

Witness Name: Nigel Polglass

Exhibits: None

Dated: 31 October 2025

THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF NIGEL POLGLASS

I, **Nigel Polglass**, will say as follows: -

INTRODUCTION

1. This witness statement is made following the request of the Chair of the Inquiry, and in response to the Inquiry's letter dated 2 October 2025, to set out the changes and improvements to processes that Whistl have implemented since becoming aware of the issues raised by the Inquiry.

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR CHANGE

Communication of Requirements for Prohibited and Restricted Items

2. During October we have sent a communication to all of our customers reminding them of their obligations relating to dangerous, prohibited and restricted items.
3. We are also currently carrying out a review of the presentation of our information relating to dangerous, prohibited and restricted items to see if it can be improved. We intend to introduce any changes by the end of 2025.

4. In the new year, we will send a further reminder to our customers. This will start a process in which customers are reminded every 6 months of their obligations relating to dangerous, prohibited, restricted goods. There will also be an opportunity to provide a reminder when there is an update to any of the rules relating to such items.
5. This process of communication is accompanied by the changes we are making in relation to our understanding of the items being sent through our network (see paragraphs 8 to 11 below). Our account managers will review the product range with their customers to ensure that the customers understand the rules to which the items are subject.

Manual Handling in Depots

6. As I mentioned in my first statement, due to the high level of automation, there are relatively few opportunities for human intervention in the movement of a parcel through our depots. However, at the end of September we carried out reminder training sessions with all staff in our parcel depots about handling, and dealing with, dangerous and restricted items, including bladed items.
7. In the new year we will begin a process of regular training updates so that the operations and account management staff are reminded, and up to date, on the subject of dangerous and restricted items. The timing of this process will also allow us to assess the phase 1 report from the Inquiry and consider the further changes that are needed based on the findings.

Identification of Products being sent by customers

8. During our review following the Inquiry's information request, we noted that we discuss with the customer the types of products that a customer will send prior to agreeing a contract. But, after the initial assessment, we do not request an update for any changes in the products being sent. Where we have contracted with fulfilment houses, parcel brokers or resellers of our services, the types of product may change repeatedly as the businesses of their underlying clients change or they take on new clients.

9. Therefore, we are introducing a process to obtain on a continuous basis, information about the goods being sent by our customer. This will assist with the following matters:
 - a Creating greater visibility within the supply chain of the types of items going into, and being sent through, our parcel network. This will provide more information to final mile carriers. In addition, and particularly where supply chains are more convoluted, pushing these obligations up the supply chain towards the sender of the parcel should create behaviours where businesses (i) think more about what types of items are being sent and what they need to do to send them, and (ii) can reduce the risk of inadvertently sending prohibited items or mishandling restricted items.
 - b Giving an opportunity for our account managers to remind a customer looking to send dangerous or restricted items of the carriers who will carry such items and where to find the guidance and sending requirements. If a customer is considering sending prohibited items, they can prevent them from doing so. If a customer was found to have sent prohibited items inadvertently, then it would receive a warning. If the customer was found to have done so again, then we would end the contract.
10. In terms of implementing this process, during October we provided our sales and account management teams with the new requirements for onboarding customers (understanding the types of items they are intending to send) and for creating an overall record of all items being sent by Customers which they will need to refresh with the customer on a quarterly basis (and customers will be asked to notify us proactively of changes to its mix of products).
11. The speed of obtaining a full understanding of all products will depend on the speed and accuracy with which customers respond to our enquiries, and we anticipate that the overall process will take some months to complete. However, in November, we will be making some changes to our internal systems which require the salespeople to insert the product types to be sent into the system in order to obtain pricing information for the customer for our services. This will also make product type a part of the commercial

terms in our contract with customers and so any breach (for instance sending other products) will also trigger potential contractual consequences.

Contract with Evri

12. The Inquiry raised a question about the status of our contract with Evri. Despite there being no written contract which documents all of the terms relating to the provision of services by Evri, we did provide our customers with the links to dangerous, prohibited and restricted items from the Evri's website.
13. We have been in negotiations with Evri during the course of October and both we and Evri anticipate getting to a signed contract in November.
14. In addition, we held a number of sessions with Evri in order to discuss, and work out, practical operational ways in which we can work together to deal with any dangerous, prohibited or restricted items (including bladed items) that come into our parcel networks. Those discussions are intended to result in a documented operational process between Whistl and Evri. We will be carrying out the same process with our other carriers.

Technical changes

15. In my first witness statement to the Inquiry, I suggested that senders could be required to include the Product Harmonised Code (PHC) in the shipping data for all items. This would (i) enable our carrier management system to refuse to ship a prohibited item and (ii) allow sortation machines to reject any item which included a PHC which included restricted or dangerous goods so that they can be handled separately.
16. While the technology to do this does exist, this step would require development for both the customer as well as the carrier which, if it applied to all products, might be extensive and take a long time to implement. In addition, it would need to be an industry-wide initiative as otherwise customers will simply avoid parcel businesses which required this step, not because they are doing anything unlawful, but because it will add to their IT costs and to their administration time.

17. We are starting to design a change in our systems which will allow the system to recognise any product information which is inserted by the sender at the time that the sender creates a shipping label. This change is intended to create a notification which will go to the sender's Whistl account manager who can then review what the item is and whether any further or additional action needs to be taken (for example if the item is prohibited or restricted).

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signed: **Signature**
Dated: 31 October 2025

ANNEX 1

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