

Royal Mail Group

ROYAL MAIL – CONFIDENTIAL

Record of Tape Recorded Interview

Record of Tape
Recorded Interview

Person
Interviewed Susan Jane RUDKIN (SR)

Place of
Interview Private Residence
Ibstock Post Office© Leicester

Date of
Interview 20th August 2008

Time commenced 13:00 Time concluded 13:44

Duration of 44 minutes Tape reference 045187

interview no

Interviewing Mike Wilcox (MW) Gary Thomas
Officer(s) (GT)

Other persons
present

Exhibit No:
Number of pages: 8

Signature of
interviewing officer
producing exhibit

Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
0.07	MW	Normal introductions including voice identification, legal rights and caution. No legal representation required. Son Dale allowed to sit in as "friend". Explains that interview is regarding the audit shortage and no objection to interview being recorded. GS001 signed and timed at 13:04.
5.05	SR	Background regarding the office in which they have been there 8 years in October. Her husband Michael is the Postmaster in name but he doesn't work in the Po at all. Says there are 5 other part time staff in the Post Office© and 3 HORIZON terminals. Says that the office operates a single till unit and the cash account balance is compiled by her after having assistance from an assistant called Sue Ball. Confirms she does end of day routines with regard to going into the office just before 5 and the end of day despatches done.

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
7.17	SR	<p>" The money is counted in the safe...the girls do that up to a point but I do all the entering"</p> <p>".....only on odd occasions if I get called away do they enter it onto the system"</p> <p>Discussion that by the end of the day the tills are reduced to one working unit so there would be cash in the main safe and cash in one till.</p>
8.20	MW	Asks when the last time someone else would have entered the cash on hand.
	SR	Says Sue entered it the other day.
	MW	Recaps that the Post Office© auditors arrived at the office today and she opened the safe and admitted them to the office. SR then asked to speak to Paul Field in the back room.
		Shows a handwritten report which SR confirms she signed.
9.18	MW	Reads part of the statement regarding the £40,000 shortage.
	MW	Asks why it is short
9.36	SR	<p>"The past couple of years I have been under a lot of pressure...erm.....totally in charge of the retail the Post Office© the sorting office...and we had a robbery which really knocked me for six and I have been frightened most of the time and I have let go of the reigns a lot of the time....not only with the Post Office© but everything...and unfortunately I've let things get out of hand....and there have been mistakes made behind the Post Office©....I've just not known really which way to go.and I haven't told Michael because I felt as if I was letting him down and that once I got myself right I could sort the problems out., but I just haven't been able to and they have escalated to a point where I didn't know which way to turn"</p>
11.00	MW	Asks when robbery was and SR says it was 2 years ago.
	MW	Clarifies she runs the shop the Post Office© and a sorting

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
		office with 14 postman.
	SR	Says she gets up early to make sure the staff and mail arrives on time along with the newsagents work.
	MW	Asks where the money has gone
	SR	"Well because the business as a whole and the staff, the overheads and the business have not been really doing what it should be doing. I've had you know...losses behind the Post Office© counter and then coupled with trying to sort the business out ...erm...difficulties and.....I've just not know which way to turn....."
13.00	MW	Clarifies there have been losses in the Post Office© and under the terms of the contract that should be made good.
13.20	MW	"Is part if this because you haven't been putting the money in to make the losses up?"
	SR	"Yes"
	MW	Asks if trading statement is short would you just inflate the cash to make that right?
13.31	SR	"Yes"
	MW	Also had bills for shop and house gas and electric
	SR	Agrees
	MW	Asks if she has been paying them through the Post Office© without putting the money in.
	SR	"What I have been doing is ...erm.....say borrowed 500 thinking that I can put that back in after the days takings and something has cropped up and I have not been able to do that, so it's everything altogether"
	MW	Explains if she borrowed £500 what has she done with it
	SR	"I've paid it into our account"
		Clarifies it is a Lloyds TSB business account.
	MW	Confirms she took cash into Lloyds TSB in Coalville and paid it in over the counter.
15.07	SR	"No way have I really wanted to defraud the Post Office© or anything...we worked for the Post Office© for a lot of years and.....we are honest people and I just.....the

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		<p>business has everything has just got too much for me...erm managing everything I haven't kept topside of my books and managing the stock and managing the staff and really I know that....I should have asked for help and if I wasn't coping I should have asked for help but I didn't feel as if I could. I felt as if I was letting everybody down and letting Michael down and felt sure that I would be able to sort everything out and I think because I haven't been in the Post Office© whereas I used to work in the Post Office© quite a lot of hours I haven't been able to keep topside of what has gone on behind Post Office© counter although I am here all the time but obviously I.....when I say I don't work full time in the Post Office© I am here full time from six o'clock in the morning until 6 o'clock at night"</p>
16.41	MW	<p>"Do you deal with all the finances in the house then</p>
		<p>.....do you pay all the bills?"</p>
	SR	<p>"I deal with everything"</p>
		<p>Says she always has done this as her husband is the</p>
		<p>Chairman of the negotiating committee for the NFSP.</p>
	GT	<p>Discussion on whether money could have been paid into the</p>
		<p>account over the Post Office© counter. And SR confirms</p>
		<p>this cannot be done for a business account.</p>
	GT	<p>Discussion regarding finances and all bills comes out of</p>
		<p>business account.</p>
		<p>Questions whether suppliers have come into the shop and</p>
		<p>she has used some of the money to pay them</p>
		<p>"Yes"</p>
	SR	
		<p>"Yes"</p>
	GT	<p>Trying to understand how the amount got so high</p>
		<p>Says that it started with the shortages and not being able</p>
		<p>to make them good and when she did pay some back she would</p>
		<p>be short for bills and then taking money in the hope of</p>
		<p>paying back from takings.</p>
		<p>"Because I haven't taken charge and said something it has</p>
	SR	

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		just got out of hand and really.....I have been frightened more than anything because I have always been a really strong person and this last couple of years I haven't slept...initially I couldn't go into the Post Office© and that is where I have kept taking the back seat and I shouldn't have"
20.46	MW	Asks when she thinks she first took Post Office© money for whatever reason.
21.04	SR	"Nothing that really comes to mind other than I did have a big shortage in the Post Office© and though Oh God that is because I am not keeping an eye and I put the money in.....from out of the business....erm....and...basically it is like I say it just seem to escalate"
	MW	Shows concerns regarding losses and her lack of control would mean errors and not shortages. Possibility of staff problems.
22.15	SR	Says she cannot put her finger on anything but a new girl last year made some mistakes.
	SR	"I don't think for one minute that the girls, that anybody out there is doing anything....but they are mistakes and most of them we have been able to resolve...one or two have come back"
23.35	MW	Asks the largest amount taken at any time.
	SR	A Thousand pound
	MW	Confirms it was paid into the bank.
		Explains some of the loss is shortages and some is cash paid into the bank.
		Asks if large deposits on the statement would be all due to Post Office© cash.
	SR	Says that the PO money would be part of the shop takings deposit so not able to differentiate.
24.30	SR	Says that the wage bill is paid by BACs but Post Office© money would not be needed to pay it.
	MW	Asks why she brought up the wage bill

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25.40	SR	Says it comes out of the remuneration
	GT	Confirms she needed to top up sometimes to cover the wage bill
	SR	Says there are good days and bad days in the retail side.
	MW	Asks if she had taken any cash for paying suppliers.
	SR	Says not cash.
28.50	MW	Confirms all money taken was paid into the bank account.
		Discussion on any car purchases and she says that her Mother gave her the money for that.
		Discussion on when started and not started right after robbery. Whether the staffing was too high and unaffordable.
	SR	Says that Michael has been away more and more and she has let him do his own thing and things have got out of hand and she couldn't talk about it.
		Discussion on new member of staff taken on to replace what Michael used to do.
30.29	MW	Discussion regarding cash declaration and how she knew how much would be short.
	SR	" Well as it's gone along obviously I have made a note because you think well I need to pay that back in....so you make a note of what has been taken out andso therefore I knew how much to....."
	MW	".....so you kept a running total"
	SR	"Yes"
	MW	Have you still got that piece of paper of that note you kept?"
31.21		"Where would that be?"
	SR	"erm...that's behind the Post Office® counter"
	MW	Asks if when she did a cash declaration she added on the amount from the piece of paper
	SR	"Yes"
	MW	Clarifies the other option could have been a balance snapshot to tell you how much it was out.

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Tape counter times	Person speaking	Text
32.06	SR	"As time has gone on I have had to do a balance snapshot and check the figure and then write that figure down so I know what to put in"
	MW	Explains that any difference between the balance snapshot and her piece of paper would be a genuine shortage. which would have been added on to the paper.
	SR	"Yes"
33.10	GT	Clarifies that any difference between the snapshot and paper record must be added on the running total as well.
	MW	Asks if she ever made any shortages good
	SR	"yes I tried the best way I could"
	MW	"What the smaller amounts?"
	SR	"Yes"
		Confirms larger amounts would be added on to the piece of paper.
		Discussion whether anyone else could have taken any money and SR says she believes it is just mistakes. Staff are good with the paperwork
34.41	MW	"Did anyone else know on the counter what you were doing?"
	SR	"No"
	MW	Asks to explain how Sue declared the cash a few days ago.
	SR	"She would just declare what I tell her"
	MW	"So did you tell her there was x number of pounds in the safe. Did you tell her there was £40,000 more than what was in there"
34.59	SR	"Yes or I would override it and put the difference thing..."
	MW	Explains that if the higher figure is declared when Sue did it then it implicates her.
	SR	Says she would have overwritten the figure.
	SR	Says the cash sheets show the correct figure but the inflated figure is put into the HORIZON system.
36.00	GT	Queries if Sue would know the shortage when she did the cash declaration.

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37.10	SR	Confirms that she wouldn't know how to get the difference as she just did the cash declaration.
	MW	Recaps money paid into account which has helped pay for Shop bills, wage bill household bills.
	MW	"Who did that money belong to?"
	SR	"It belonged to the Post Office@"
	MW	"Did anybody give you permission to use that money?"
	SR	"No"
	MW	"Did you ask anyone if you could use it?"
	SR	"No"
	MW	"What do you think they would have said if you did ask them?"
37.55	SR	"Well obviously no"
	MW	Explains that the money has gone and asks if she is in a position to repay it.
	SR	Says that not at the moment but now that Michael knows they will be making arrangements.
	MW	Says the audit shortage is currently £43856:89 of which £43761:17 was cash.
38.55	MW	Shows cash declaration and SR confirms it is the cash figure of £125874:68.
	MW	"Is that the actual amount that was in the safe at that time?"
	SR	"No"
	MW	The reason is there is £43000 missing.
	MW	Asks if these are true states of the account at any time?
39.47	SR	"No"
	MW	Asks if she understands that by taking that money she has stolen it from the Post Office@?
	SR	Nodding head
	SR	"Yes....but it wasn't my intention to do so in the first place"
	SR	
40.54		Discussion that Michael last worked behind the counter about 18 months ago and he had no knowledge of what was

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42.55	MW	happening. Explains that they have worked together as a team for the last 26 years Says she was so ashamed that she couldn't tell him Concludes that each time a trading statement is completed it is not accurate. Explains the Post Office© w ants it's money back and asks for permission to search premises
44.14	SR	Nothing to add or clarify Tape seal signed and tape stopped at 13:44