

## POCL SERVICE MANAGEMENT

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Horizon Programme  
Congo 4  
(ICL Pathway Release 1c)  
Horizon service Report  
Number 6  
Period - May 1998

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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 27 July 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 7 = Thurs. 14 May - Wednesday 20 May 1997.

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### 3. Headlines

Volumetrics for May 1998

• Number of active payment cards =	27,692
• Number of commissioned Post Offices =	204
• Number of Counter Positions =	334
• Offices De-commissioned =	1
• Manual Post Offices supporting foreign encashments =	1,492
• Number of encashments for May =	59,788
• Value of encashments for May =	£ 2,185,324.90
• Number of foreign encashments for May =	866
• Value of foreign encashments for May =	£ 31,666.25
• Average value of each encashment =	£ 36.57

### 4. End to End Business Continuity













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Overall there are no major threats to business continuity, however the 'lost transaction' trend continues which is the key reason for the 'BPS and Transaction Processing' domains being on 'amber' status. The priority 1 level assigned to these problems has focussed the contractor towards actively addressing POCL concerns and providing remedial action.

### 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

#### Lost Transactions (LT)

A baseline has been introduced this month to regularly indicate current levels of LT in an easily readable form. This has been carried out to reflect TP and Service Management concerns. These concerns are that current levels, while presently manageable, may not be acceptable to the business when large volumes of encashments are returned by newly automating post offices. LT indicate, when extrapolated (**for BES only**), volumes that may be startling in the live service. It is worth noting however, that caution needs to be exercised when viewing raw figures as there may be variables and arguments that might effect extrapolations.

Radical improvements need to be made now and the ways that this can be achieved are being formulated by Service Management and ICL Pathway.

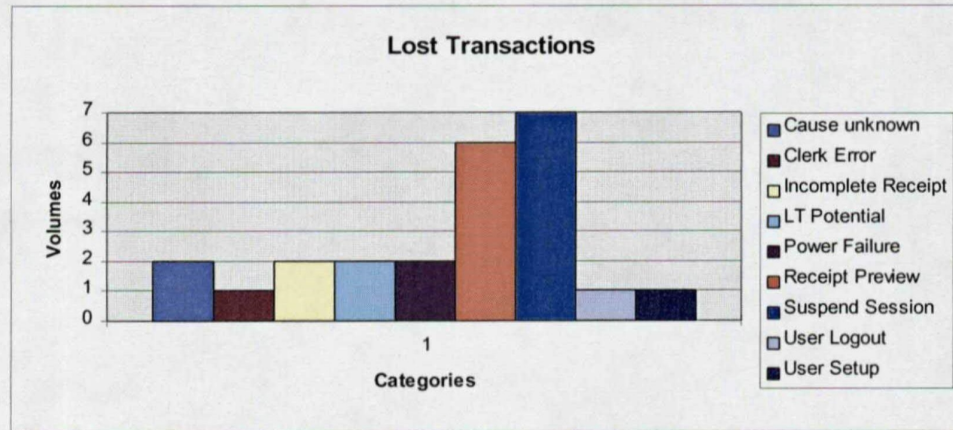
#### Baseline for LT

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

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

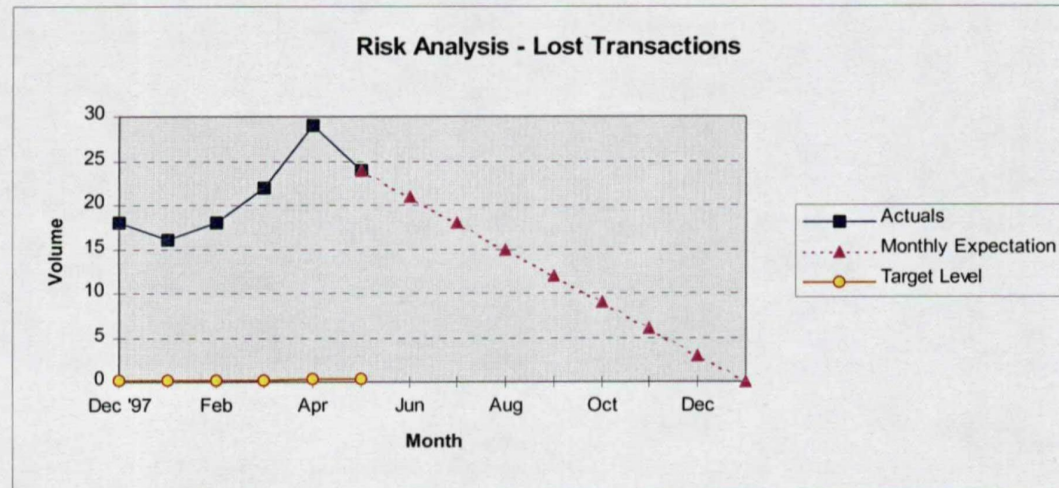
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### Lost Transactions May 1998





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### 5.2 Transaction Processing & ICL Pathway Interface

#### Lost Transactions (LT)

The report this month includes a comment from TP (Kevin Lenihan) to refocus attention on their continuing concerns.

“Whilst I accept that ICL Pathway need to balance time spent resolving the problem of lost transactions, against development of Release 2, it remains a serious issue for POCL. Whether these problems are system or conformance related, the point remains - we need to know and have assurance from Pathway that a similar situation will not occur in Release 2. The level of confidence in the new system could rapidly be undermined if lost transaction problems increase



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in line with volume at current levels. This would not only result in operational problems, but also effect the service provided to customers, clients and our staff / postmasters. The need to isolate the cause of lost transactions must therefore remain paramount."

### 5.3 Fraud & Security

#### Authentication of Users to Helpdesks - One Shot Passwords

For Release 2, agreement on a procedure is imminent. Forecast closure is July 1998.

A review of the temporary procedure for urgent short notice requests from users for One Shot Passwords is to be carried out.

### 5.4 Accounting & Reconciliation

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

## 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".

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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

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Month	Cards Issued to POCL (Cumulative)	Active Cards (Cumulative)	Lost Cards	Stolen Cards	Damaged Cards
Mar '98	29,638	23,579	38	19	25
Apr '98	30,574	26,478	43	30	51
May '98	32,719	27,692	59	28	37

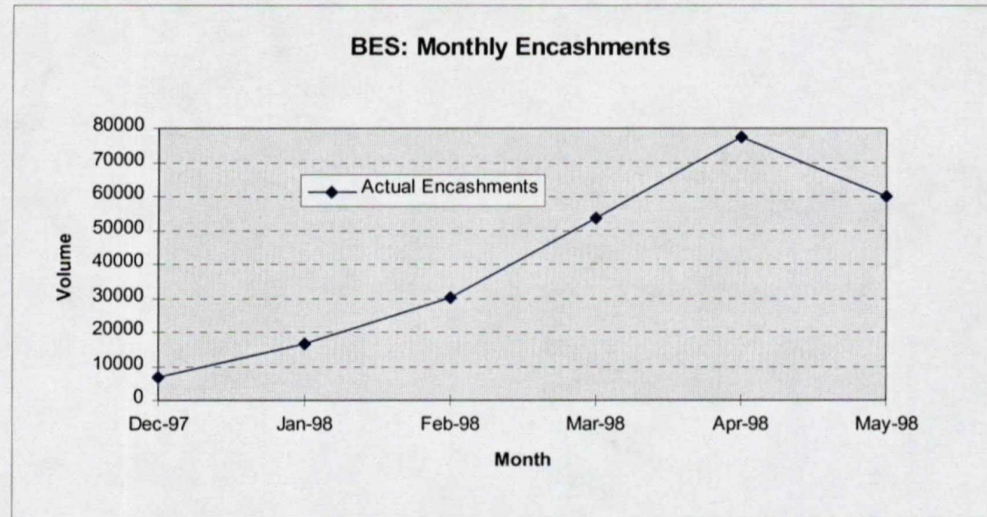
### 6.2 Volumes of BES transactions

These fell sharply this period. Figures imply that the cause of volumes falling was due to customers foregoing encashment of benefits whilst away from their home outlet and taking advantage of schools breaking up for the second of the May bank holiday breaks.

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



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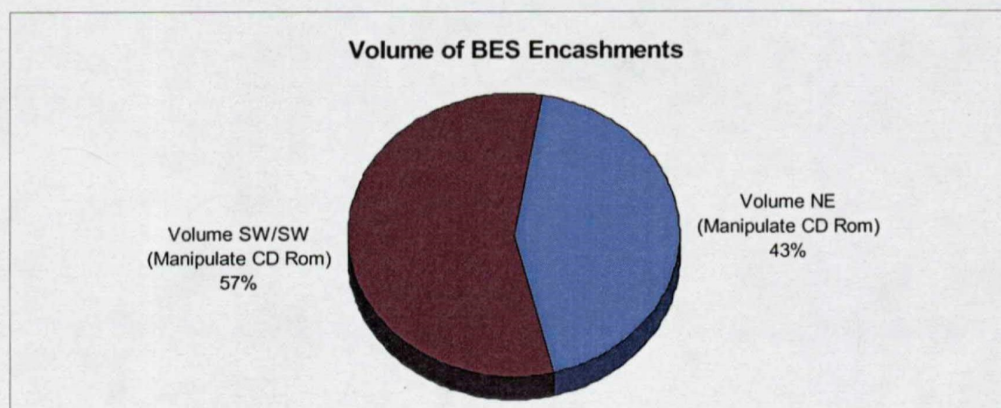
### 6.3 BES Encashments by POCL Region for May 1998 (calendar month)

Region	North East	South Wales South West	Foreign
Volume of Encashments	25845	33943	866
Value of Encashments	£ 748,404.80	£ 1,061,518.30	£ 31,666.25

NB.

Volume and Value of Foreign transactions include automated outlets (204) and non automated outlets (1492).

### 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 May 1998

Payee Type	Number
Beneficiary	57,597
Alternative Payee	2,191
Permanent Agent	0

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

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

NB

The number of expiries is currently 1.1% of the number of encashments for May. The more than double the amount over April is the result of a backlog of expiries being returned this May. The cause was due to problems with counter procedures which did not return expiries automatically to CAPS. A CP has been raised to automate this process in future.



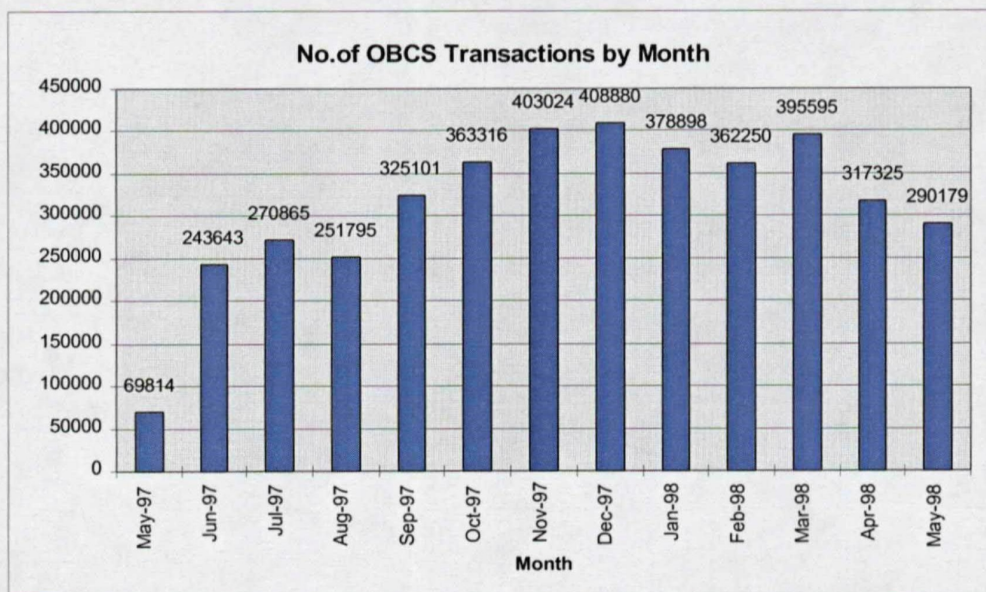
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### 7. OBCS

#### 7.1 No. of OBCS Transactions by Type - May 1998

Encash Local	Encash Foreign	Issue/Receive Local	Issue/Receive Foreign	Re- Direct	Total Transactions
257,265	3,283	29,006	455	170	290,179

#### 7.2 No. of OBCS Transactions by Month



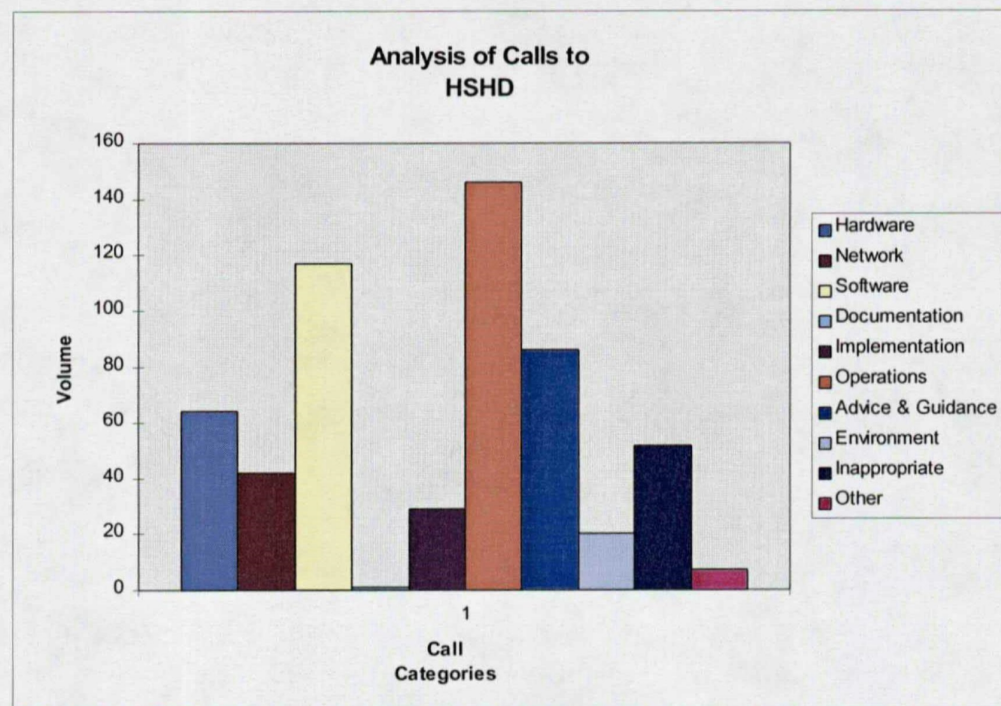
A reducing trend is being shown, as expected, due to customers taking advantage of the holiday season.



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### 8 Horizon System Helpdesk Volumetrics

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





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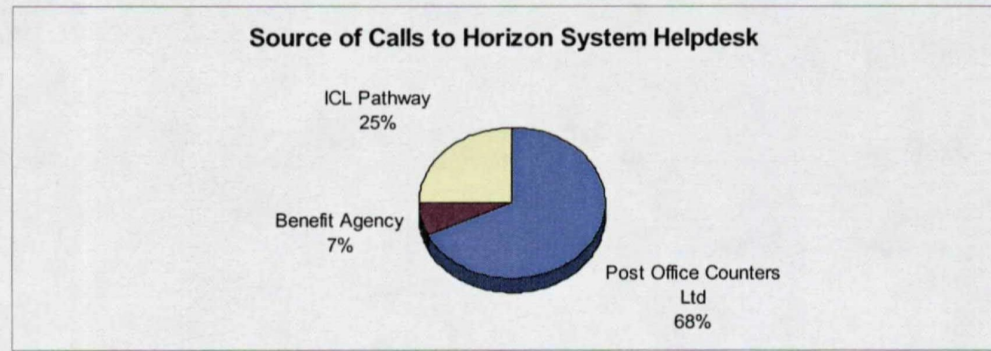
### Breakdown of calls to HSH

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

\* Outlets receiving letters regarding implementation has resulted in an increase in the number of calls in this area.

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### 8.2 Source of Calls to HSH



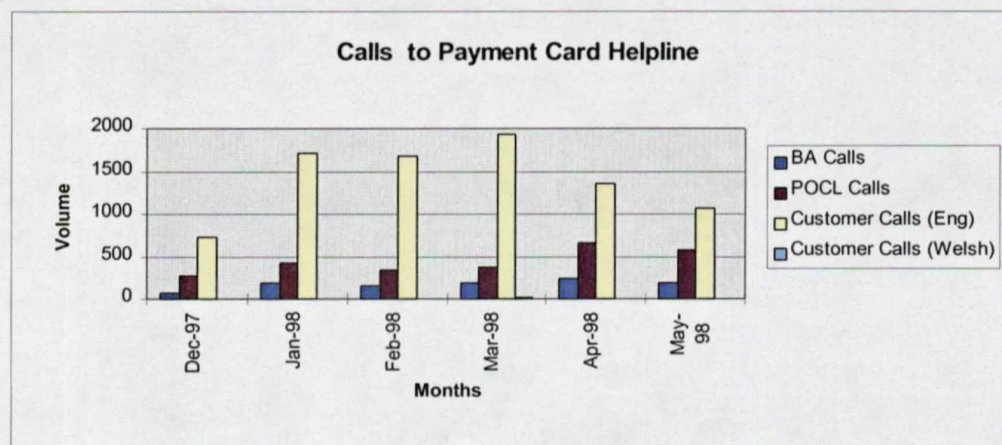
### Breakdown of Calls by Month

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



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### 9. Payment Card Helpline



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

Reduced volumes of calls have been reported. These correspond with the falling number of encashments also seen this month.

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Breakdown of Call Types	POCL	BA	Customer (English)	Customer (Welsh)
Card	65 (17%)	120 (56%)	387 (45%)	0
Payment	461 (68%)	61 (38%)	103 (9%)	0
Other	58 (14%)	13 (6%)	576 (46%)	2 (100%)
Total	584	182	1066	2



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### 10. Key Incidents/ Problems during Release 1c

#### Problems Resolved

- 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

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### Current Incidents in Resolution

- Identify Process for outlet changes
- Lost transactions - card problems
- Lost transactions - printer failure
- Lost transactions - correct permission not assigned to user
- Lost transactions - user exited prematurely
- Lost transactions - system lock

(full details are provided in previous reports).

### 11. Concerns

Timeliness provision of data supplied to POCL is an issue still to be resolved.

### 12. De-commissioned Post Offices

As of 30 May 1998, Hewelsfield (346523) remains the only de-commissioned outlet - ISDN line still not available at the new telephone exchange.

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**POCL SERVICE MANAGEMENT****Appendix A****ACCOUNTING AND RECONCILIATION MANAGEMENT SUMMARY****• RELEASE 1C STATISTICS AND SETTLEMENT ADJUSTMENTS**

	Rel 1c. From 4 /11/97 to 30/4/98			From 1/5/98 to 31/5/98			
	Total	Cleared	C/F	B/F	Received	Cleared	C/F
DSS Incidents	9	9	0	0	4	3	1
Fallback Incidents	5	5	0	0	0	0	0
Lost Transaction	126	120	6	6	24	24	6
PAS Incidents	4	4	0	0	4	4	0
PO Incident	8	6	2	2	4	6	0
POCL Incident	34	21	13	13	4	16	1
Unmatched Encashment	13	8	5	5	0	4	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>9</b>

<i>Cumulative 4 Nov 97 - 30 Apr 98</i>	<b>26</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>9</b>
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Incidents have been reclassified to more accurately reflect the exception types received.

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Total Number of Encashments from 1 May to 31 May	60,185
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- General Reconciliation Performance

There was a 23% decrease in the level of transactions reported this period and good clear up rates were achieved.

- Improvements

This period - ratio of incidents to transactions were 1:1504 (last period 1:1659).

- Concerns

It is evident that Lost transactions still form the greatest proportion of incidents received. Their reduction remains a prime focus for PSM.

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