

INTO

**POCL SERVICE MANAGEMENT**



Horizon Programme  
Congo 4  
(ICL Pathway Release 1c)  
**Horizon Service Report**  
Number 7  
Period - June 1998

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Date produced: 28 July 1998

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## POCL SERVICE MANAGEMENT

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### 1. Introduction

This report is produced by the POCL Service Management team and provides a high level "in-flight" assessment of any threats to overall business continuity in the Congo 4 live service environment. The primary purpose is to identify any issues (actual or potential) that might threaten the Congo 4 roll-out or regression from ICL Pathway services. It should be noted that this report may have an operational bias.

For ease of reference, the report utilises a traffic light system with the following keys -

 = Immediate Threat to Business Continuity

 = Potential Threat to Business Continuity

 = No Threat to Business Continuity

The next full Horizon Service Report is scheduled for W/C 24 August 1998.



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### 2. Report Format

#### 2.1 ABBREVIATIONS

BA Benefit Agency  
BES Benefit Encashment Service  
CAPS Customer Accounting & Payment Strategy  
COLS Caps Operational Live Support  
CAW Cash Account Week for Post Offices  
CPCS Customer Payment Computer System  
CSU Card Support Unit  
HSHD Horizon System Help Desk  
MAL Minimum Acceptable Level  
OBCS Order Book Control Service  
PCHL Payment Card Helpline  
POCL Post Office Counters Ltd  
RLM Regional Liaison Manager  
PSM POCL Service Management

#### Post Office CAW

Post Office cash account weeks run from Thursday to Wednesday.  
i.e: Week 8 = Thurs. 14 May - Wednesday 20 May 1998.

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### 3. Headlines

#### Volumetrics for June 1998

• Number of active payment cards =	28,531
• Number of commissioned Post Offices =	204
• Number of Counter Positions =	334
• Offices De-commissioned =	1
• Manual Post Offices supporting foreign encashments =	1,500
• Number of encashments for June =	73,383
• Value of encashments for June =	£2,275,042.01
• Number of foreign encashments for June =	1,008
• Value of foreign encashments for June =	£ 37,262.20
• Average value of each encashment =	£ 31

### 4. End to End Business Continuity











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Due to the continuing trends of 'incomplete transactions' which occur at the rate of four in every ten thousand transactions. The generic problems on the subject have taken a higher profile with both POCL and ICL Pathway directing specific resources to resolve the problems within an agreed timescale of three months.

Due to the actual impact on the 'live' environment that 'incomplete transactions' has, the overall status of business continuity is now 'Amber'.

### 5. Core Elements of the Live service

Infra-structure	BPS	OBCS	CAS /PAS	CMS	TP / Pwy Interface	Fraud & Security	Accounting
							

NB: This section of the report should be viewed and interpreted from the 'end user' perspective and how it will impact their environment.

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### 5.1 Benefit Payment System

#### Incomplete Transactions

The title of 'lost transactions' has been changed to 'incomplete transactions'. This is considered to be a better description of the problem. To date all transaction have been recovered by manual fallback.

It has been agreed within both POCL and ICL Pathway that the current levels of Incomplete transactions is not acceptable for a system where the primary function is to record and manage transactions. From a POCL perspective it would seem reasonable to expect that the Horizon system has integral safeguards to protect and preserve transaction data. Integrity, consistency and durability are fundamental requirements of any transaction processing IT system. As it is, there seem to be variety of situations where the system reacts unpredictably and loses data.

An operational workshop has now been scheduled with resources from prominent domains within POCL and ICL Pathway. The desired objective from the workshop is to propose software enhancements which will eliminate/reduce Incomplete Transactions to the target level. Once made, proposals will be referred to ICL Pathway Technical Support for feasibility. The next report will provide a synopsis of the workshop, detailing where we are now and the next steps.

The forecast date to resolve the overall problem of Incomplete Transactions has been set for the end of November 1998, however, some categories will be resolved sooner.

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### Baseline for Incomplete Transactions

To provide an easy baseline against which incomplete transactions can be assessed. Figures have been produced to show the volume of incomplete transactions per 10,000 encashments returned on an adjusted monthly basis and secondly a target figure of incomplete transactions that POCL should be aiming to receive prior to the advent of Live Trial.

The current situation has remained the same as last month.

Current month level of IT per 10,000 encashments received	4.0
Target level of IT per 10,000 encashments received	0.26

### 'Major Office' List (Manual Foreign Encashment Offices)

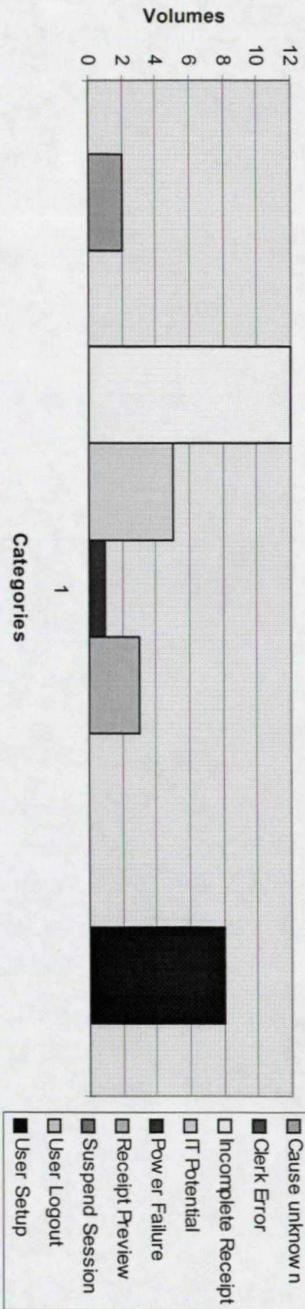
The new 'Major Office' list was scheduled to be introduced into the 'live' environment on Monday 29 June 1998. However, due to a sequence of events, the new list was not actually implemented until Friday 10 July 1998. The impact to the customers was contained by POCL Service Management.

A full review will be conducted to examine all the processes and identify improvement opportunities.

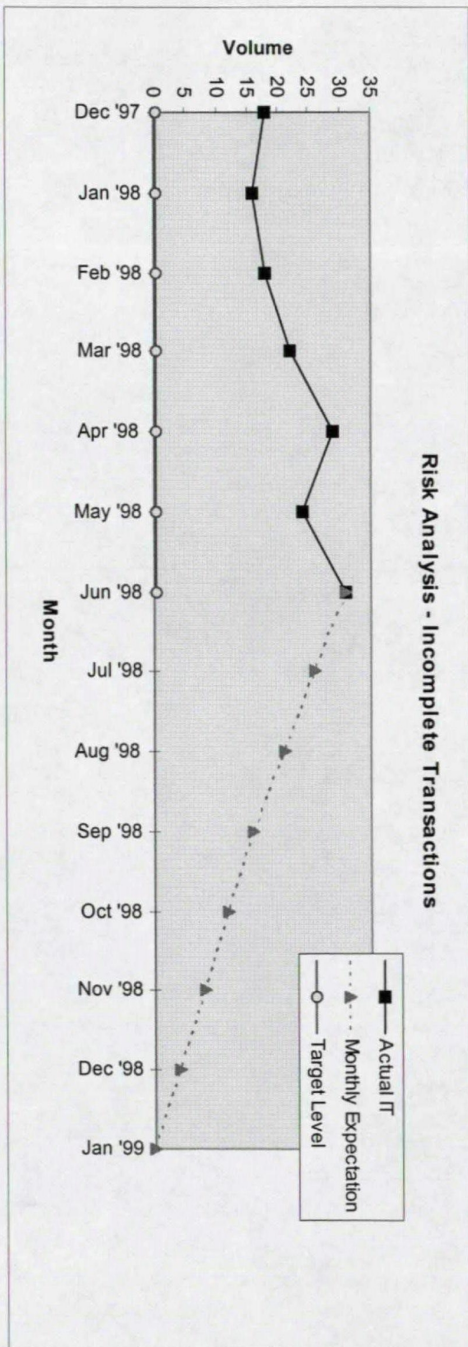


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Incomplete Transactions - June 1998



Risk Analysis - Incomplete Transactions





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### 5.2 Transaction Processing & ICL Pathway Interface



#### Incomplete Transactions

The transaction Processing & ICL Pathway interface remains on 'Amber' status, with incomplete transactions having a large impact on this.

Other factors which are of concern are:

- unmatched exceptions
- cash account errors

Last months report included a statement from TP detailing the impact of incomplete transactions within their domain, in addition, a report has been furnished showing the projected effect in monetary terms to the TO environment.

### 5.3 Accounting & Reconciliation

Appendix 'A' details an agreed summary of accounting & reconciliation for the June period.

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### 6. BES: Volumetrics

Definitions for the purpose of this report.

A transaction is an incident of "a recorded and auditable instance of business activity, involving Service provision or Stock movement across organisational or Service boundaries".

A payment is the Child Benefit allowance money due for one week, or for four weeks (in the case of a four-weekly allowance).

An encashment is a measure of the work effort in a customer session from the clerk accepting the payment card to returning the card with monies, i.e. one customer is paid all due Child Benefit allowance. Thus, a customer may save several payments before visiting their PO. During such a transaction there will be one encashment of several payments.

#### 6.1 Payments Card Statistics

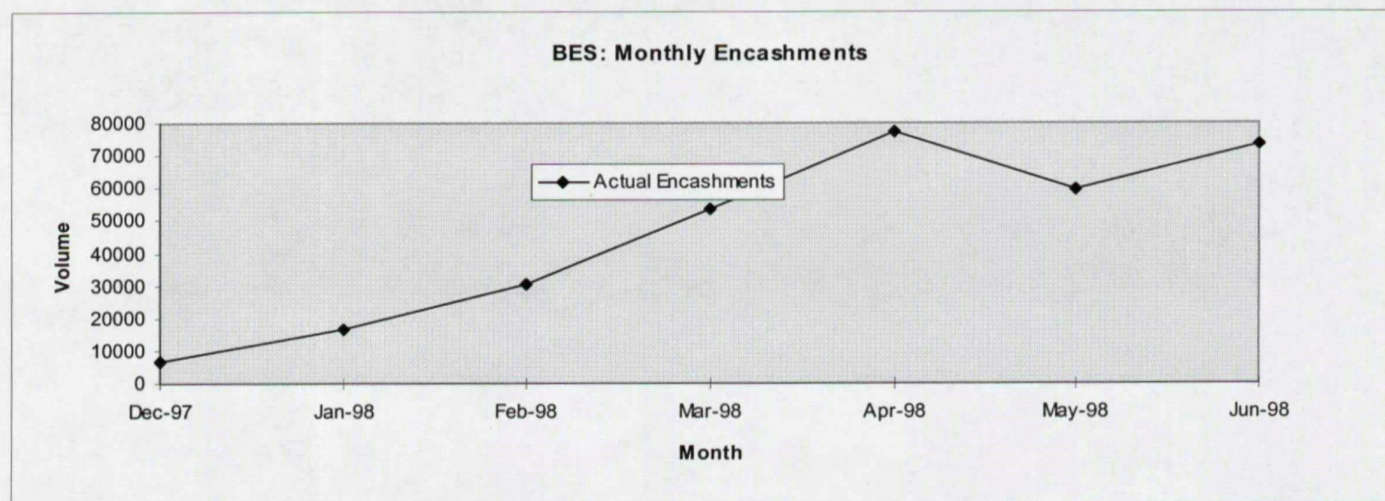
Month	Cards Issued to POCL (Cumulative)	Active Cards (Cumulative)	Lost Cards	Stolen Cards	Damaged Cards
Apr '98	30,574	26,478	43	30	51
May '98	32,719	27,692	59	28	37
June '98	34,033	28,531	71	15	45

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### 6.2 Volumes of BES transactions

Volumes of encashments have returned back to the normal expected levels.

Transaction	Nov 97	Dec 97	Jan 98	Feb 98	Mar 98	Apr 98	May 98	June 98
Actual volume of Encashments	3,440	6,727	16,835	30,343	53,786	77,292	59,788	73,383





## POCL SERVICE MANAGEMENT

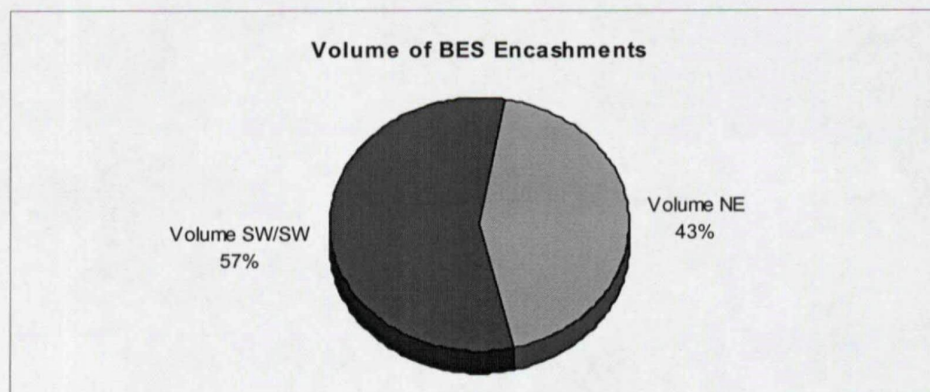
### 6.3 BES Encashments by POCL Region for June 1998 (calendar month)

Region	North East	South Wales South West	Foreign
Volume of Encashments	31,914	41,469	1,008
Value of Encashments (£)	939,697.66	1,334,344.35	37,262.20

NB.

Volume and Value of Foreign transactions include automated outlets (204) and non automated outlets (1,500).

### 6.4 Percentage Split of Encashments



NB:

The forecast percentage split is 57% SW/SW and 43% NE, derived from the number of automated offices in each Region

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### 6.5 Encashment Breakdown by Payee Type for June 1998

Payee Type	Number
Beneficiary	70,703
Alternative Payee	2,679
Permanent Agent	1

### 6.6 Number of Stops & Expires: by Month

Category	Nov 97	Dec 97	Jan 98	Feb 98	Mar 98	Apr 98	May 98	June 98
Stops	47	61	276	437	621	678	647	694
Expires	1	2	3	134	279	340	664	461

NB

The number of expires have fallen in June, which indicates that the CR raised to automate expires sent back to CAPs, has been successfully implemented.

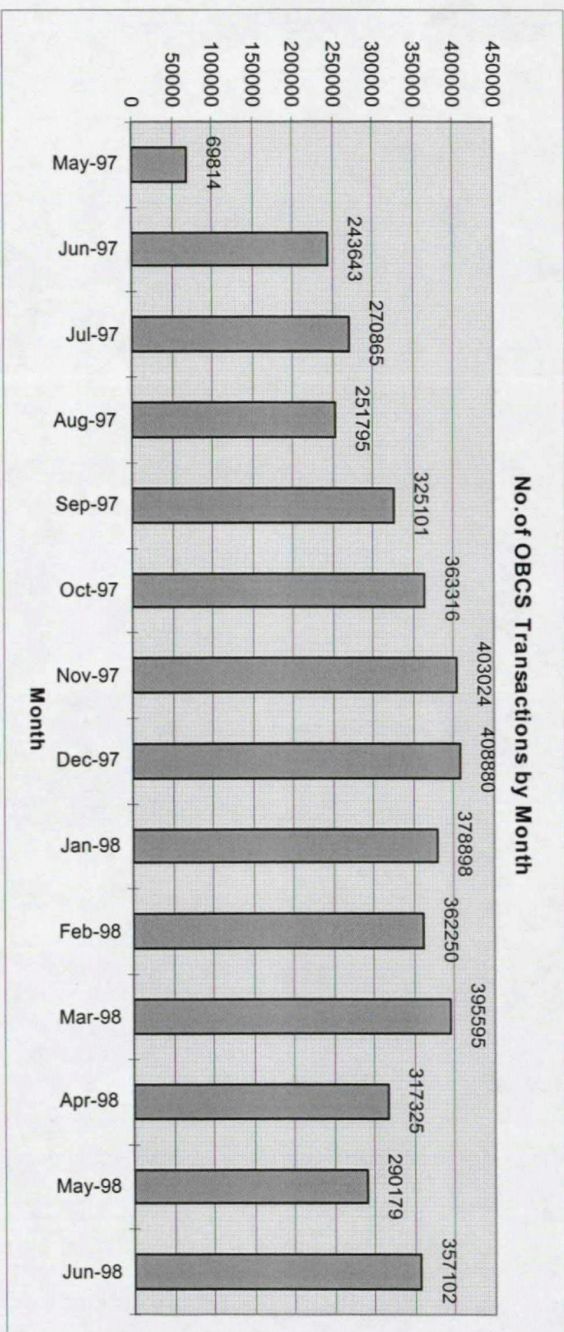
## 7. OBCS

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**POOL SERVICE MANAGEMENT****7.1 No. of OBCS Transactions by Type - June 1998**

Encash Local	Encash Foreign	Issue/Receive Local	Issue/Receive Foreign	Re-Direct	Total Transactions
312,454	4,049	39,910	487	202	357,102

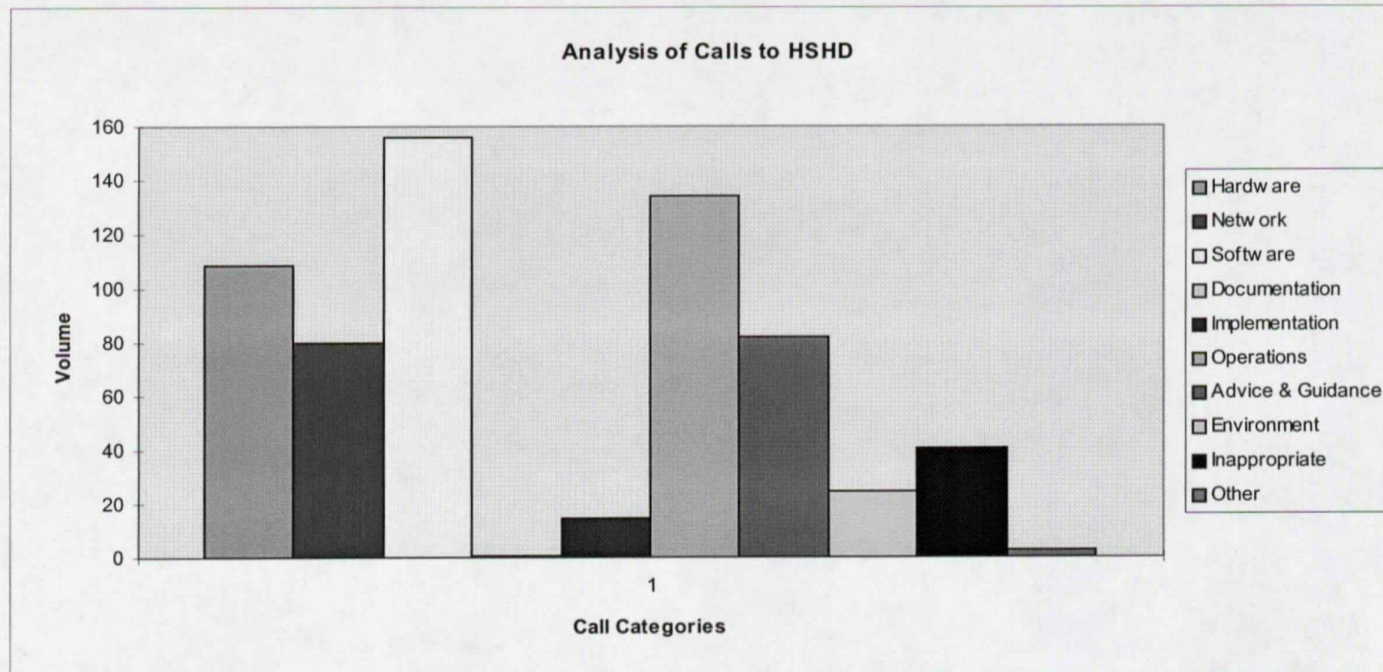
**7.2****8 Horizon System Helpdesk Volumetrics**

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### 8.1 Categories of calls to HSHD during June 1998



NB: The total number of call to the HSH = 646

### Breakdown of calls to HSH

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Category	Dec 97	Jan 98	Feb 98	Mar 98	Apr 98	May 98	June 98
Hardware	82	93	74	105	117	64	109
Network	26	35	39	31	33	42	80
Software	89	136	121	190	155	117	156
Documentation	0	0	1	2	1	1	1
Implementation*	19	4	9	3	1	29	15
Operations	143	231	182	181	190	146	134
Advice & Guidance	236	305	217	147	70	87	82
Environment	14	23	13	15	19	20	25
Inappropriate	32	35	36	37	35	53	41
Other	19	32	3	30	10	7	3
Total	660	894	695	741	631	566	646

NB: The increase in software coded calls was due to a higher number of reported software errors during the June period, which were varied with no specific reason. ICL Pathway will continue to monitor.

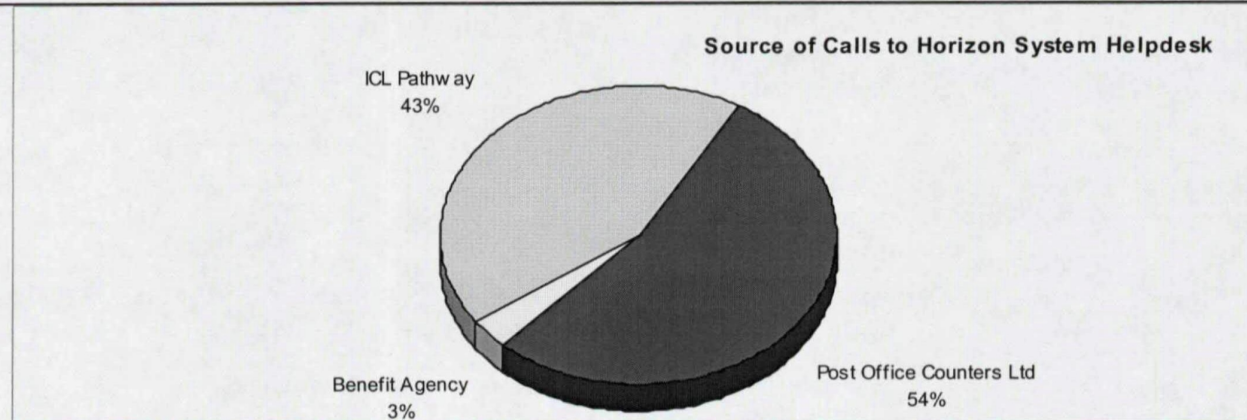
**8.2 Source of Calls to HSH**

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### Breakdown of Calls by Month

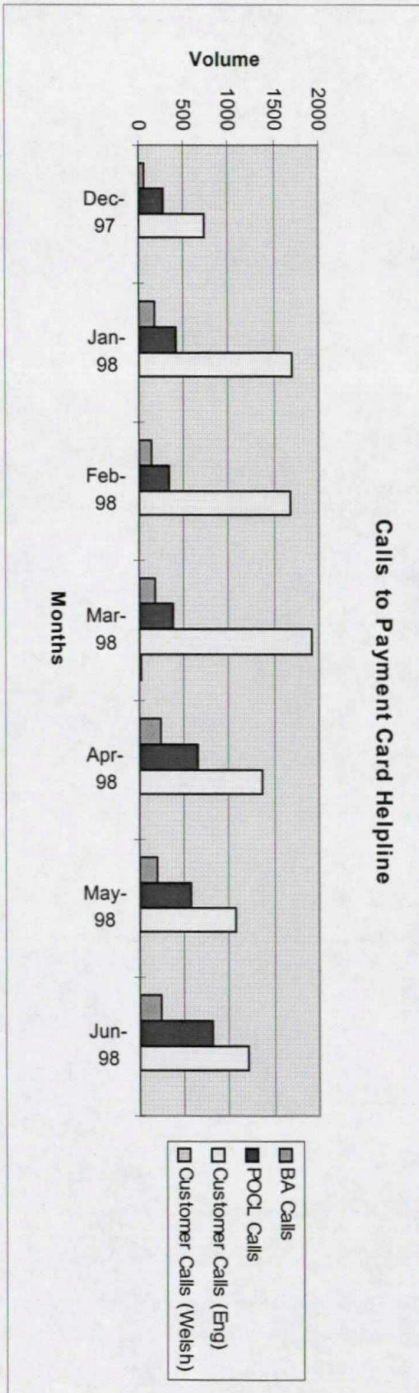
Business	Dec 97	Jan 98	Feb 98	Mar 98	Apr 98	May 98	June 98
Post Office Counters Ltd	523	619	468	527	430	338	346
Benefit Agency	13	55	31	35	44	38	21
ICL Pathway	124	220	196	179	157	190	279
Total	660	894	695	741	631	566	646

## 9. Payment Card Helpline

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Source of Calls	Dec 97	Jan 98	Feb 98	Mar 98	Apr 98	May 98	June 98
Post Office Counters Ltd	270 (25%)	425 (18%)	339 (16%)	370 (15%)	659 (29%)	584 (32%)	851 (37%)
Benefit Agency	69 (6%)	186 (8%)	147 (7%)	187 (7%)	243 (11%)	194 (10%)	231 (10%)
Customer Calls (English)	733 (68%)	1,710 (74%)	1677 (77%)	1928 (77%)	1362 (60%)	1066 (58%)	1210 (53%)
Customer Calls (Welsh)	5 (.5%)	5 (.2%)	2 (.1%)	14 (.6%)	3 (.1%)	2 (.1%)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1077</b>	<b>2,326</b>	<b>2165</b>	<b>2499</b>	<b>2267</b>	<b>1846</b>	<b>2292</b>

NB: Volumes of call to the PCHL remain a consistent 3 % of total monthly encashments

Breakdown of Call Types	POCL	BA	Customer (English)	Customer (Welsh)
Card	74 (8%)	130 (54%)	392 (32%)	0
Payment	659 (78%)	84 (36%)	72 (6%)	0
Other	118 (14)	17 (7%)	746 (62%)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>0</b>

NB: Type 'other' are calls which do not fall under category 'card or payment'.

Example: Calls made by customers which were proper to the Benefit Agency. (A1 Benefit Forms)

### 10. Summary of Key Problems during Release 1c

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### Problems Resolved (Closed / Monitor)

- ICL Pathway 'maestro' scheduler failed over a weekend period, affecting 10 ex IGL offices
- Release 1c printers not performing to standard required
- Release 1c payment receipts are lower specification to that of IGL
- Files sent to ABED with wrong creation date
- ISDN line problems affecting release 1b offices
- Authentication of users to the HSH & PCHL
- Duplicate payments at Bath Road, due to office unable to harvest
- PMSR report received in ABED did not pick-up Bath Road Duplicate payment
- BES transactions not being committed and subsequently lost after 'full log-out'
- Transactions being lost after experiencing printer failure
- Stop payment not confirmed back to CAPS, following a customer transferring from a BES office to a non-automated office
- Payment cards not activated at Post Offices in NE Region, prior to their issue to the customers
- Disabled customer complaint concerning lack of 'agent' facility at Release 1c
- Increased cash account errors
- Lost Transactions - Time Outs
- Lost Transactions - Suspended Session (Monitor)



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### Current Problems awaiting Resolution (Open)

- Identify Process for outlet changes
- Lost transactions - User Set-Up
- Lost transactions - Incomplete Receipts
- Lost transactions - Power Failure
- Lost transactions - Clerk Error
- Lost transactions - BES/OBCS Corruption
- Lost transactions - Other (Cause Unknown & Potential)
- Implementation of 'Major Office' List

### 11. Concerns

Discussions are still on-going to obtain MIS data form the supplier, to the sponsor organisation earlier. This would enable greater analysis, plus an earlier production of internal POCL reporting.

### 12. De-commissioned Post Offices

As of 29 June 1998, Hewelsfield (346523) remains the only de-commissioned outlet - ISDN line still not available at the new telephone exchange.

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### Appendix A

#### ACCOUNTING AND RECONCILIATION MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

- RELEASE 1C STATISTICS AND SETTLEMENT ADJUSTMENTS

Forty four new incidents were received this month.

	4/11/97 to 30/6/98			1/6/98 to 30/6/98			
	Received	Cleared	C/F	B/F	Received	Cleared	Outstanding
DSS Incidents	13	12	1	1	0	0	1
Fallback Incidents	5	5	0	0	0	0	0
Lost Transactions	150	145	5	5	31	25	11
PAS Incident	8	8	0	0	1	1	0
PO Incident	12	12	0	0	6	6	0
POCL Incident	39	37	2	2	2	4	0
Unmatched Encashment	12	11	1	1	4	5	0
TOTAL	239	230	9	9	44	41	12

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Total Number of Transactions from 1 June to 30 June	73,383
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- GENERAL RECONCILIATION PERFORMANCE

An increase in the number of transactions this reporting period can be attributed to a return of customers foregoing payments during the two May Bank Holidays which coincided with schools breaking up at the same time.

- IMPROVEMENTS

This period - ratio of incidents to transactions 1:1682 Last period showed 1: 1504.

- CONCERNS

Lost Transactions form 70% of incidents received this month. Concerns therefore remain and Service Management is specifically tasked towards resolving the underlying causes. An action group has been specially targeted at this for resolution.

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