highlight -- thank you very much.

The document on the right we can see is another copy of Al376, can you see that?

A. Yes.

Q. We can broadly see, certainly in box 6 -- sorry, on the page on the right can we go back a page, please, and then highlight the relevant section. Thank you.

We can broadly see that they are the same, if you

(i) reconstitute any missing start time attribute by interpolation from immediately preceding transactions within the customer session, or (if none is present) to log an event and (ii) map any ..."

I think "full mode"?

A. "Null".

Q. "null mode", thank you:

"... attribute to 'serve customer' attribute." I will skip the next bit:

"Pathway will monitor occurrences of any such null attributes and work will continue to ensure that all transactions are correctly recorded with all attributes at the outlet. This will eliminate this problem; it is theoretically possible that a very occasional transaction will result with an invalid item transaction mode, although there has been no instance of this detected in any of the analysed cases.

"[Second cause] on one occasion a reference data change from core to non core and the new Reference Data mapping of products to Cash Account may cause transactions conducted within the [Cash Accounting Period] prior to the [Reference Data] change not to be posted to the Cash Account. In this case there is no fault with the Pathway system. Pathway has proposed an approach to POCL to avoid this problem through the

just look at the data on the left-hand side and the right-hand side.

- A. Yes. In fact, I think they are the same, aren't they?
- Q. They are identical. There are some colour differences or shading differences.

Then if we scroll down both of them, please, we can see that the data within them is the same, yes?

A. Yes.

- Q. Then if we go over the page for both of them, please, we can see that box 4 is different. It says "Medium" rather than "Low" and box 6 is entirely different. It has just got completely different text in it.
- A. After "20,000 outlets", yes. So one looks like an update on the other. Firstly, there's a causal analysis -- there are two causes.
- Q. Yes, if we read that:

"There are two causes.

"very occasionally a transaction is recorded at the outlet with a missing attribute (start time or mode). The processing rules specified for the TPS harvester reject any transaction which has a missing attribute, meaning these transactions are not forwarded to TIP. They are however, correctly posted in cash accounting processing.

"The harvester specification is being modified to 90

use of product types within RD."

That last sentence bears some similarity to what had happened -- what was described in the document that I showed you earlier.

Can you explain, please, is this how these forms worked, that there could be something written in one version of an Acceptance Incident, that could be deleted, and then something new could be written into it, rather than a progressive, chronological account of the development of the problem and the solutions to it?

- I am surprised to see this. I would have expected exactly what you have just described.
- Q. Why are you surprised to see it?
- A. Because the documents I looked at -- I didn't go through all of these. I went through the Excel spreadsheets that I was describing earlier which are the -- you know, the register -- and those showed day by day, sequentially, everything that happened, who said what, what actions have been taken, what actions were placed, who responded to what actions, how, on both sides, because these were joint activities.

So there was no question there of anything being wiped or written over --

- Q. Deleted or overwritten?
 - A. Exactly, no question at all. I am surprised to see this 92

1 here, I must admit. you say, is because it hadn't been shared, so events 1 2 2 Q. Then if we can read on in both documents down to the have moved on, the bug fix had been applied, it had been 3 3 successful, whereas on the 9th it was still a work in clearance 4 4 progress, so that's the best I can do by way of Thank you, and then on the right-hand side, thank 5 you. Just a bit more, thank you. 5 explanation, I'm afraid. 6 I think we can see that there's a different 6 Q. In the Clearance section, it says: 7 clearance action in this document. We can see that it 7 "For ongoing monitoring, Pathway believe a target 8 8 maximum occurrence due to this cause for the next [Cash is signed off by Mr Dicks himself. 9 9 Accounting Period] should be ... (0.67%) at which point You remember that, under the document I showed you 10 earlier, the proposal of acceptable occurrence was 10 the incident should be reduced to Medium." 0.1 per cent per week over a three-month period. This 11 Then the ongoing monitoring at 0.1 per cent, "at 11 12 proposal was that the relevant period would be a single 12 which point the incident should be closed". 13 cash accounting period, I think that's one week rather 13 A. So that implies to me that it was viewed by POCL as 14 than three months, yes? 14 high. John Dicks was saying "We have made good headway 15 A. Yes, I'm reading this, I think, for the first time. 15 here, we think it's now already medium" and, if it 16 Q. You're just catching up, okay. 16 proves -- if events prove over the next three months 17 A. Yes, I'm not familiar with this one, I don't think. 17 that it actually has pretty much gone away and POCL are 18 18 (Pause) happy with 0.1 per cent, then it should be closed. 19 So the conclusion -- the proposition for what it 19 That's my interpretation of this. 20 should be is still the same "Ongoing monitoring for 20 Q. Is that a practical demonstration of ICL considering the 21 three months ... 0.1%", so that's no different. But 21 cash account discrepancies to be less severe than POCL? 22 22 this was clearly an interim position as at 9 August, A. No, this isn't, as I said, to do with the cash account. 23 which was then replaced on 11 August. Now, I don't know 23 This is to do with these attributes, these missing 24 24 whether the version as at the 9th was shared with POCL. attributes and the fact that TIP would reject 25 It's possible that the reason it was overwritten, as 25 transactions with missing attributes. That's why TIP 1 was missing transactions and those transactions had been 1 "9 faults (the 'Agreed Category B faults') which 2 included in the cash account, is what this makes clear, 2 both parties agree are medium ..." 3 and there was, as I understand it, no argument about 3 Then they are listed. 4 that. 4 "3 faults (the 'Disputed Category A Faults') which 5 5 That's not to say there weren't other issues, but the Contractor [that's Pathway] considers to be category 6 not in relation to this. 6 (b) faults but which POCL believes are high severity 7 7 Q. Okay, we can take both of those documents down from the (category (a)) faults ..." 8 screen now. Can we turn to what was happening in the 8 They are listed and amongst them is 376. So is it 9 midst of this, namely the signing of the first 9 fair to say that at this date, despite what we had read 10 10 in the Als of 9 and 11 August, by 20 August there supplemental agreement and look at FUJ00000485. Can you 11 remained a dispute about the severity of Al376? 11 see the date of the first supplemental agreement, 12 20 August 1999? 12 A Yes A. Yes. 13 13 Q. Was that relatively common during the resolution of the 14 Q. Can we just read the preamble together, so under 14 Als because, in part, ICL were permitted no category A 15 15 incidents and, as you said, only ten category B 16 "This Supplemental Agreement is supplemental to the 16 incidents and, upon which classification acceptance 17 Codified Agreement between the parties dated 17 turned and therefore payment to ICL turned? 18 28th July 1999 ... 18 A. So relatively common, no. They were exceptional. There 19 19 were three where we didn't agree and if I may, on 376 "The Contractor and POCL have been carrying out the 20 Operational Trial and the other Acceptance Procedures in 20 there was no disagreement that if the cash account was 21 accordance with the Codified Agreement. 21 going to be wrong, that that was a serious issue. The 22 "It is agreed that as at the end of the CSR 22 reason that ICL Pathway considered it not to be their 23 Operational Trial ... Period ... there were ..." 23 serious issue is because they attributed most of the 24 Then if we just scroll down please so we can see 24 problem to reference data which came from POCL. So that 25 25 was -- if you just go back to the bottom paragraph of them all: 95 96

the previous report, it was saying "This is excluding 1 2 the reference data issue". 3 The reference data issue was really serious because 4 that would have caused a cash account problem, but 5 ICL Pathway's position, certainly at the technical 6 level, was "This is not our problem". 7 Now, at my level it's a problem because the end 8 result is going to be wrong for the collective and --9 you may come on to this later -- John Bennett wrote in, 10 I think it was early November, to David Smith about this very issue and he more or less said "Unless you can fix 11 12 it with us, we can't do it on our own, we're going to 13 have to stop rollout". That was ICL Pathway to POCL on 14 reference data. 15 Q. Just on the issue of there only being three disputes, 16 I think we can see underneath there were two faults 17 which were disputed category B faults. 18 A. Okay, point taken. 19 Q. Which the contractor considered to be low but which POCL 20 believed to be B and then over the page, more dispute --21 so there were two of those -- and one fault which ICL 22 believed isn't an Acceptance Incident at all but which 23 POCL believed is a category B fault. 24 A. I stand corrected, there were six disputes out of, as 25 you pointed out, scores and quite possibly hundreds --1 A. Correct. 2 Q. As we will see after lunch, I think, when we look at 3 pages 7 and 8 of this document, there was, nonetheless, 4 a timetable for new installations to be ramped up in 5 post offices; is that right? 6 A. There was and I alluded to this earlier. Part of the 7 logic for that was that we needed a bigger sample size, 8 to your point about 200 not being really sufficient --9 or was it 300 by then? And we needed the experience of 10 the rollout process itself because migrating data from 11 existing paper-based system to the new system, that of 12 itself could generate problems. 13 So we needed to really test our abilities, jointly 14 with Post Office, to roll this thing out without hitting 15 a wall and that was the proposition -- that happened in 16 October/November -- sorry, September/October/November, 17 such that we would then have a period of time before 18 January resumption of rollout to fix things that were 19 found. That was the thinking. MR BEER: Sir, I wonder whether that's an appropriate moment 20 21 to break for lunch. It is for me. 22 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I think it is.

I'm sure you are aware, Mr Oppenheim, but you

shouldn't discuss your evidence while you're having your

lunch. I'm sure you don't want to but I'm obliged to

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1 Q. Six disputed faults? 2 A. Yes. I don't regard that as common out of so many when 3 so much was moving and it was acknowledged that there 4 was a disagreement and, ultimately, we accepted that we 5 hadn't passed, hence the supplemental agreement. 6 Q. Can we just move on over the page, please, to 7 paragraph (D) of the preamble: 8 "It is agreed that there is no CSR Acceptance 9 Specification in respect of which there are more than 10 10 category (b) faults." 11 Just explain what that means? 12 A. If there are more than 10 category B faults then we 13 14 Q. So it was recording the agreement that there were not in 15 excess of 10? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. Then if we can read down, please, to the agreement 18 itself after the preamble, at 1.1 under "CSR 19 Acceptance": 20 "The parties agree that CSR Acceptance was not 21 achieved as at the end of the CSR Operational Trial 22 Review Period." 23 A. That's what I just said, absolutely. We accepted that. 24 Q. So it was agreed that the core system didn't meet the 25 acceptance criteria at the end of the operational trial? 1 tell you that. 2 A. Thank you, sir. Yes, I'm aware of that. SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right, 2.00, everyone. Thanks. 3 4 (1.00 pm) 5 (The luncheon adjournment) 6 (2.00 pm) 7 MR BEER: Good afternoon, sir, can you see and hear me? 8 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, I can, thank you. 9 MR BEER: Thank you, and likewise. 10 Mr Oppenheim, we were just dealing with the preamble 11 to the first supplemental agreement which was at 12 FUJ00000485. We had gone through the preamble and 13 I think we had identified that there were some 14 15 outstanding faults, of which six or so were disputed. 15 Can we go forwards, please, to page 7 of this document. 16 Look at the foot of the page, can you see the heading at 17 the bottom "Rollout"? 18 A. Yes, I can. 19 Q. Then if we go over the page, the parties agreed in 20 paragraph 4.1 that: 21 "... rollout shall not commence until authorised by

the Release Authorisation Board in accordance with paragraph 4 of schedule A11."

What was the Release Authorisation Board, please?

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A. This was a joint POCL/ICL Pathway senior management 100

group, which was assembled to make the judgment about 1 sample size, the point that you made, at some point this 1 2 2 whether or not to roll out in the light of Als and morning, 200 was judged to be too small, plus there were 3 acceptance in general, and anything else. 3 incidents to do with -- or Als to do with rollout 4 4 Q. Thank you. Paragraph 4.2: itself, for example training, was it 218? So these 5 5 needed to be exercised. Now, with the benefit of "Notwithstanding [that], the parties agree to 6 install the Core System in additional outlets as 6 hindsight, this was too aggressive, too soon and, 7 follows ..." 7 indeed, as you will show me in a moment doubtless, that 8 31 August, Borough High Street, one branch; then 60 8 was swept away fairly swiftly. But the whole process 9 9 had started some time earlier, before the codified branches in the week commencing 6 September; 90 branches in the week commencing 13 September: 10 10 agreement. "If by 10 September ... the parties agree that 11 The codified agreement basically codified -- hence 11 12 sufficient progress has been made in resolving the 12 the term, I think -- the memorandum of understanding 13 Outstanding Faults (and any other outstanding category A 13 which was signed in, as I recall, the latter part of May. 14 or B [Als]) the parties may agree to install the Core 14 Q. May. 15 System in further outlets as follows ..." 15 16 16 A. And that basically set the roadmap for all the things Then, down the page, please: in the week commencing 17 20 September, 158 branches; and in the week commencing 17 that had to happen, including the three-month live 18 27 September, 178 branches. 18 trial. Otherwise, it wouldn't have completed in this 19 A. Yes. agreed. 19 timeframe. 20 Q. What would you say to the suggestion that, within a few 20 So looking at the codified agreement in isolation, 21 21 weeks of the codified agreement being signed, there had I agree, it looks like you sign this, you fail then and 22 22 been a failure to sign off on the integrity of the core still you're going to carry on but, actually, the wheels 23 system and yet, nonetheless, there was a planned rollout 23 were set in motion quite some time previously and, in 24 24 at scale envisaged by this document? fact, the live trial was in play before DSS dropped out, 25 A. So the driver for this primarily was to increase the 25 which is why there was still a reference to the DSS in 101 102 1 the Acceptance Incident form. 1 purpose of this was to increase the sample size. Is 2 The nature of the live trial changed and the focus 2 that right, that this was part of an extended exercise 3 was very much more on POCL. Now, as we recognised 3 to broaden the test bed or was, in fact, this part of 4 pretty quickly, that this wasn't a sensible thing to do 4 rollout? 5 5 and we agreed to change it. A. This wasn't part of rollout, this was -- you will find 6 Q. Without the benefit of hindsight, could you not see that 6 references in various places about the need to increase 7 7 this was a recipe for disaster, prematurely rolling out the size of the operational sample. I can't pinpoint 8 a system that wasn't ready? 8 from memory exactly where those references are, but that 9 A. Well, if it hadn't have been ready then we wouldn't have 9 was definitely part of the rationale. It wasn't just to 10 agreed to roll it out, we wouldn't have been allowed to 10 push out a whole bunch of post offices to hit the roll it out and we wouldn't have wanted to roll it out. 11 11 numbers early. 12 12 But the premise when the supplemental agreement was put Q. In your statement -- we need not turn it up, it is 13 together was that a lot of progress had been made, and 13 paragraph 74 -- you say that once the change in 14 it had. I mean, the AI we were looking at in detail 14 commercial terms had been agreed with Treasury, as 15 before lunch showed that what appeared to be a very 15 a result of the withdrawal of the Benefits Agency, both 16 alarming state of affairs actually was -- in respect of 16 parties, that's ICL and POCL, were incentivised to 17 the Pathway piece -- a much smaller issue -- that's not 17 proceed as quickly as possible. You say in 18 to belittle it and say it wasn't of any consequence at 18 paragraph 104 that the agreement set an extremely tight 19 all, it was, but it didn't affect cash accounts. 19 timetable and, at paragraph 146, that there was 20 And so there was a belief that, actually, we were 20 financial pressure on both Pathway and POCL at the time 21 making good progress and, by this future date, we would 21 of the rollout. 22 be -- we stood a chance of being in a good place to 22 Bearing those things in mind -- incentivisation to 23 carry on, to increase the sample size and get more 23 proceed as quickly as possible, an extremely tight 24 feedback. 24 timetable and financial pressure -- do you think the interests of subpostmasters were suborned from the 25 25 Q. You have said on three occasions, I think, that the

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1 forefront of your company's mind at this time? 2 A. I don't. We readily accepted that we hadn't hit the 3 hurdle that was required of us and we continued to work 4 on it. We worked on it extremely hard, together with 5 POCL. There were things that weren't as they should 6 have been and they needed further work. 7 You asked me a question about the incentives and 8 I answered it honestly in the answer: yes, there were 9 intense incentives but, at the same time, I think I also 10 say the last thing we needed was another false start, given what had happened with the Benefits Agency. So 11 12 our reputation had taken a hit because it was perceived 13 by many as, really, down to us to have failed in the 14 production of the Benefit Payment Card programme. 15 Q. Thank you. That document can be taken down and replaced 16 with FUJ00079169, please. FUJ00079176. 17 We can see that this is a record of an acceptance 18 workshop held on 17 September 1999 and so over a month 19 after the previous AI forms that we had looked at before 20 lunch. Can you tell us what an acceptance workshop was, 21 please? 22 A. So an acceptance workshop -- that was a workshop which 23 was overarching chaired by Keith and myself and within 24 it each of the Als was addressed and that process which 25 was written in, I think, two supplemental agreements, or 105 1 Q. Okay, and then if we go over the page please to page 8. 2 Again, reference to further workshops in relation to 3 a different aspect of Al376, yes? 4 A. Mm-hm. 5 Q. Then over the page, please, to page 9 and if we scroll 6 down a little bit, please, we see this recorded: 7 "POCL's position is that rollout should not commence until data integrity can be assured. Ruth Holleran ..." 8 9 Do you remember who she was? 10 A. Yes. Q. Who was she? 11 A. She was certainly on the POCL side, I think operational. 12 13 Q. "... to consider with the Auditors, and report back to 14 this group, whether the current Pathway checks plus, 15 possibly, continuing POCL checks, would be adequate 16 until Pathway's full data integrity checks are in 17 place." 18 Then skip over the reference, if we may, to the 19 previous workshops and come up to workshop 7, which is 20 this workshop: 21 "Workshop 7 Update: this issue has now focused on 22 the success criteria for NRO resumption ..." 23 National rollout resumption? 24

Q. "... at the review in November. Pathway had previously

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1 was it in the -- yes, in the supplemental agreement --2 was that we would work jointly through these various 3 issues. 4 Q. We can see you're present at this one. 5 A. And it is chaired by Peter Copping as expert from PA. 6 Q. Yes, we can see that you are present at this one, in the 7 fourth line 8 A. Yes, yes. 9 Q. The way that this works is it addresses, Al by Al, page 10 by page. 11 A. Correct. 12 Q. I wonder, therefore, if we can go forward to page 6, 13 please. I think at the foot of the page you can see the

heading, "Al376 Data integrity"?A. Yes, indeed.

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Q. Would that be a fair way of describing the issue with Al376, that it was an issue of the integrity of the data?

19 A. Yes, it's a fair way to express it.

Q. Then if we go over the page, please, and then just scroll down a little bit, please, we can see a description on this page of a series of workshops. Are they references to previous workshops that have occurred?

25 A. Yes.

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proposed four weeks ... with [equal to or less than]

1.5% error rate."

Do you remember that having been proposed by

Pathway?

A. To be honest, I don't. I mean, I see it there recorded but I don't remember it. It's not certainly something that we spent a lot of time talking about.

Q. Why didn't you spend a lot of time talking about it?

 A. Because POCL rejected it and I wasn't going to argue with them.

11 Q. Why was it suggested? I mean, on an estate of 20,000 12 branches, that would be, what, 300 branches a week 13 showing a discrepancy error.

14 A. Yes, but the -- this would have been on the basis that 15 there would have been continuing improvements after 16 that. That would have been a premise made. Rather than 17 rollout from here, you rollout when you get down to here 18 (indicating) and then there would have been continuing 19 improvements. That would have been the premise behind 20 that, not that it would have stayed at less than 21 1.5 per cent, or a limit of 1.5 per cent forever.

I agree with you it would have been too high and, indeed, the previous PinICL had acknowledged that such a thing would have been too high.

Q. Given that the previous PinICL had acknowledged that 108

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1		an array rate of this would be too high, why was Dathway	1		a missing attribute and a TID mismatch, not the each
1 2		an error rate of this would be too high, why was Pathway even suggesting it?	1 2		a missing attribute and a TIP mismatch, not the cash
3	٨	I can't remember who suggested it. At a guess it would	3		accounts, 0.6 per cent of cash accounts were wrong, that's not what this was.
4	Λ.	have been put forward by the lead analyst responsible	4	0	So what was the worst consequence of the error?
5		for 376 but I can't remember whether that was John Pope	5		It would the third supplemental agreement sets it all
6			6	Α.	
7		or John Dicks directly. It's not something I recall	7		out as to under what failure conditions, what actions
		having had any great discussion about. Bear in mind			would be required, but the generality was that either
8		these were going on on pretty much a daily basis and I did have other duties as well.	8 9		Pathway most often Pathway but otherwise POCL
9 10	0				would have to make certain error corrections, either
	Q.	"[Ruth] Baines and Ruth Holleran proposed an error rate	10 11		manually into a key them into the system to correct
11		of 0.6 per cent (the current average is 1.2 per cent)	11		an imbalance, some missing data, or otherwise, if there
12		together with six other conditions, five of which are	12		were a lot of them, then POCL could require Pathway to
13		listed in [Ruth Holleran's] paper and the sixth being	13		provide an update file electronically. So that's
14		a further two weeks period of live running of the	14	_	also I'm getting ahead of myself here.
15		permanent Cash Account fix prior to the actual	15 16		Yes.
16		re-commencement of [national rollout] in January."	16 17	A.	But that's all set out later, but that was the
17		Then you are recorded as responding as follows:	17		consequence. It was to do with overwhelming POCL but
18		"0.6 per cent error rate [was] agreed subject to	18		not only POCL Pathway, in terms of the number of
19		this being measured as the average of six weeks from	19	_	errors that will need to be corrected.
20		4th October to mid-November"	20	Q.	Can we see how this was formalised in the second
21		What would you say to the suggestion that this was	21		supplemental agreement and turn up FUJ00079316. Can you
22		conscious risk taking here, accepting even an error rate	22		see this is a document called "The second supplemental
23		of 0.6 per cent?	23		agreement", dated 24 September and one of the things it
24	A.	Yes, but this is the error rate of the type that we were	24		does, as we will see, is reduce into contractual terms
25		talking about before lunch whereby you could get 109	25		what was agreed at that part of the workshop that we 110
1		have just seen.	1		They are described in part A and I think we will
2		Can we look again at the preamble, please:	2		find that's blank and then:
3		"This Second Supplemental Agreement is supplemental	3		"Faults not falling within recital (E) above
4		to the Codified Agreement	4		" Acceptance described in Part A of
5		"The Contractor and POCL have been carrying out the	5		schedule 1."
6		Operational Trial and the other Acceptance Procedures in	6		I think we will find that at page 9.
7		accordance with the Codified Agreement.	7		So this is a list of the Als that have rectification
8		"By a Supplemental Agreement dated 20th August 1999	8		plans and we can see that 376 is one of them.
9		(the 'First Supplemental Agreement') the parties agreed	9		Can we go back to page 3 of the document please. At
10		that [Core System Requirement] Acceptance had not been	10		paragraph 3.1 we can see:
11		achieved at the end of the CSR Operational Trial	11		"The Contractor [that's ICL] undertakes to use its
12		Period.	12		reasonable endeavours to resolve each of the Outstanding
13		"By the first supplemental agreement the parties	13		Acceptance Incidents referred to in part B of schedule 1
14		agreed a programme of work with a view to achieving	4.4		[which we just looked at] in accordance with the
		agreed a programme or work with a view to achieving	14		[Willow We just looked atj in accordance with the
15		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by	15		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the
15 16					
		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by	15		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the
16		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain	15 16		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable
16 17		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted	15 16 17		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it
16 17 18		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that	15 16 17 18		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans."
16 17 18 19		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that only certain faults could be raised as Acceptance	15 16 17 18 19		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans." Can we go forward to the rectification plans please,
16 17 18 19 20		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that only certain faults could be raised as Acceptance Incidents in relation to the Second CSR Acceptance Test.	15 16 17 18 19 20		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans." Can we go forward to the rectification plans please, they are page 10. We will see that there is a list of
16 17 18 19 20 21		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that only certain faults could be raised as Acceptance Incidents in relation to the Second CSR Acceptance Test. "As at the date of this Second Supplemental	15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A.	rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans." Can we go forward to the rectification plans please, they are page 10. We will see that there is a list of rectification plans for each of the Als. They are called AINs here, is that just AI number?
16 17 18 19 20 21 22		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that only certain faults could be raised as Acceptance Incidents in relation to the Second CSR Acceptance Test. "As at the date of this Second Supplemental Agreement the following Acceptance Incidents remain	15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	A.	rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans." Can we go forward to the rectification plans please, they are page 10. We will see that there is a list of rectification plans for each of the Als. They are called AINs here, is that just AI number?
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that only certain faults could be raised as Acceptance Incidents in relation to the Second CSR Acceptance Test. "As at the date of this Second Supplemental Agreement the following Acceptance Incidents remain outstanding"	15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans." Can we go forward to the rectification plans please, they are page 10. We will see that there is a list of rectification plans for each of the Als. They are called AINs here, is that just AI number? You know I'm not sure. When I read this I couldn't
16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24		Acceptance and Release Authorisation by 24th September 1999, and also agreed that only certain elements of the [CSR] were required to be resubmitted for testing in the Second CSR Acceptance Test and that only certain faults could be raised as Acceptance Incidents in relation to the Second CSR Acceptance Test. "As at the date of this Second Supplemental Agreement the following Acceptance Incidents remain outstanding" That excludes category C ones:	15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24		rectification plans listed Schedule 2 and the Rectification Timetable. POCL shall use its reasonable endeavours to comply with the obligations imposed on it in the Rectification Plans." Can we go forward to the rectification plans please, they are page 10. We will see that there is a list of rectification plans for each of the Als. They are called AINs here, is that just AI number? You know I'm not sure. When I read this I couldn't recall what the "N" stood for.

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interested in, which is on page 13 and down the page to 1 2 paragraph 20 and at 20.1 and 20.2 we can see the 3 rectification plan for Al376: 4 "Each of the Contractor and POCL shall complete the 5 steps and achieve the objectives applicable to it ... 6 set out in Document ..." 7 It is described: 8 "... and where that document identifies one party as 9 fulfilling an action, the other party shall assist the 10 aforementioned party to reach a successful conclusion. "Each of the Contractor and POCL shall complete each 11 12 of the ... Obligations applicable to it by the dates and 13 to the standards set out in [another document]." 14 Can we go to page 19 please, for the rectification 15 timetable at the foot of the page, schedule 4, part B. 16 Keep going down. We can see "TIP interface accounting 17 integrity (Al376)" and then if we flip over the page, or 18 carry on scrolling -- thank you -- we can see the 19 timetable and the steps are as follows: 20 "The criteria to be met by 24th November 1999 shall 21 be as follows: 22 "(i) during the period from 3rd October 1999 until 23 14th November 1999 the percentage of Cash Accounts 24 received by POCL across the TIP interface containing 25 Cash Account Discrepancies shall not exceed 0.6 per cent 113 1 release, can you explain what that is, please? 2 A. So this was to basically enhance the controls and the 3 checks three-way between the counter, TMS and TIP, as 4 I recall, so I think otherwise known as a three-way 5 integrity check because, as I have said before, there's 6 the possibility of timing differences, if a post office 7 isn't polled, if the communication network goes down, 8 then you have transactions at the post office that don't 9 get to TIP, basically, and they will catch up in the 10 next period, but in that period they're missing. 11 So you needed a mechanism to do that reconciliation, 12 such that you wouldn't have a situation where TIP simply 13 said "It's wrong, what I've got is wrong". So the first 14 thing was to identify the discrepancies and next it was 15 to aid the process of fixing the discrepancies, the 16 so-called rectified -- sorry, you were going to say? 17 Q. We will come back to the accounting integrity control 18 release. That's a sufficient description for the 19 moment --20 A. Okay. 21 Q. -- and I will ask some questions in a little while 22 about, firstly, whether it should have been there from 23 the start and, secondly, whether it was an adequate 24 remedy when it was introduced. 25 A. Okay. 115

of all such ... Accounts ..."

That's essentially reducing into writing what had been agreed at the workshop; is that right?

- A. Yes.
- Q. "(ii) during the period from 3rd October 1999 until 14th November 1999, no Cash Account Discrepancy shall arise as a result of a cause previously reported to POCL as having been remedied."

That's obvious what it means on its face:

"(iii) all new causes of Cash Account Discrepancies identified after the date of this Agreement shall have been properly analysed by the Contractor and suitable rectification plans therefore submitted to POCL in reasonable detail within ten days of the Contractor becoming aware of such Cash Account Discrepancy."

Then (iv):

"The Contractor shall have satisfied POCL (POCL acting reasonably) that the Accounting Integrity Control Release would, had it been deployed at the relevant time, have identified all Cash Account Discrepancies reported prior to 24th November 1999 which shall have arisen as a result of any new cause identified after the date of this Agreement ..."

No need to read (v).

The reference to the accounting integrity control

Q. Before we just leave this agreement can we go back to page 4 please and look at 3.6 at the top:

"The contractor shall cooperate and join with POCL in providing such information and explanation to the Post Office's auditors as such auditors may reasonably require in order to satisfy themselves that the audit reports of the Post Office and POCL should not be qualified or contain a fundamental uncertainty paragraph as a result of the circumstances giving rise to Acceptance Incident 376."

Can you explain, please, why that was necessary?

A. My recollection of this is hazy. I don't recall having to spend a great deal of time on it. The point was that obviously there were people within POCL who were very

concerned at 376 and that initial description of 376

which painted a very black picture of the likelihood of a lot of errors. As we discovered as we went through it, there weren't a significant number of errors arising from the system that would have affected cash account but, at that time, that wasn't known and there was a lot of concern. Plus there were instances which could

affect the cash account, notably and in particular around reference data.

So, basically, people had got understandably concerned about it and we were requested to provide, if

1		you like, substantiating evidence of the kind that I'm	1	A.	Yes, correct.
2		trying to convey now, to show the auditors that it	2	Q.	for the period 7 to 13 October, it was just shy of
3		wasn't going to be a disaster.	3		43 per cent; for 14 to 20 October, it was 32 per cent;
4	Q.	Because, otherwise, there would have to have been	4		and then 21 to 27 October it was 2.29 per cent.
5		a qualification entered into the accounts, or the	5	A.	Indeed.
6		auditors may have required a qualification to be entered	6	Q.	Can you recall what accounted for, firstly, the
7		into the accounts.	7		substantial reduction?
8	A.	That is indeed what they were concerned about, which	8	Α.	Well, I can describe what caused the very high numbers:
9		I could well understand.	9		that was bad reference data.
10	Q.	Can we turn, moving the story on a little, to	10	Q.	It was all down to the reference data?
11		FUJ00118169. This is a monitoring report dated	11	A.	Well, not all, but something like 2 per cent would have
12		9 November 1999. You can see that in the bottom right	12		been other things, but all the rest of it was
13		at the foot of the page and it's an update for the	13		I believe was reference data. The vast bulk of that was
14		meeting the next day, 10 November. You can see that in	14		reference data and it was acknowledged to be by POCL at
15		the top right. Can you see that?	15		the time. So you had signage problems that we alluded
16	A.	Yes, I'm sorry, yes.	16		to earlier, so a 196 reference data update, which we had
17		Then, against the third row, Al376/1, which was	17		challenged in June and we were instructed again in
18		essentially the first requirement that required to be	18		October to apply, even though we had said we thought it
19		fulfilled that we have just mentioned in the	19		was likely to create a problem and it duly did and,
20		rectification timetable, namely:	20		actually, in one of the documents I have seen, I have
21		"The percentage of cash accounts containing	21		seen an acknowledgement that, yes, that's exactly what
22		discrepancies shall not exceed 0.6%."	22		did happen.
23		I think we can see the figures were, where the	23		That was one example. There were other examples.
24		target was not exceeding 0.6 per cent for the period	24		Reference data was a major problem.
25		from 3 to 6 October, it was just shy of 45 per cent	25	Q.	When that's stripped out and we get to the week of
20		117	20	Q.	118
1		21 October to 27 October, the figure is nearly four	1		are being held to establish what action can be taken
1		21 October to 27 October, the figure is nearly four	1		are being held to establish what action can be taken
2		times the so-called acceptable level of cash account	2		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These
2	Δ	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it?	2		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the
2 3 4	Α.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of	2 3 4		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [Al] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is
2 3 4 5		times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data.	2 3 4 5		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences
2 3 4 5 6	Q.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it?	2 3 4 5 6		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000."
2 3 4 5 6 7	Q.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All	2 3 4 5 6 7		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Q.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All I can say and you may show me a later version of	2 3 4 5 6 7 8		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to too many reference data errors. What does the last
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Q.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All I can say and you may show me a later version of this, a later dated version of this is that, by the	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to too many reference data errors. What does the last sentence mean:
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Q.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All I can say and you may show me a later version of this, a later dated version of this is that, by the end of the period, we were either at or very close to the 0.6 per cent, having stripped out these non-data	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	4	swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to too many reference data errors. What does the last sentence mean: " the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved"
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	Q. A.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All I can say and you may show me a later version of this, a later dated version of this is that, by the end of the period, we were either at or very close to the 0.6 per cent, having stripped out these non-data errors, as we referred to them as.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	A.	swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to too many reference data errors. What does the last sentence mean: " the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved" So this is where we have to get reference data updates
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2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24	Q. A. Q. A. Q. A. Q. A.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All I can say and you may show me a later version of this, a later dated version of this is that, by the end of the period, we were either at or very close to the 0.6 per cent, having stripped out these non-data errors, as we referred to them as. Can we go forwards, please, to FUJ00058187. This is a "Monthly Progress Report". I think, is this from ICL to Yes, this is our to POCL? This is ours. It's internal and it's also to POCL, yes. You would have either seen or contributed to the creation of this? I would have seen it. I wouldn't have contributed. Okay. Can we go forward to page 10, please, and have a look at the third bullet point: "Too many reference data errors are being	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to too many reference data errors. What does the last sentence mean: " the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved" So this is where we have to get reference data updates out to every counter and every branch before the change in reference data is to take effect and, as I said before, this was before internet and broadband. We had to do that using IBM's Tivoli system, which was state-of-the-art at the time, over ISDN, and the challenge was to be able to get all of these instructions out well in advance, like two days or so in advance, of when they were due to take effect so that there wouldn't be any missed dates. Can we go forward to page 19 of the document. Under "Detailed Plan Activities", and the "Acceptance Resolution Timetable" and then scroll down. Next to
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	Q. A. Q. A. Q. A. Q. A.	times the so-called acceptable level of cash account discrepancies, isn't it? It is and I'm not saying that that wasn't the tale of reference data. That could be reference data too, could it? Some of it could be. I really can't analyse it. All I can say and you may show me a later version of this, a later dated version of this is that, by the end of the period, we were either at or very close to the 0.6 per cent, having stripped out these non-data errors, as we referred to them as. Can we go forwards, please, to FUJ00058187. This is a "Monthly Progress Report". I think, is this from ICL to Yes, this is our to POCL? This is ours. It's internal and it's also to POCL, yes. You would have either seen or contributed to the creation of this? I would have seen it. I wouldn't have contributed. Okay. Can we go forward to page 10, please, and have a look at the third bullet point:	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23		swiftly to prevent these occurring in the future. These are having a major impact on [AI] 376. In addition, the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved before rollout commences in late January 2000." So this is October 1999 and we see the reference to too many reference data errors. What does the last sentence mean: " the performance of the data distribution process is inadequate and must be improved" So this is where we have to get reference data updates out to every counter and every branch before the change in reference data is to take effect and, as I said before, this was before internet and broadband. We had to do that using IBM's Tivoli system, which was state-of-the-art at the time, over ISDN, and the challenge was to be able to get all of these instructions out well in advance, like two days or so in advance, of when they were due to take effect so that there wouldn't be any missed dates. Can we go forward to page 19 of the document. Under "Detailed Plan Activities", and the "Acceptance

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look at what John Pope, I think that is, said in 1 2 relation to 376. John Pope: 3 "This area is of particular concern. The six-week 4 observation period has started. The work is in three 5 parts: fixes yielding a target stability figure of merit 6 of a maximum 0.6% of Cash Accounts in error (approximately 42); additional reconciliation 7 8 facilities; and new Operational Business Change (OBC) 9 procedures. Although all fixes are implemented, 10 problems arising from Pathway Reference Data handling were encountered and are proving difficult to solve 11 12 without letting through Cash Accounts in error. The 13 definition work for additional reconciliation is on plan 14 and design is in progress. All the OBC procedure work 15 is completed." 16 We can stop there. So, again, at this point the 17 finger being pointed towards reference data being the 18 problem? 19 A. It wasn't the only problem. I mean, this is a very, 20 very complex multi-layer programme, so it's -- I don't 21 want to give the impression it's the only problem, but 22 it was the overwhelmingly largest problem. But, as it 23 says there, we had issues also with Pathway reference 24 data handling. That's when we received the -- sorry, 25 the reference data instructions from POCL, we then 121 1 written into the third supplemental agreement and, 2 subsequently, operational documents that flow from that, 3 so that the fact that he had made significant 4 contributions to an agreement that -- what was the date 5 of this? 6 Q. January 2000? 7 A. I mean, the third supplemental agreement from memory was 8 signed on the 19th, so I don't know whether this was 9 before or after. 10 Q. It's just dated January 2000. 11 A. But, in any event, the work that went into that was 12 very, very significant. 13 Q. Can we look forwards then, please, to the statistics. 14 Can we just look back a moment at POL00090590. We see 15 an email here at the foot of the page, dated 16 6 January 2000: 17 "In advance of tomorrow's delivery meeting, find 18 attached the latest spreadsheet that looks at criteria 19 in relation to 376." 20 Then the thing that we're looking at, 376(i), 21 a 0.17 per cent pass rate, so cleared the ceiling of 22 0.6 per cent, and we see what happened to that by the 23 time of the undated report that we have just read.

needed to "handle it", turn it around and push it out to the post offices and we were having trouble with that, probably just the volume of that, but that's what that alludes to.

Q. Thank you. Can we move to a similar progress report for January 2000, FUJ00058189. You can see the date, similar format to before. Can we go forwards, please, to page 26. The first bullet point at the top of the page:

"The outturn on Al376 was 0.06% Cash Account Discrepancies, exactly an order of magnitude better than the target."

Obviously 0.06 better than the target of 0.6:

"Under this activity John P [John Pope] made significant contributions to the Third Supplemental agreement, specified the committed CS Repair Facility, aligned the operating agreement on Reconciliation to support the contract, and sorted out the necessary PinICLs to clear."

This reads as if it's a job well done and that's the end of the matter; is that right?

- A. No. It's a job well done, but it certainly wasn't the end of the matter.
 - Q. Why wasn't it an end of the matter?
 - A. Because we needed the detailed processes that were then 122
 - I don't know for sure but I would say it was a major contributing factor.
 - Q. The accounting integrity control release, can we understand how it was intended to operate in practice and the function that it was intended to perform. It is set out -- and this is just for the transcript, no need to turn it up -- in the second supplemental agreement at POL00090428, at pages 135 to 137, the document entitled "Logical design for EPOSS/TIP reconciliation controls".

I want to try and understand how, in simpler language rather than going through that laboriously, it functioned and the operation that it was intended to perform. Would this be right, that the EPOSS and Transaction Information Processing, TIP reconciliation controls, added some functionality to the system to provide a simple validation, that the transactions and data recorded at the counter, matched the data in the POCL back end systems?

- A. Exactly right. That's a good high level summary, yes.
- Q. The way in which the data and transactions were captured and harvested, in broad summary again, worked as follows -- and this is me and my understanding translating what has been read. Firstly, the EPOSS, the Electronic Point of Sale Service transaction data from the counter was captured in something called the office 124

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contributed to this?

How far had the accounting integrity control release

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4		platform convice infrastructure?	4		houndary
1	۸	platform service infrastructure? Mm-hm.	1	0	boundary. Now, the accounting integrity control release
2 3		The data is harvested by the transaction processing	2 3	Q.	
4	Q.	service, that's a POCL database, collecting all	4		introduces, would you agree, some basic checks to ensure that on a daily and then on a weekly basis a certain
5		transactions from the counters. It is passed to TIP,	5		number of things, collected at counter level, match that
					-
6		the transaction information processing, which would in	6	۸	that was transferred by TIP? Transferred to TIP I would think, yes.
7	^	turn feed POCL accounting systems.	7		-
8 9	A.	You're asking me to confirm something that's a little, perhaps, too technical for me. I mean I was very happy	8 9	_	To and then by TIP? Yes, correct.
			10	Α.	Firstly, the total number of transactions?
10	_	with what you said previously.		Q.	Yes, and the value.
11		The high level summary but not the one beneath?	11	Α.	,
12	A.	I'm not 100 per cent sure that it worked like that. My	12	Q.	Secondly, the quantity value of them and thirdly the
13		understanding was the harvesting was done from branches	13	^	sales value of them.
14		to correspondence servers to TMS to TIP. So that was	14		Sounds right, yes.
15		the route that I was familiar with and then once within	15	Q.	They are the three basic data checks that the control
16		TIP, then Post Office would push that same data out to	16		release intends to collect and compare?
17		clients and there would be reconciliations between them	17		Yes.
18	_	and the clients.	18	Q.	So this new release was intended to ensure that those
19	Q.	Okay, let's look at it a different way round, looking at	19		three data sets, collected at the counter level, matched
20		the object. The object is to ensure that the	20		that data that was transferred via TIP?
21		transaction records from the counter, which are then	21		That's my understanding, yes.
22		subsequently transferred by TMS and TIP to POCL, to	22	Q.	Then if the output is such that the numbers don't match,
23		their accounting systems, reconcile exactly?	23		it generates an alert essentially
24	Α.	So, to be precise yes, but to be precise, TIP is	24		It does, yes.
25		a POCL system so that's the boundary, TMS/TIP is the 125	25	Q.	and what it generates is identification of the branch 126
1		code and the discrepancy figures are reported, ie what	1		it. I don't recall a requirement.
2		the discrepancy on any one of those data sets that	2	Q.	Who out of the pair of you in this relationship were the
3		I mentioned is?	3		IT experts?
4	Α.	Yes, that's my understanding.	4	Α.	We both were. They had a lot of technical people on
5		Would you agree that, from a technical perspective, that	5		their side.
6		would have required, in this new release, firstly	6	Q.	So in your last two answers are you suggesting that it
7		ensuring that a clear marker was used to delineate the	7		fell to them to suggest that a very basic validation and
8		start and end time period used?	8		reconciliation tool should be written into your software
9	Α.	You're asking me for a technical view. I mean there	9		code?
10		were start times in all of the messages and indeed this	10	Α.	No, I'm not. I'm simply saying, in answer to your
11		was one of the reasons for the missing attribute problem	11		question "why wasn't it done sooner", I think there was
12		that we talked about earlier, so on occasion	12		an element of it before and in fact I can recall
13	O	We will pick it up with another witness.	13		a couple of PinICLs talking about there were
14	Α.		14		I can't remember what there were. There were checks but
15		Yes. Why was a system of this nature, carrying out	15		they weren't organised in the manner that you described
16	~.	rather basic data integrity controls, not built in from	16		and they were more for technical people, so they weren't
17		the start?	17		as useable and they weren't as shareable as they were
18	Δ	That's a very fair question. There was an element of it	18		with POCL. So yes, logically I agree I don't think that
19	,	before: this didn't suddenly get rustled up in no time	19		it was in a requirement and therefore it got missed.
20		at all. So we had been working on it I think since	20		I'm not going to make any excuses for that.
21		about June, recognising that there would be a need,	21	Ω	Can I turn to a related issue: whether this very basic
22		which is how it was that it was possible to deliver it	22	Q.	software, as I described it, was capable of identifying
23		for December.	23		and addressing the underlying root causes of the cash
20		ioi Boooiliboi.	20		and addressing the underlying root causes of the cash
24	\cap	Can I suggest that	24		imbalances that it detected. Would you agree that the

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A. I don't think that there was a requirement from POCL for

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capability of the software release, as we have just

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- 1 described it, was quite limited? 2 A. Yes. 3 Q. That's because all the release did was to flag batches 4 of transactions that didn't reconcile? 5 A. Individual transactions. It would pinpoint those which 6 did not match that three-way check, but it wouldn't, of 7 itself, identify the root cause, correct. 8 Q. Exactly, that was the point I was about to make. It 9 wasn't capable of identifying the root causes of the 10 cash account imbalances. let alone address the root causes? 11 12 A. Absolutely right. What it did do -- and there was 13 a process for this, very detailed process. Whenever one 14 of these exceptional events was identified, then there 15 was a routine for looking into the transaction logs, the 16 message files, and so on, and so on, to dig into, 17 you know, what had caused the problem. 18 Q. The second limitation, would you agree, was that, even 19 if the release worked properly, it would only highlight 20 a specific set of errors in the system related to 21 harvesting and communication of transactions between the 22 counter and TIP? 23 A. I agree with you. 24 Q. So that, if there was a software or hardware fault at 25 the counter level, that itself prevented transactions 129
 - to this point but the receipt hadn't been printed, or whatever, and it hadn't been completed -- the transaction hadn't been closed out as it would normally have to be.

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The inference of that, we would say, is that transaction actually did complete, the money was paid out and the correction would be to fill in the blanks, as it were, and that would be the correction I would expect my technical colleagues to apply in this -- it was referred to in the previous thing, these rectification files, and they would be transferred across TIP and everything would balance, if it was caught before it was identified and, if not, we would send an error correction afterwards. I'm going off memory for the third supplemental agreement.

But -- so that's one cause of failure. Another cause of failure is, let's say, a printer breaks, or more likely runs out of paper in the middle of a transaction. Now, I think that was fixed. I'm pretty sure that was fixed, such that the transaction would have completed anyway but, in the early stages, if that happened then it would not. I believe that was a PinICL that was resolved, so that's another one.

There's -- there was the hour glass problem, which you haven't mentioned but let me mention it. Slow

from being recorded or lost or duplicated, or miskeyed in EPOSS, for example, they wouldn't be captured by this release?

- A. I think I need to -- if you don't mind -- go into each of those in turn because they're slightly different.
- Q. Yes.
 - A. I agree the headline principle of what you're saying. It wouldn't have addressed those, it would have addressed timing differences, and such-like, mismatches in communication. What it wouldn't have done is identified if there had been a break in the network, right in the middle of a transaction, such that something was lost.

Now, there should be rejects right up until that point and it should be possible to see that the counter clerk had got to a certain point in the transaction -so, for example, a possible reason for a cash discrepancy, a shortfall, would be there had been a benefits payment made, the cash had been paid out and then, lo and behold, the transaction wasn't recorded. That would be an obvious cause for there being a discrepancy and a shortfall for the postmaster.

Now, by analysing the messages right up until the point where there would be a record of the break in the network, you would be able to see that, yes, you had got

running of the PC.

- 2 Q. Yes.
- 3 A. Very understandably, a postmaster would get impatient, 4 he is up against it, he's got a queue and he might 5 hit -- I have done it myself -- the key twice. If you 6 hit the key twice then, basically, that breaks that 7 transaction, or it did at the outset. I believe that 8 too was rectified but, at the beginning, that kind of involuntary behaviour could cause a transaction to be 10 either missed or duplicated, I can't recall.
- 11 Q. Is the point this, Mr Oppenheim, the release identified, 12 at a basic level, a basic data set showing 13 discrepancies. It neither identified nor addressed the 14 root causes of them and the only way properly to do so, 15 to identify, diagnose and deduce root causes, is to have 16 a task force of skilled individuals doing so?
- 17 A. I wouldn't say a task force but you need skilled --18 a team of skilled individuals who do that for a living, 19 yes, and that's what second and third line was supposed 20 to be about.
- 21 Q. Just stopping you there. The helpdesk -- that's what 22 the helpdesk was supposed to be about, was it, the 23 second and third line?
 - A. Helpdesk -- when there's -- the helpdesk would register the fact there had been an error and, if there was 132

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(33) Pages 129 - 132

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a correction routine, which it was possible for the 1 2 postmaster to run for himself, then there should have 3 been a script which had been agreed with POCL that would 4 steer -- the helpdesk first line operator would steer 5 the postmaster through it, such that he could effect 6 that fix himself. 7 I don't know the proportion of those that could be 8 done that way. There was certainly quite a high 9 proportion that could be done that way. Obviously, it 10 relies on the postmaster making the call, picking it up and being able to follow through and I know there were 11 12 some instances where that went wrong and then he was 13 unable to put it right afterwards, from what I have 14 15 Q. Can we move, please, to the third supplemental 16 agreement, FUJ00118186. This was entered into, we can 17 see on the top of the page there, on 19 January 2000 18 and, overall, would you agree that it defines, at 19 a relatively high level, the measures that were to be 20 implemented to detect, report and remedy cash account 21 errors by various issues, including software faults, 22 coding errors, reference data errors? 23 A. I wouldn't quite characterise it like that. It is 24 actually quite detailed and it went into -- there's 25 a table of, I think, all the known reasons for error at

> supplemental agreement, just two clarificatory points on some questions that I asked and answers that you gave earlier.

Firstly, could we have back up on screen FUJ00058189. This was one of the monthly reports and I have picked the January 2000 monthly progress report. I think, looking back at the [draft] transcript in your answer, you said that this document was ICL's, ie it was authored by ICL, ICL Pathway, that it was internal and then you added but it is also to POCL.

- A. Sorry, I was going to say I was -- in a sense both. I wasn't trying to say "Oh, and by the way it was also POCL".
- Q. On what basis do you say that this report was addressed to and provided to POCL?
- 16 A. I believe it was -- I believe it was. I'm not 17 100 per cent sure now that I think about it.
 - Q. What is the basis for your belief?

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- 19 A. It was my recollection. I can't say for certainty. If you bring up the distribution -- could you do that? 20
 - Q. I don't think I can. If you look over the page.
- 22 A. I haven't got it in front of me. Ah, there, right.
 - Q. One can see a contents page, and then go over the page again, and then go over the page again -- we always find these pages upside down -- then go over the page again.

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the time and it wasn't so much to do with software errors. I mean, there was a process for that. This was not to do with software errors. It was identifying, okay, was it one of these or one of those and it set it out in very, very --

MR BEER: I'm sorry, somebody is drawing something to my attention

The transcript had stopped so we had better stop speaking.

(Pause)

Can I suggest that we take an early afternoon break 12 and restrict it to ten minutes or so. I haven't got 13 long to go in my cross-examination but if we came back 14 at 3.10

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, certainly. MR BEER: Thank you very much.

17 (2.58 pm)

(Short Break)

19 (3.14 pm)

20 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Hello.

> MR BEER: Sir, good afternoon. Sorry that has taken a little longer than expected --

SIR WYN WILLIAMS: That's all right.

MR BEER: -- 15 minutes rather than 10 but just before we pick up, Mr Oppenheim, where we left off in the third 134

Sometimes within these reports one --

- A. Oh, I'm sorry, I was referring to a service one. This is the managing director's -- no, I got that wrong. If I may retract that. I thought we were looking at the Acceptance Incident report, not this one. No, this -the managing director's is internal. My apologies.
- Q. Thank you, that's the first clarification.

The second clarification, you said a number of times in the course of your evidence today and including this morning that the Cash Account -- and I'm going to call it capital C, capital A -- was acceptable, was fine and that this was one reason why it was permissible to seek to recategorise Al376 as a category B incident or lower. When you're referring to the Cash Account here are you referring to it, in a technical sense, to a technical module as part of the system?

- 17 A. I'm struggling to understand the point.
- 18 Q. Yes.
 - A. I'm sorry.
- 20 Q. I have been using the Cash Account problem, describing 21 the Cash Account in a much broader context, ie anything 22 which showed a discrepancy between the cash that 23 a subpostmaster had in branch and the cash value 24 recorded in back office systems --
 - A. Right, okay.

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Q. -- which I had understood the Al376, certainly the first two incident forms, to be referring to it, in the sense that I was using those words: Cash Account Discrepancy.

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A. Right, okay. Very important point. I have to say mine is the narrower one, which is more of a technical one I guess, and if we go through aspects of the third supplemental agreement I can point you to how we sought to distinguish between the two, not to belittle the part that it would not identify, but it was never going to identify everything.

All it was going to do was identify any differences between the Cash Account as declared by the subpostmaster, or postmaster, what was in the central TMS system and what was sent across to TIP.

The Cash Account as committed by the subpostmaster may have been "wrong", and I don't use the term in a pejorative sense. It's what he may have been forced pretty much to commit to in order to carry on because there was an inadequate facility for him to say "Just a minute, I've got a problem", if something didn't balance. And if he made good the imbalance, as I understand it, particularly in hindsight, then the committed Cash Account would have balanced and we would have known nothing about it.

The only way we would have known about it is if he 137

mind the helpdesk person couldn't actually get to the terminal in the post office, that wasn't possible in those days, so he had to steer the subpostmaster through what he would have had to do and some of that would have been quite complicated, and I can imagine some of it --

Well, I have seen some of the evidence, some of it went wrong and you ended up with double the problem that there was in the first place.

So the only way to identify and fix those was through that route.

This reconciliation process, you're quite right, would not have done that.

- Q. Thank you.
- A. And, if I may just one more point, the third supplemental agreement made that clear because it said there's a thing -- it identified a thing called I think -- the second one did as well -- a "not data error", which sounds like a very peculiar term but it's a very deliberate term. In Pathway's terms it means "It's not us", it's reference data, is one example, or it's the postmaster making a mistake. I have to say that, you know: easily done, millions of transactions, right.

But it isn't something that's a software bug and it's not something that we can effect and it's not

had reported the problem to the helpdesk, which is what I was talking about before the break, in which case, if he says, "Look, I put through a such and such and it broke" -- you know, I gave a couple of examples, there are more -- "and it didn't complete properly and I'm pretty sure, I have been through my records, and this £300 discrepancy I can relate to that transaction", then we from the helpdesk should have gone into that and got a second line support person, an account specialist, to go in to look at the message store and dig out the audit trail for that particular event.

- Q. Just stopping there, that requires the people in the helpdesk, the various tiers of the helpdesk, to do what you have just said --
- A. Yes.
 - Q. -- for the subpostmaster to have persistence and conviction in what they are saying and not to be told "It's your responsibility to balance the books, make good the difference"?
- 20 A. Certainly looking at what's happened, yes. It shouldn't 21 have required persistence, it should have required 22 simply an explanation of what had been observed and 23 there should have been, as I said before, a certain 24 amount that he could have done to put it right for 25 himself through a scripted set of instructions. Bear in 138

1 something that we can fix and there are references in 2 there to, if it's not clear, we will say it's not clear, 3 we will report that to the Post Office. 4

- Q. Thank you. I'm just going to give the cross-reference to that, it's FUJ00118186. We will chase down in due course the paragraphs within the third agreement. I know that you have been reading it or re-reading it over the break.
- A. Yes.
- Q. Lastly, can I ask you please to look at FUJ00118188, please. Thank you very much. This is a letter from your counterpart, Keith Baines, dated 20 March 2000. It reads:

"TIP Integrity Checking:

"The Second Supplemental Agreement (in clause 7.1) provided for a TIP Integrity Checking Period, during which POCL would reconcile transaction and cash account data received in TIP from ICL Pathway. This period was to continue until four consecutive weeks without discovery of any Cash Account Discrepancies not found by the Accounting Integrity Control Release.

"I am pleased to be able to confirm that this condition has now been satisfied, with satisfactory explanations having been received by POCL from ICL Pathway for the small number of apparent 140

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(35) Pages 137 - 140

1		discrepancies that were found."	1	asked by Mr Jacobs on behalf of the Howe & Co Core
2		I think this has been drawn to your attention very	2	Participants.
3		recently and I don't suppose you remember receiving it	3	Questioned by MR JACOBS
4		at the time?	4	MR JACOBS: Thank you, sir. Can I ask if you can see me and
5	Α.	That's my "File", writing at the top.	5	hear me?
6		Yes. But now you wouldn't remember receiving it. What	6	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I can hear you and I now am able to see
7		do you now take from it, having had your attention drawn	7	you as well.
8		to it?	8	MR JACOBS: Thank you, sir.
9	Α.	Well, it doesn't surprise me. I think I do remember it	9	Mr Oppenheim, I'm asking questions on behalf of
10		because it was a key event.	10	153 subpostmasters represented by Howe & Co. Could
11	Q.	Ah.	11	I ask Frankie, please, to turn up paragraph 59 of your
12	Α.	But, thankfully, you were able to produce it. This was	12	witness statement and that will come up on the screen.
13		very important because, obviously, if you go back to	13	That's at pages 19 to 20 of your statement. It's there.
14		where we were in July/August it was not looking good,	14	If we could just expand that at paragraph 59.
15		but, by this stage, by doing this and there was also	15	Now, this is in respect of Horizon project
16		the attribute checker, which you haven't mentioned but	16	achievability and you say that in 2001 your confidence
17		which we also put in place to help POCL with the	17	in achievability was supported by a statement that the
18		reference data issues, we had done it. I mean but	18	chief executive officer of Post Office made to the
19		having said that, there were still, inevitably, going to	19	effect that the project had been a success and that:
20		be instances where something went wrong and we have	20	" we have got a product which is working
21		I tried to write that into the third supplemental	21	extremely well"
22		agreement and POCL should have known that .	22	Now, we, as I have said, represent 153
23	MR	BEER: Thank you very much, Mr Oppenheim. They are the	23	subpostmasters and mistresses, most of whom, if not all,
24		only questions I ask at the moment.	24	have given evidence to the effect that the product
25		I think, sir, the next set of questions are to be	25	routinely created unexplained and erroneous shortfalls,
1		more than occasional mismatches, for which they have	1	things that you don't know about. You can't pick it all
2		been held liable.	2	up in testing. So, at some point, you have to pull the
3		Now, my question is: do you accept that there is	3	lever and Go Live and, bearing in mind the volumes,
4		a disconnect between what the contracting parties were	4	looking at it from that standpoint, from any IT
5		saying at this time and what was actually happening on	5	programme normal IT programme standpoint, I would
6		the ground?	6	have said this would have been viewed as a success,
7	Α.	Well, with the benefit of hindsight and I I don't	7	except for the fact that your clients were held to
8		know the timelines of your clients' events. With the	8	account for things that they didn't do.
9		benefit of hindsight, clearly, all was not well, but	9	Q. Well, I accept that and you have said that you can't
10		I have been trying to say throughout that we cautioned	10	identify everything in testing, but what did they know
11		the Post Office that this would not be 100 per cent	11	about the potential for all these shortfalls that were
12		foolproof.	12	unexplained?
13	Q.	Okay, and have you listened, Mr Oppenheim, to what our	13	A. Well, I can't answer that. I mean, the I would turn
14		clients and other people have said in their evidence in	14	it around and say why didn't the Post Office, and also
15		this Inquiry from February to May this year?	15	Pathway, note the feedback that was coming back better
16	A.	I have listened to some of the videos, yes.	16	through the helpdesk through the reports of problems
17	Q.	My next question for you is, with hindsight, do you now	17	back into the helpdesk?
18		agree that Post Office and ICL's confidence in the	18	Q. Okay, well, that's helpful, thank you.
19		product was misplaced at the time that this statement	19	My next questions are in relation to perceived risks
20		was made?	20	prior to rollout and, Frankie, if we could ask for
21	A.	That presumes that we thought everything in the garden	21	paragraphs 60 and 62 of Mr Oppenheim's statement and
22		was rosy and we knew it wasn't and we knew that there	22	they are at pages 20 and 21 of 97.
23		were things that we didn't know about it. And the point	23	So looking then at paragraph 60, these are the
		were things that we didn't know about it. And the point that I made elsewhere in my witness statement was that,	23 24	So looking then at paragraph 60, these are the perceived risks of ICL Pathway and the first one that
23				

1		"The Rollout to 18,500 post offices on the other	1		particular risks and I'm talking about installation
2		(sustaining the flow of preparation work, ISDN	2		and training were not adequately mitigated?
3		provisioning, training and equipment supply over almost	3	Δ	Well, the evidence would suggest not, particularly
4		two years with few breaks)."	4	,	around training. I think there's definitely something
5		So that was one of Pathway's perceived risks at this	5		to be said about training. Training was one of the
6		stage?	6		Als was it 218 or 298 no, 218. It was, as
	٨				
7		Yes, it was.	7		I recall, a two-and-a-half-day training exercise and
8	Q.	Then moving over to the Post Office perceived risks,	8		then there was an extra half day or day for the
9		which is at paragraph 62, if we could move on to that	9		postmaster. A very complex system, a complete change in
10		please. So 62.1:	10		business practice for most of them, from manual paper
11		"rolling out 40,000 sets of Counter equipment to	11		based to system. Was that enough? I think probably not
12		18,500 Post Office branches at a rate of hundreds	12		and I have seen that Post Office actually had some of
13		a week, having first connected each branch to the	13		their people and, indeed, some of the more IT literate
14		network via ISDN (or otherwise satellite);	14		postmasters help others to augment the training, so
15		"modifying the branches to accept the installation	15		I think the evidence is incontrovertible that it wasn't
16		of PCs and printers"	16		enough.
17		Given the state of technology at the time, and then,	17	MR	JACOBS: Okay, well, thank you. I'm just going to ask
18		finally:	18		those who instruct me if they have any more questions
19		"training 67,000 subpostmasters and counter staff	19		they would like me to ask.
20		(just) before their respective implementation	20		(Pause)
21		dates"	21		Thank you, I don't have any further questions for
22		Our clients say that the training they received was	22		you.
23		ineffective and that there were significant problems	23	A.	Okay, thank you.
24		when the equipment was installed, quite often major	24		WYN WILLIAMS: Who is next?
25		power outages. Do you agree, Mr Oppenheim, that these	25		Questioned by MS PAGE
		145			146
1	ме	DACE: Halle it's Flore Dage here representing a number	4		and thing but, on the other hand, there's this idea that
1	MS	PAGE: Hello, it's Flora Page here, representing a number	1		one thing but, on the other hand, there's this idea that
2	MS	of subpostmasters as well.	2		there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be
2	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some	2		there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself
2 3 4	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to	2 3 4		there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be
2 3 4 5	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the	2 3 4 5		there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially;
2 3 4	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the capacity for Fujitsu to go into accounts and make	2 3 4 5 6		there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially; is that fair?
2 3 4 5	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the	2 3 4 5	A.	there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially; is that fair? Yes, I think that's entirely fair.
2 3 4 5	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the capacity for Fujitsu to go into accounts and make	2 3 4 5 6	A. Q.	there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially; is that fair? Yes, I think that's entirely fair. So it sort of anticipates, does it, that the ICL
2 3 4 5 6 7	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the capacity for Fujitsu to go into accounts and make changes, and the extent to which Post Office would have	2 3 4 5 6 7	A. Q.	there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially; is that fair? Yes, I think that's entirely fair.
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the capacity for Fujitsu to go into accounts and make changes, and the extent to which Post Office would have known about that.	2 3 4 5 6 7 8	A. Q.	there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially; is that fair? Yes, I think that's entirely fair. So it sort of anticipates, does it, that the ICL
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	MS	of subpostmasters as well. What I would like to do, if I may, is ask some questions relating to the issue that we have come to speak about as remote access, in other words the capacity for Fujitsu to go into accounts and make changes, and the extent to which Post Office would have known about that. What I would like to do, if I may, is refer you to	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	A. Q.	there's the POCL internal audit and it seems to be suggesting there and you can read it for yourself that the plan would be for these ICL audits to be something which the POCL audit could trust potentially; is that fair? Yes, I think that's entirely fair. So it sort of anticipates, does it, that the ICL internal audits will be shared with POCL and their audit
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1 support purposes. Previous audits have identified 2 potential control weaknesses which management declare 3 have been addressed. The audit will confirm the current 4 arrangements and assess the strength of the controls in 5 place. Will include a site security audit." 6 So if we can just sort of unpack that a little. 7 There's obviously been some concerns about who has the 8 sort of wider access that you get if you're in third 9 line support; is that fair? 10 A. It's an issue -- it's a worry for any programme, where 11 you have to determine who is trusted to make changes and 12 have access to live systems, and it should be, and it's 13 an obvious area for any audit to focus on. 14 Now, this said that there had been concerns and 15 potential control weaknesses. I mean, this was --16 Q. This is in --17 A. This was in July 2000. 18 Q. That's right. 19 A. I would say, by then, we should have got on top of 20 those. This says that they have been addressed, 21 according to management. 22 Q. Yes. 23 A. It doesn't -- I'm just reading it as it is written. It 24 doesn't say that they have audited and verified or 25 confirmed that it has. 149 1 or whether the intention was that POCL would say "Look, 2 can you -- have you done an audit on X and would you 3 share it with me". In other words, we would produce it 4 if asked, as opposed to just issuing them all to POCL, 5 or without being asked. 6 I suspect it was -- if asked, we would share it as 7 opposed to "here it is", to be honest. 8 Q. The only way to resolve any problems that ICL picked up 9 in terms of accounts and reconciliations, the problems 10 that we have been talking about with Acceptance 11 Incident 376 was through SSC going into the accounts and 12 doing these changes; is that fair? 13 A. No. There was such a spectrum. There is appendix 4 --14 schedule 4 in the third supplemental agreement goes 15 through a long list. For the kind of problems of breaks 16 and such-like that I was referring to latterly, yes, if 17 the postmaster wasn't able to do it for himself under 18 instruction -- under guidance. There was another whole 19 category where a lot of the 376 discrepancies were going 20 to be not automated but semi-automated and didn't 21 affect -- there wasn't a Cash Account error, but some 22 other missing transaction or whatever error. 23 So some but not all, by any means, I think, is the

Q. No. Well --

A. It says:

"The audit will confirm the current arrangements and assess the strength of the controls in place."

Seeing that, as I imagine I would have seen it originally, I wouldn't have been unduly alarmed by that because it's right that they should be looking and worrying about these and I would too and it would suggest that there had been some weaknesses, management says they have addressed them, the audit will follow up. Sounds okay to me.

- Q. I don't seek to suggest otherwise. This is a planned audit. I haven't been able to locate the documentation of the actual audit, so it's unclear what was found when this was followed up. But the point that I would like to sort of tease out, if I may, is that, assuming that audit took place, Post Office would have, according to the plan, then been shown that and it would have been shared with them for their own audit purposes; is that right?
- A. Well, I'm afraid I don't know. The fact that they could rely on an internal audit -- I don't know that --I wasn't responsible for this. This is Martyn Bennett's area. I don't know whether he would routinely have shared these with POCL, particularly in the early days,

agreement, require Fujitsu to inform POCL if we made a judgement, and that was really key to me because then it's saying, "Look, we're really not sure", and if then someone is accused of fraud, that will be the first place to look. We would have provided that information. If he had made a call, on such and such a day that which tied in with that discrepancy, that week's Cash Account, then that's at least a starting point for saying, "Just a minute, we knew there was a problem here. This was the assumption we made. Maybe that was a wrong assumption, we should relook at it".

- Q. But at a more routine level, when it wasn't that sort of "We're not sure" type situation, somebody in SSC would go in and resolve the problem?
- A. I was not expecting that. I -- for me, this was more of a technical support thing, as opposed to changing data. I did not expect any change of data, particularly without the agreement of the postmaster, so if the postmaster had been talked through a correction routine and it hadn't worked, then I would have expected the helpdesk to say "Well, this is what I'm going to do, I'm going to raise an error report, I'm going to declare it to Post Office and I'm going to make these changes and I will share them with you; is that okay?" Right?

They agree what the corrective action should be and 152

provisions, right at the end of the third supplemental 151

answer. And where it was required, those general

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1 he does it on the postmaster's behalf. That's what 1 MR MALONEY: Sir, may I ask some questions now? 2 2 I expected, not that he would do it unilaterally. SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes, of course. 3 Now, I have no direct knowledge of what was actually 3 MR MALONEY: Thank you, sir. I know by that answer you can done, I'm afraid, but that was my expectation. 4 4 hear me. Can you see me now? 5 Q. Have you read the evidence of Richard Roll at all? 5 SIR WYN WILLIAMS: There is always a delay but now I can, 6 A. I have briefly and I -- I didn't know Richard and 6 Mr Maloney. 7 I found some of what he said -- well, a lot of what he 7 **Questioned by MR MALONEY** 8 8 MR MALONEY: Thank you. said concerning but I also found some of it quite 9 surprising. I wasn't -- I should stop there. 9 Mr Oppenheim, the Chair has just given you my 10 Q. You accept, don't you, that Horizon data was not 10 surname. I'm Tim Maloney and I also represent a number 11 infallible? 11 of subpostmasters and, specifically, I act on behalf of 12 A. Yes, yes. I have said that all along. 12 subpostmasters whose convictions have been quashed on 13 Q. And that the Post Office should not have prosecuted on 13 referral of their convictions either to the 14 the basis that it was? 14 Court of Appeal or the Crown Court. 15 15 A. You're asking me for an opinion. Would I have done it? A. Understood. 16 No, not without digging really deep. 16 Q. I have only very few questions really for you and they 17 Q. Finally, do you accept that it was actually in Fujitsu's 17 concern commercial priorities of POCL, as you understood 18 commercial interests for Post Office to prosecute on 18 them, when dealing with the development of Horizon in 19 that basis? 19 1999, particularly. 20 A. No, I don't accept that at all. I mean it -- quite 20 Firstly, did you regard the Benefits Agency's 21 21 cancellation of the Benefits Payment Card in May 1999 as apart from the moral side of things, I don't understand 22 an existential threat to POCL? 22 how even commercially -- oh, you mean to keep in their 23 good books? No, no, no, Fujitsu is not that kind of 23 A. Yes. 24 24 organisation, not in my day anyway. Q. Why did you regard it as such an existential threat to 25 MS PAGE: Thank you, those are my questions. 25 POCL, Mr Oppenheim? 154 1 A. Because the original plan, the raison d'être for the 1 It was a way of making the old books secure by putting 2 2 Benefit Payment Card was to modernise the method of a barcode on them such that BA could put a stop notice 3 3 payment through the Post Office to claimants and to make on them, which previously they couldn't have done and 4 it "a good experience for them to continue to do so", 4 that saved, variously estimated, 50 million of the 5 5 whereas what the Benefits Agency would have preferred 150 million loss of encashment fraud per annum. So it 6 was ACT and they actually made no secret of that, so 6 was a good step towards the way. But, no, that was part 7 7 that would have eliminated, at its worst, something like of the legacy of books and that was going to go away and 8 a third, as I recall, of POCL's revenues. 8 what needed to replace it was Network Banking, to 9 attract as many POCL customers to continue to use So in that sense, yes, it was an existential threat, 9 10 unless something could be done to mitigate that loss 10 branches and maintain a footfall. and, hence, the Network Banking solution and also OBCS 11 11 12 was an aid in the meantime because it cut down on 12 13 13 encashment fraud, even with paper, and it stopped the 14 Benefits Agency from rushing to ACT, which otherwise 14

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I don't know.

streams?

Banking --

Q. -- and OBCS?

Α. Yes.

A. Yes.

I think they would have wanted to do. Whether the

government would have allowed them to do that or not,

Q. So there was a necessity to generate alternative revenue

Q. Those alternative revenue streams included Network

A. Not really. OBCS was, in a sense, an interim solution. 155

Q. Of course, integral to the movement to Network Banking, would be the development of automation? Q. Without automation, there could be no movement there, 15 there could be no alternative revenue streams, the 16 existential threat perhaps became an existential 17 reality?

18 A. Well, it would have been, yes.

19 Q. So was it obvious to you, around 1999 and into 2000, 20 that POCL would be under real commercial pressure if 21 Horizon did not proceed at pace?

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23 MR MALONEY: That's all I ask. Thank you, Mr Oppenheim.

> SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Is anyone else present who wishes to ask Mr Oppenheim any questions?

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1	MR BEER: No, that's a nil return, thank you, sir.	1	investigate whether a subpostmaster had committed
2	Questioned by SIR WYN WILLIAMS	2	a crime, I think it's reasonably obvious that I would
3	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Right. Well, I'm going to go on a little	3	have to go to someone in Fujitsu to ask for relevant
4	fishing expedition with Mr Oppenheim myself, just for	4	information.
5	a minute or two.	5	A. Mm-hm.
6	Mr Oppenheim, it relates to many questions you have	6	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Yes? Now, I'm not one of the people who
7	been asked about processes whereby Pathway might provide	7	were working in the technical teams, I'm now a Post
8	information to POCL to assist in investigating	8	Office investigator, or perhaps even a Post Office
9	subpostmasters, all right?	9	lawyer, so I want to locate the right people, if you see
10	A. Mm-hm.	10	what I mean. So can you assist me from your
11	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: I don't want to discuss the strict	11	knowledge because, in this period, you obviously were
12	contractual provisions with you. I'm going on what	12	very knowledgeable who would it be that would most
13	I describe as a fishing expedition because I want to try	13	likely tell me what information Pathway might hold and
14	and identify the people who might know most about this	14	how I might use it?
15	in order to ask questions in the future. Do you	15	A. Firstly, I don't know the answer, but I'm going to try
16	understand?	16	and give you my best shot. I mean, the information is
17	A. I do.	17	all operational information, so that comes under the
18	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Will you accept from me, because I have	18	head of services, Steve Muchow, but he is a support
19	reliable evidence to this effect, that investigations of	19	function. So support is, by definition, a support
20	subpostmasters, in reliance on Horizon data, began	20	function. He is not necessarily the go-to person from
21	almost as soon as the rollout began because we have	21	within POCL.
22	instances of people being in court in 2001 and therefore	22	As I have said before, my working assumption was
23	being investigated in 2000, all right?	23	that anything to do with prosecutions, to do with audit,
24	So in the year 2000, if I was the person in POCL who	24	would have been Martyn Bennett, within ICL Pathway. So
25	was charged with accumulating the evidence necessary to 157	25	that would be, I would have thought, my headline go-to 158
1	person, and then he would go to someone in support,	1	would know because why wouldn't they go to them first to
2	third line support, Steven Muchow I'm thinking maybe	2	say "Have you got any data, operational data, that would
3	the very first of these would be groundbreaking, so	3	help us with this?", before necessarily coming to us,
4	probably Steve Muchow, to get the evidence to produce	4	but I don't know.
5	the information that was sought.	5	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. I can't be certain about this
6	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So my investigation begins with	6	yet, but no doubt I will get evidence about it, it may
7	Mr Bennett and we can ask him what he would have done in	7	be that in that same period there would have been
8	my supposed scenario, yes?	8	a request, as Mr Beer was putting to you, for a person
9	A. I would definitely put the question to him. I may be	9	to give evidence from Pathway about the reliability of
10	wrong in pointing at him, but logically I would have	10	Horizon. Who would have been involved in making the
11	thought that was where it would go.	11	decision as to who is best placed to give that sort of
12	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right.	12	evidence, given these two premises: firstly, it would be
13	A. It could have come up through just depending on how	13	in the nature of expert evidence where the expert owes
14	POCL raised the matter. Did it go from their	14	duties to the court; but, secondly, also it would be
15	prosecution team, their fraud team, to say Keith Baines	15	based to a degree on factual evidence, so you would need
16	as the sort of interface to me contractually, who might	16	a suitable person to cover those two things in the
17	then have gone to Steve Muchow without my knowing it.	17	Pathway organisation. Who would have made the decision
18	I would be surprised	18	"It's Mr X", or Ms Y? Who was the best placed?
19	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: So Mr Baines is another possibility for	19	
20	asking these questions?	20	Can I suggest you ask John Bennett that question. I would have thought this would have been seen as such
21	A. Well, I think I think that's not going to be	21	a major issue that it would have any such question
22	possible.	22	would have gone to John for determination. I don't
23	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: No, I'm sorry. Yes, yes, sure. All	23	recall discussing it with him, but that may be a lapse
24	right	23 24	of memory on my part.
25	A. But one of that group of people I would have thought	25	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: Because on any viewpoint there did come
20	159	23	160

1	a point in time where the person giving evidence in	1	27 October 2022)
2	court about these issues was being challenged about it,	2	
3	so it's hard to believe that this wasn't, at least by	3	
4	that stage, though I appreciate this might be after your	4	
5	direct involvement, there wouldn't have been a good deal	5	
6	of discussion about this sort of evidence.	6	
7	A. I mean, again, at the risk of repetition, it never came	7	
8	up, it never came across my desk I cannot believe	8	
9	I would have forgotten had it done so during my	9	
10	tenure.	10	
11	Now, the fact that it only came to court in 2001,	11	
12	that could point to it having been discussed after, just	12	
13	after probably I had left in February, it's possible,	13	
14	but I'm casting around. I'm sorry, I just don't know.	14	
15	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. I will leave my fishing rod	15	
16	aside and we will wait for future witnesses.	16	
17	Thank you very much, Mr Oppenheim, for making	17	
18	a statement and for giving evidence to the Inquiry.	18	
19	A. You're welcome. I hope it helps.	19	
20	MR BEER: Sir, thank you. That's all of the evidence for	20	
21	today. We're back at 10.00 am tomorrow.	21	
22	SIR WYN WILLIAMS: All right. Thank you very much, Mr Beer.	22	
23	MR BEER: Thank you, good night.	23	
24	(3.57 pm)	24	
25	(The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on Thursday,	25	
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