OPERATIONAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT

BA/POCL Programme

CONGO 4
(ICL Pathway Release 1c)

Full Business Continuity Status Report
(The Full Monty)
Number 1

Period - November 1997

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1. Introduction

This report is produced by the PDA Operational 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 give rise to considering a suspension of the Congo 4 roll-out or regression from ICL Pathway services.

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

NB   Any comments about the content, format or value of the report would be welcomed by the PDA Operational Service Management team at Terminal House.

2. End to End Business Continuity

○

○

●

There are no matters that need escalating for consideration of suspending the Congo 4 roll-out and/or regressing from ICL Pathway services.

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3. Report Format

3.1 ABBREVIATIONS

BA   Benefit Agency
CAW   Cash Account Week for Post Offices
CSU   Card Support Unit
HSH   Horizon System Helpdesk
IGL   Initial Go-Live
OBCS Order Book Control Service
OSM   Operational Service Management
PCHL Payment Card Helpline
POCL Post Office Counters Ltd
RLM   Regional Liaison Manager

3.2 POST OFFICE CAW

Post Office cash account weeks run from Thursday to Wednesday.
i.e: Week 32 = Thurs 30 Nov - 5th Dec 1997.

4. Headlines

4.1 Volumetrics.

- Payment cards issued to date =   (Data not available at present)
- Payment card customers =   4,294
- Offices migrated to release 1c =   205
- Offices de-commissioned (not migrated to Release 1c) =   6
- Manual Foreign Encashment support Post Offices =   1,492
- Average number of encashments per week, since Release 1c =   687
- Average value of each encashment =   £40

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5. Core Elements of the Live service

Infra-structure	BES	OBCS	PAS	CMS	ABED	Fraud & Security	Account ing
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
○	○	●	○	●	○	○	●

5.1 INFRASTRUCTURE

5.1.1 ICL Pathway are continuing their investigations and testing of the release 1c printers, OSM are awaiting a further update.

5.2 BES

5.2.1 With reference to transactions being lost after printer failure. ICL Pathway have investigated their system in a testing environment and have concluded that after the user produces a manual receipt and 'exits out', the system returns back to the transaction to be committed. However, OSM believe in the 'live' environment the system actually return to the main menu and does not prompt the user to commit the transaction. OSM will seek further clarification.

5.2.2 Incidents have arisen this week where payment cards have been incorrectly issued to customers in five Post Offices in the NE Region, this has left the customers with unactivated cards.

ICL Pathway, CAPS and OSM have contained the situation by identifying and isolating the possible customers concerned (eleven), and making arrangements for new cards to be distributed to them.

OSM has produced and arranged distribution of a special notice to ALL 205 Post Offices operating release 1c.

The CSU has made contact with the said customers, explaining the situation and the impact on them.

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OSM has logged the incidents on the problem management database with purpose of identifying the route causes.

5.3 PAS

5.3.1 ICL Pathway are considering improvement opportunities to various aspect of the Bath Road duplicate payment problem;

- monitoring of communications with outlets;
- PAS acceptance of duplicate transactions harvested on the same day;
- inclusion of these in CBoS and the CPCS and ABED interfaces;
- PAS validation to minimise file rejections by CPCS;

5.4 CMS

5.4.1 The PUNs for IGL card swap-out were scheduled for distribution in week commencing 1st December and is expected to continue for the duration of December.
The reason for the IGL cards to be replaced are:-

- PAN checksum incorrect.
- Livery change on Card reverse (Rollout Card is different from that for IGL)
- Word change on Card reverse (Helpline telephone number, Freepost return address & referral contact for information about the benefit).

To date there has not been any problems with the card replacement process, OSM will obtain further update at the end of December 1997.

5.5 ABED

5.5.1 There has been no new problems to report this week. All outstanding concerns / problems continue to be monitored and awaiting resolution via the problem management process.

5.6 Fraud and Security

5.6.1 Proposals for the authentication of users to the Payment Card has been submitted to the parent organisations, however there was need for further clarification from ICL Pathway.

5.7 Accounting & Reconciliation

5.7.1 Please see appendix 'A' for summary on accounting & reconciliation.

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6. Offices Migrated to Release 1c

6.1 The table below totals the number of offices migrated to release 1c per day.

Date	No. of Offices
01/11/97	9
02/11/97	1
05/11/97	2
07/11/97	20
10/11/97	19
11/11/97	20
12/11/97	16
13/11/97	17
14/11/97	21
17/11/97	21
18/11/97	20
19/11/97	19
20/11/97	20
Total	205

NB: The 10 IGL offices were the first to migrate.

7. BES: Volumetrics

7.1 Definitions for the purpose of this report.

A transaction is a broad description of a customer session.

A payment is the Child Benefit allowance money due for one week, or for four weeks (in 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.

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7.2   Payment Card Customers.

BES: Number of Payment Card Customers against Forecast

(Chart: Number vs Post Office Cash Account Week 32–37, with Forecast Payment Card Customers and Actual Payment Card Customers)
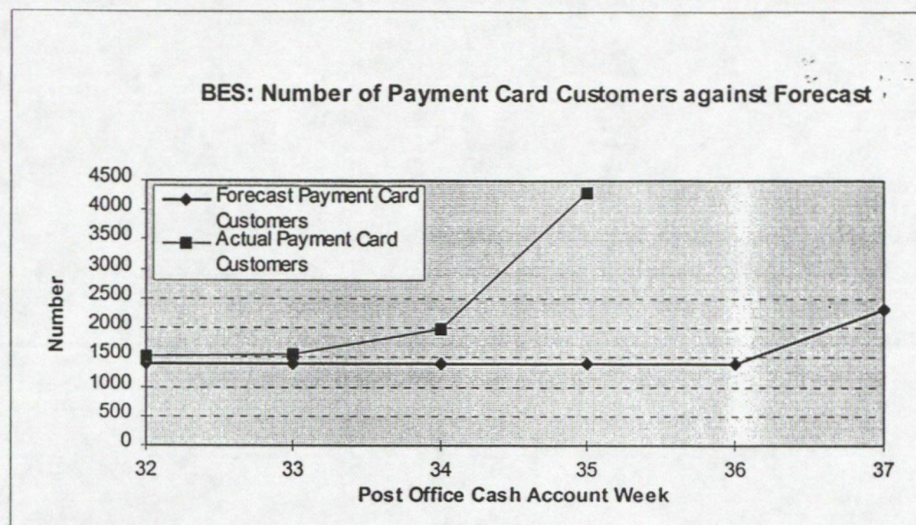
7.3.   BES Transactions against forecast since release 1c.

BES:Actual Transactions against Forecast

(Chart: Volume vs Cash Account Week No's 32–37, with Forecast No. of Payments, Actual No. of Payments, Forecast No. of Encashments, Actual No. of Encashments)
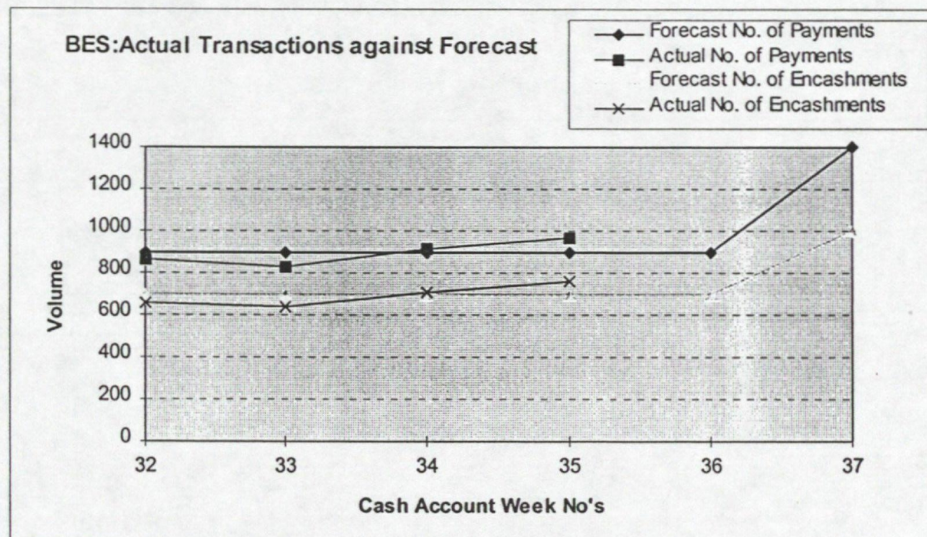
NB: It was forecast that payment cards would take four weeks to be issued, it transpires that the process is quicker and therefore, BES transactions are being performed from CAW 34.

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7.3.1 BES Transactions this period

Transaction	CAW 32	CAW 33	CAW 34	CAW 35
Number of payments	857	823	916	964
Customer encashments	656	633	705	757
Value (£)	26,089.80	25,659.65	27,728.55	29,982.85

7.4 BES transactions for the last 21 week period.
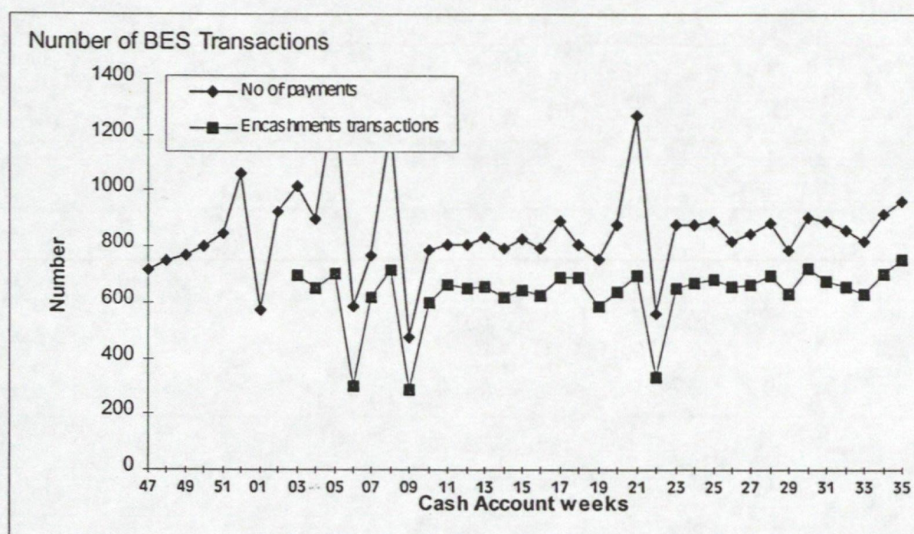
NB: The purpose of this graph is to graphically show trends between payments and encashments over the given period. (week 32 is when migration to release 1c started)

7.5 Stop / Expired BES Payments

7.5.1 Stops & Expired BES Payments this period

	CAW 32	CAW 33	CAW 34	CAW 35
Stops	12	5	17	9
Expired	3	2	2	3
Total: Stops & Expired	15	7	19	12

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7.6   BES Foreign Encashment Transactions

Problems with ICL Pathways data warehouse has prevented data being available in time for this report.

8.   OBCS Volumetrics

8.1   ICL Pathway were not requested to provide OBCS data for Release 1c. The PDA has recognised that there is still a requirement for this data and are in consultation with ICL Pathway to produce this information. As an interim measure, data can be extracted from invoices provided by ICL Pathway on a monthly basis, however Novemeber's invoice has not been received in time for this report.

9.   Helpdesks Volumetrics

9.1   Horizon System Helpdesk

9.1.1   POCL calls to HSH.
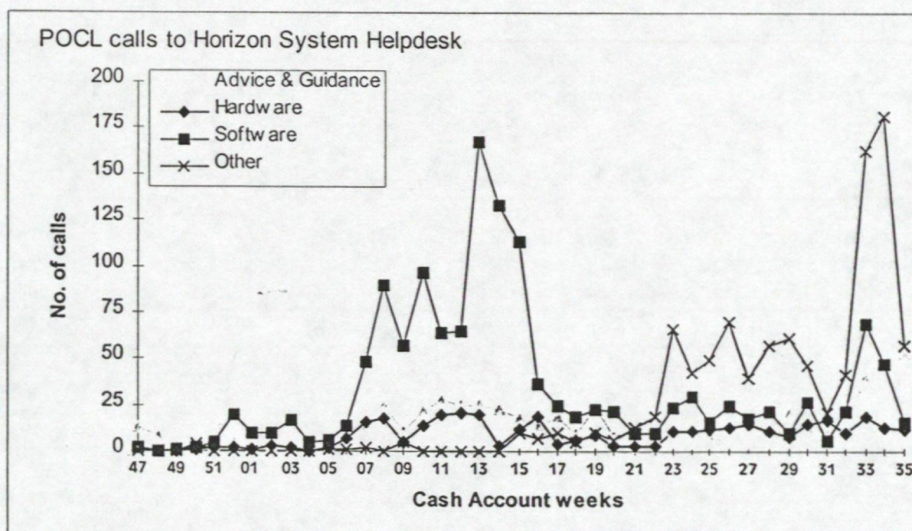
NB: Data relates to the past 21 weeks to graphically view trends. (migration started from CAW 32)

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9.1.2   Call this period.

	CAW 32	CAW 33	CAW 34	CAW 35
Advice & Guidance	14	40	47	53
Hardware	10	19	13	12
Software	22	69	47	16
Other	41	163	181	57
Installation	15	103	120	25
Documentation	0	0	0	0
Environment	1	4	6	6
Inappropriate	9	4	4	3
Network	12	44	42	6
Operations	4	8	9	17

NB: The lower six categories are a breakdown the main category (Other)

9.1.3   Calls to the HSH have increased since CAW 33, this is in line with migration to release 1c. Inparticular, calls relating to installation increased during CAW 33 and 34. These were the two main weeks for migration to release 1c (see 6.1).

9.2   BA calls to HSH

9.2.1
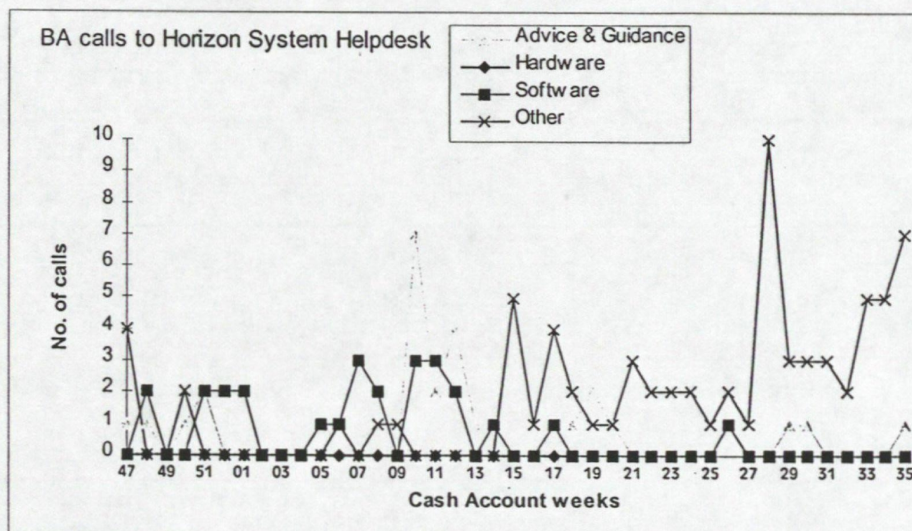
NB: Data relates to the past 21 weeks to graphically view trends.

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9.2.2 Calls this period

Area	CAW 32	CAW 33	CAW 34	CAW 35
Advice & Guidance	0	0	0	1
Hardware	0	0	0	0
Software	0	0	0	0
Other	2	5	5	7

NB: Since release 1c, BA calls to HSH remain minimal.

9.3 Payment Card Helpline

9.3.1
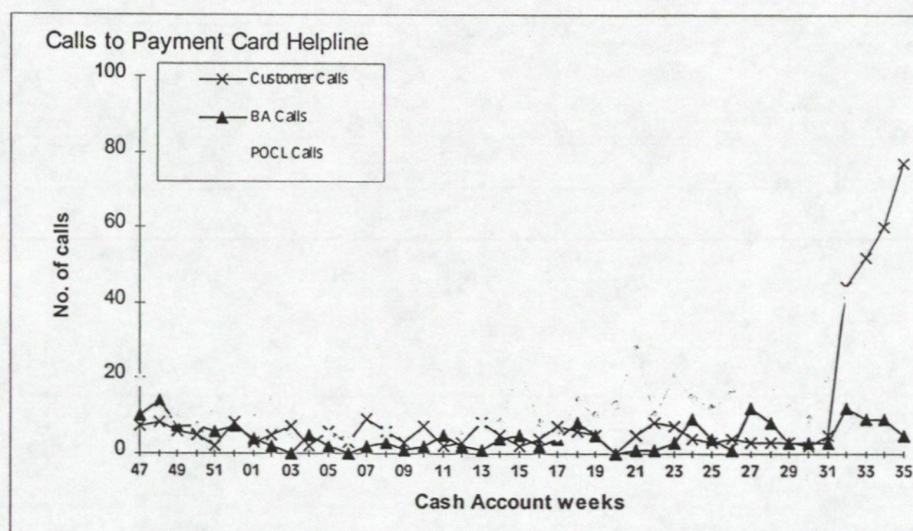
NB: Data relates to the past 21 weeks to graphically view trends

9.3.2 Calls this period.

Call source	CAW 23	CAW 24	CAW 25	CAW 26
Customer	44	52	60	77
BA	12	9	9	5
POCL	43	30	44	41

NB: As with the HSH, call to PCHL have increased as expected.

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10.   Key Incidents / Problems during the period of November

- 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.

11.   De-commissioned Post Offices

11.1   The following 6 Post offices have been de-commissioned from the 'Horizon' and did not migrate to release 1c.

1. Birdlip (SW/SW)
2. Bristol Road (SW/SW)
3. Gloucester Street (SW/SW)
4. Lawrence Hill (SW/SW)
5. Salisbury Avenue (SW/SW)
6. Westfield (SW/SW)

11.2   There has been 2 Post Offices temporarily closed during this period, both have now been re-commissioned.

1. Felton (NE)
2. St.Andrews (SW/SW)

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APPENDIX 'A'

EXTRACT FROM BA/POCL PDA RECONCILIATION - OPERATIONAL REPORT

SUMMARY OF RECONCILIATION FOR THE PERIOD

IGL

Two IGL incidents were carried forward for which ICL Pathway provided credits on its October invoice, These incidents were closed on 12 November.

Release 1c Statistics

There were 10 new reconciliation incidents representing nine cases - one was prematurely cleared and a new incident raised when new evidence emerged. Eight were cleared and two remain open, one related to a registered "Known Problem".

Exception Type & Exception Number		New		Not Cleared*	
		No.	£s	No.	£s
Authorisation of a non-existent Payment	(30)	3	87.15	1	29.05
Stop not confirmed to CPCS ("marooned")	(330)	1	60.15	1	60.15
Transaction data lost - BES time-out	(465)	3	81.35		
Transaction data lost - counter printer failure	(523)	2	33.15		
Transaction data lost - user set-up error	(530)	1	38.05		
Totals		10	299.83	2	89.20

* Cleared = reconciliation work complete but not closed (perhaps any credits due not yet issued).
Not cleared = reconciliation work (including data and financial resolution) not complete.

General Reconciliation Performance

General reconciliation performance was good. In particular, recovery of lost transaction data was prompt and effective.

Improvements

Improvements are being made to reconciliation processes:
- all parties now get notification of all incidents and a weekly summary;
- forms and reports are being revised to improve text and cross references;
- original encashment id to be recorded for lost transaction data recovery;
- links to associated "software" incidents for BA COPS are under discussion.

Concerns

The duplicate payment on 17 November in Bath Road Post Office included a series of compound errors and is a "Problem". Resolution of the reconciliation and data aspects is decided but not yet complete.

A software fix is scheduled for next month to clear and prevent "marooned stops".

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A system fault at the Payment Card Helpline caused a duplicate encashment that was compounded by a failure. This caused loss of transaction data that was recovered.

Incidence of transaction data loss is much higher than forecast for the 10 active post offices. Recovery has worked well, but there is a need to review causes.

The overall exception rate (1 per 310 encashments) is a concern if scaled up to full Release 1c volumes (factor 25) and an issue if scaled to full roll-out (factor thousands).