

Notes from the Independent Assurance Panel Meeting held on the 16th October

Alan Hughes	Chair person	Annette Vernon	CIO
John Clarke		Xxxx Xxxx	IPS
Fergie Williams		Xxxx Xxxxxx	IPS
Malcolm Mitchell		Xxxxx Xxxx	IPS
Xxxxxx Xxxxxx		Karen Farquharson	Proving Services
Xxxx Xxxx			
Xxxx Xxxxxx	Secretary		
Xxxx Xxxx			

Update from Chair – Alan Hughes

Alan briefed the panel that in response to the gap identified between resources and aspirations, the Programme had been comprehensively reviewed from bottom up and a new, smaller, portfolio of projects resulted. This portfolio had been reviewed at the instigation of Annette by Proving Services Ltd to check its viability.

Annette explained that the current business case for the programme was set at high level making it difficult to map benefits against costs of specific projects. Annette explained that there were four key objectives that projects were aiming to address:

- Making borders more secure/ Immigration control
- Criminal detection
- Prevention of fraud and Public service efficiency
- Protecting the vulnerable

The Panel asked if there were not many other benefits of reliable identity validations for public and private sectors. Annette advised the panel that in the light of the concerns highlighted by the Proving Services Review there were some specific issues the Panel could advise upon:

- If the whole portfolio of projects is not achievable, what could give? (bearing in mind that other activities were still to be added.)
- How to assess the justifications that support the proposals

There was some discussion over activities still to be added. Annette advised this included, for instance, whether DWP-CIS biographic (not biometric) data could be used to accelerate and validate the ID database.

The IAP asked about dependencies between projects suggesting this would require careful handling when identifying things to 'give' in the portfolio. Doubts were raised over whether the dependencies that had been suggested were dependencies in the true sense.

Proving Services Review presentation – Cranfield team – Karen Farquharson

Karen Farquharson introduced herself and briefly covered the Proving Services history and experience before explaining the Proving Services methodology to the panel. Karen then took the panel through a presentation on the findings of the review. Karen acknowledged that the review took place at a fluid time in the creation of the Portfolio.

The IAP asked if Proving Services had seen all the expected documentation on the projects. Karen explained that this had not been possible in every case. She also advised that the quality of documents seen varied considerably explaining that overall the team had relied on interviews with project managers and sponsors for information.

Common findings across the IPS portfolio of projects were that there was a lack of benefits analysis and poor justification for projects. IPS projects also tended to be too focused on methods not outcomes.

Karen advised that the review team had validated their findings with project managers and sponsors. She advised there appeared to be some accountability issues with regard to the projects reviewed. Karen explained how the portfolio analysis showed the status of projects to be similar suggesting systemic issues affecting the whole portfolio rather than problems that were features of any particular project.

There was some discussion around the overall conclusions which included

- The contribution that each project was making was not always clear
- There was not a route map through from individual project benefits to the main objectives of the Programme.
- Many projects referred to the overall programme business case to support the project's own case. There was little reference to why specific projects needed to be

undertaken which contributed to the lack of clarity with regards to objectives and benefits. The Business case did not define adequately the critical success factors.

- There were too few links in documentation between strategic drivers, benefits, business change and measures.
- A comparison was presented between best practice and the IPS portfolio review results. This highlighted the IPS lacked benefits analysis and clear, documented business/process change implications.

IAP agreed that IPS needed to develop a clear road map and needed to define the projects. They also advised that the IPS needed to set targets for outcomes in order to measure the benefits of the projects.

Discussion on Proving Services review with Annette Vernon, Xxxxx Xxxxx, Xxxx Xxxxx and Cranfield team

Annette Vernon rejoined the meeting and reiterated her earlier questions to the IAP: in short, how to go forward. Annette also sought advice on how/what to do to the Business Case to demonstrate the individual project contributions.

IAP asked about the scope of the business case. The IAP advised that they felt the IPS programme may lack sufficient detail on purpose noting that there is a movement away from delivering an ID card to a broader goal to improve Identity Management across Government. Annette confirmed the Programme was to deliver a number of benefits.

Annette explained that her priority now would be to re-appraise the portfolio given the concerns identified by the Proving Services Ltd reviews. Once this process has been completed IAP will be sent this for comment and to challenge. There was some discussion over the changes needed to meet international and parliamentary commitments and also on the needs of other stakeholders.

Action – When the information on the review of the portfolio is available it is to be sent to the IAP in preparation for discussion.

IAP concerns and advice

The IAP advised good practice would be that a consistent set of objectives were worked to. These should be used to challenge each project in terms of the cost and value or savings they will deliver.

The IAP said they were encouraged by the critical approach being undertaken by IPS. The panel referred to previous concerns they had raised over the previous solution for ID cards explaining that they had felt this approach to be too ambitious, had too many variables, had an overly long timescale and was inadequately defined. Overall the panel were reassured by the current approach but were concerned with the lack of quantification of benefits, changes to scope, unclear communication of purpose and that there doesn't appear to be an overall picture of how projects contribute to each other and the end goals.

IAP stated that their role was to provide a degree of oversight and review of the ID cards Programme they advised that they found it difficult to offer assurance given there was insufficient clarity about the detail of the purpose and the benefits of activities. In addition they felt they were being drawn into helping define processes and purposes.

The IAP also noted that the programme was trying to quantify benefits even though the size of the problems they were to address were not quantified. Thus making a net benefit case impossible to show. The panel felt the IPS was being asked to produce solutions without the ability to mandate their use because the potential beneficiaries were spread across government and not within the IPS control.

IAP advised that IPS should construct a road map of the services to be delivered in each year i.e. 2007,08, 09 etc. For each stage there should be an explanation of what functionality this would release or how it developed or supported essential infrastructure. The IAP suggested that an analysis of the likely benefits should assist in sequencing this road map which should acknowledge any issues that might affect the delivery of an ID card in 2009.

Against every project an individual should be appointed as accountable with acknowledgement that the individual accountable may not always be in IPS. IAP advised that it may be useful to adopt a typically commercial stance whereby decision makers reject/refuse to resource projects when they have no sponsor, no budget or no clear definition of scope and objectives.

IAP advised of a budgetary-timescale tension that needed to be addressed: the programme was committed to a goal of providing everyone with an ID card by 2020. At this point a high proportion of the benefits could be realised. But programme resourcing decisions were made on the basis of perceived benefits within each CSR budget round. This is clearly

incompatible and is evidence that wider Government issues were affecting efficient delivery, by IPS but outside the IPS's control.

IAP advised that in terms of function all of the projects should be able to deliver one, several or all of the following:

- Greater certainty of the identification of the individual
- Additional information on the person identified e.g. a biometric
- Easier enquiry of the identity
- Improvement in efficiency of other processes

IAP recognised that in addition some projects might not deliver any of these directly but would contribute to the preparatory infrastructure. IAP advised that those projects that would deliver any of the four deliverables described above should be evaluated against different criteria than those would deliver preparatory infrastructure.

The IAP advised that:

1 – a project should be able to assert the functionality it would deliver so that the users could identify benefits arising from this enhanced functionality.

2 - To achieve this each project would have to spend time with each beneficiary/user to work out the detail of the benefits - particularly efficiency gains. This would allow a greater specification of functionality interventions which would, in turn would help better define the project.

3 - all Infrastructure/ Investment projects would need to be evaluated on whether they were the best of all the alternative approaches to deliver the capability.

4 - by evaluating projects in this way the outcome should enable identification of projects whose value is derived from improved identity management irrespective of ID cards (and so would deliver benefits in a specified CSR periods) and those that are about longer term investments and delivery of an ID card.

5 - it should be possible to meet with other government department's and have discussions with them that would identify what improvement in ID management would give them the biggest benefit in the shortest time. This would help IPS to establish priorities. The IAP also suggested that there may be elements that would come out of that process that could inform the route map.

6 - The programme team need to concentrate their efforts spending time constructing the right approach for this evaluation and persuading others of that evaluation process rather than trying to appraise all the costs and benefits themselves and constructing the portfolio itself. In particular it could not be the IPS CIO's responsibility to solve structural problems in Government but rather to deliver to a clear remit.

Panel Business

The Panel revisited their concerns over their current Terms of Reference and agreed to a review following the completion of the review of the projects. The Panel provisionally agreed their schedule as:

Date	Time	
13 th November	11am-2pm	Likely to be phone
13 th December	10am – 4pm	Face to Face

Xxxxx XXXXXXX,
October 2006