Transaction Corrections, Debt Reporting and Debt Recovery Review

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January 2009

OBJECTIVES

- Review current ways of working and supporting operating processes in the transaction correction, debt reporting and debt recovery areas.
- Review the impact of the current ways of working and current operating processes in the transaction correction, debt reporting and debt recovery area on the POL Network.
- Analyse and then recommend cost effective improvements to the way the current end-to-end transaction correction, debt reporting and debt recovery operating processes work.

KEY ISSUES - stakeholders

- What is "Settle Centrally"?
- Branch Trading forces TC acceptance
- Inadequate TC evidence/instructions
- Unclear process
- Non conformance not addressed
- New sub postmasters
- Aged/High Value/High Volume TCs

Unclear processes e.g. Ops manual talked of branches being issued with 2 equal and opposite TCs.

FURTHER ISSUES – N.F.S.P.

- DISPUTE BUTTON
- OUT OF CORE HOURS CONTACT
- LOTTERY EVIDENCE NOT SPECIFIC
- SYSTEM ROLLOVER TIME
- HORIZON TC RECEIPT
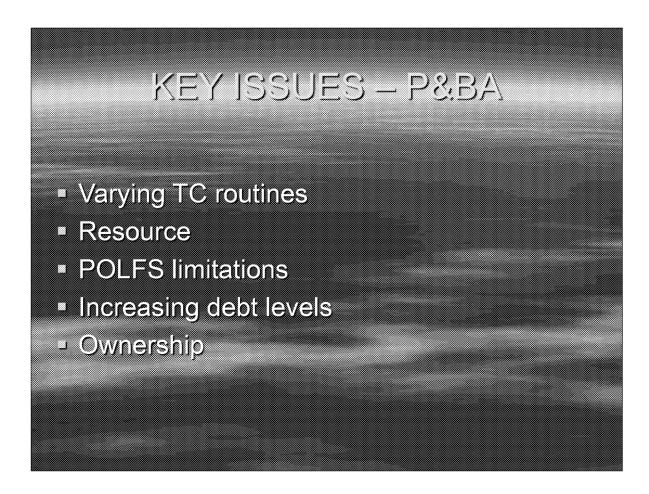- CORE & OUTREACH CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS

Dispute button – facility would be abused. POL believe they have provided evidence to support validity on issue. Dispute simply asks us to do it again. Robust dispute process is answer.
Out of hours – come to later
Lottery – in some cases this would mean 30-40 TCs/month

System rollover – acknowledged but out of scope.

TC receipt – no clear benefit bar subpostmasters claiming for losses.

Consolidated statements – considering along with local multiples/temporary agencies. Robust master data needed to avoid creating an industry. Unclear requirements from C&O. eg branch trading dates.

KEY ISSUES – P&BA

- Varying TC routines
- Resource
- POLFS limitations
- Increasing debt levels
- Ownership

Varying TC routines – one of the clear ideals I had on setting out and from others who I spoke to was consistency. But then most teams have completely different approaches to identifying errors and resolving them – and for good reasons.
Resource – time and money
POLFS – space/access to reference data/different transactions used by different teams.
Debt levels - both current & former.
Ownership – main focus has been on clearing backlog. Whether that helps the bottom line depends on whether debts generated are paid. Equally there is no incentive to seek out compensating TCs.

Key Recommendations – Existing Processes

- Test relevance of TC evidence and resolution instructions.
- Consistent Product IDs on TCs
- Define "Settle Centrally"
- Disputes resolved prior to DFR
- Timely despatch of evidence

Test relevance – by exception. Network/NFSP to provide subpostmasters will illustrations to work through. We can then take back to teams to improve.

Consistent Product IDs – needed for MI

Define Settle Centrally – legally they have accepted the debt. But would a court wear it? Need some assurances around it.

Disputes pre DFR – should not happen but need to lay out their responsibilities as well as ours. How does a dispute become formal? They need to present evidence.

Timely despatch of evidence – wanted to say pre TC issue or seek evidence option. In some areas not possible. Feels reasonable to despatch on day of issue as minimum.

Key Recommendations – Process Changes

- Remove 2nd reminder letter
- Network communications -aged, high value, large volume TCs
- Out of hours contact process
- Worst Branch
- New subpostmasters
- Communications Formats

Recovery – remove one letter in process – not contractual and adds no value. People either pay up or hang out to dfr – may as well get there.
Coms to Network before issuing. Marie to define later.
Out of hours – not recreating helpline. Requests via NBSC/mailbox to set up contacts by exception.
Worst branch – differentiate from risk model. Concept is that branch may cause loads of work to manage – no actual losses but high cost to manage. So far looked at TCs, cash declaration failures, green giro despatches, scratchcard holdings and reversals. Could do with more but data needs to be available. Love to put something in about cheque despatch but data not easily accessible. Will pick out top xx and add on sections that need individual analysis – cheques, complaints. Will not be statistically valid initially. What is anyone going to do with it?
New subpostmasters – ATM team manage new installations in early days. Once trainers have left no one seems to look at the whole picture for early days. Can identify problems early and hopefully stop future losses.
Communications to branches should be addressed either by subpostmaster name or "Subpostmaster

Deliverables – there does not look anything in here that holds significant resource implications so would expect everything to be in place except by exception.