

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: [freedom-of-information-request@dpw.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dpw.gsi.gov.uk)

Date: 25 April 2017

FOI ref: Fol 5067

ICO reference – FS50637830

Dear Mr Slater,

Thank you for your clarified Freedom of Information request provided through the Information Commissioner, on 14 December 2016. You asked for:

*I seek information relating to the 2021 target date held in the latest update or briefing (at the time of the original request - 3 December 2015) provided to the Universal Credit Programme board.*

## **DWP Response**

As I have mentioned before in previous responses, the Universal Credit Programme deploys 'Agile' techniques to ensure the system develops incrementally and this is how it is managed through its governance route. We work in short phases and, as explained before, 'target dates' are not features of Agile programme management and are not how we run Universal Credit. We articulate the scale and structure of our delivery plans for Universal Credit in terms of phases of roll-out, to specific jobcentres and local authority areas.

The Secretary of State has set out our rollout plans in a ministerial statement in February 2016:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-02-11/HCWS525/>

We also explained to you in our letter of 22 March 2016 that:

"We do not now use Milestone Schedule plans, instead we now publish the Department's plans to deliver Universal Credit as part of national expansion during 2015 and 2016."

The latest details of Universal Credit are available here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-transition-to-full-service>

The information you requested relating to a 2021 target date, provided to the Universal Credit Programme Board is available.

At the time of the original request the Universal Credit Programme Board received a Project Assessment Review Report, dated October 2015. This document is subject to another request from you, FOI 1618. As such, this is considered a duplicate request.

Other information, fulfilling your request, was provided to the Programme Board. This information was presented to the Programme Board in the context of updates around periodic activities within broad areas of programme delivery. In line with Agile methodology, the sooner the activity, the more detail there is. These activity streams are called:

**Governance and Project Management**, which gives details of reviews and assessments that take place to review progress. This activity stream refers to a 2021 closure date, which is yet to be confirmed.

**Transformation and Planning**, which looks at the interfaces and frameworks that need to be in place for Universal Credit to rollout. This looks at migration and refers to ESA/Tax Credit claimant migration completed by 2021.

**UC Product Development**, which describes the digital features Universal Credit will make use of. There is a reference to decommissioning legacy IT in 2021, which is yet to be confirmed.

We have not yet started to plan any activity around project closure or legacy decommissioning; nor have we started any significant planning for the ESA/Tax credit stage of migration, which, as you may know, is now planned to complete in 2022. These are the only noted items of information relating (in the terms of the request) to the 2021 target date and there is no additional detail contained in the information supplied to the December 2015 Programme Board about any of these items, in the three areas of the programme with planned activities relating to the 2021 target date. We have provided all of the information within the scope of your request and provided further additional information, in an attempt to give the response context and meaning. We hope this satisfies your request and we apologise for the time it has taken, due, unfortunately, to finite resource.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely

DWP Central FOI Team

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**Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act**

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing [freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk) or by writing to DWP, Central FoI Team, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Caxton House , Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA.. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)