



ADVISORY PANEL ON PUBLIC SECTOR INFORMATION

- Date:** Wednesday 7 December 2005
- Time:** 10.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m.
- Venue:** G.44/G.45 Admiralty Arch, London
- Chair:** Professor Richard Susskind OBE
- Deputy Chair:** Peter Wienand, Expert Member
- Secretary:** Andrew Eeles
- Attendees:**
- Members:** Michael Allen, Representative Member, Wales
Stefan Carlyle, Representative, Government information traders
Roger Dixon, Representative Member, Northern Ireland
Keith Dugmore, Expert Member
Trevor Fenwick, Expert Member
Christine Gifford, Representative, information management
Dick Greener, Expert Member
Hector MacQueen, Representative Member, Scotland
John Ponting, Representative Member, Government Trading Funds
Christopher Roper, Expert Member
Chris Sellers, Representative Member, end-users and information managers
Duncan Shiell, Representative Member, Government Trading Funds
John Thornton, Representative Member, local government
David Worlock, Representative Member, digital information providers
- Non-members:** Carol Tullo, Director, Office of Public Sector Information
Marcia Jackson, Head of Standards, Office of Public Sector Information

1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1 Professor Richard Susskind began by introducing Andrew Eeles, the new Secretary to the Panel. Andrew explained that he was an expert on licensing and had worked for HMSO since 1988. Thomas Papworth, the previous Secretary, was formally thanked for all the work he had done to support APPSI and was wished well in his new job. Apologies were read from Mike Batty, Michael Clark and Avinash Persaud.

2. Update on action points of previous meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed. It was noted that there was a tension between getting minutes out quickly in the interests of openness and transparency and giving members time to approve them. It was agreed that in future Professor Susskind would review the draft minutes, discuss any sensitive issues with the individual concerned and then send to the Panel who will have 5 working days to provide their comments.
- 2.2 Professor Susskind ran through the action points from the last meeting. Of particular note, it was agreed that there was potential for developing APPSI papers into other publications to increase awareness of PSI. It was also confirmed that APPSI can issue its own Press Notices, but the Cabinet Office should be informed so that any action can be co-ordinated and the Cabinet Office is ready to deal with queries. It has not been possible yet to arrange a meeting with the e-Government Unit. The Panel agreed to a suggestion that Ian Whatmore should be invited to the Annual Seminar.

3. Update from OPSI

- 3.1 Carol Tullo outlined the activities undertaken by OPSI place since the last meeting. Two important developments are covered under items 10 and 11. Significant time and resources have been spent on spreading awareness of PSI, including raising awareness of the links between FOI and PSI. 87 days have been spent so far on spreading PSI awareness. At the end of the calendar year, OPSI will publish their standard presentation and other useful tools on the OPSI website and the emphasis will shift to providing tailored support, for instance in the form of workshops.
- 3.2 Following consultation with the library community, OPSI have been looking at improvements and funding of the public access schemes. The released funding has been invested in delivering online improvements, for instance pdf printing of legislation and an improved search engine.
- 3.3 Details of the consultancy services offered by OPSI are now published on the OPSI website. IFTS Online continues to be a success, with 10 higher level and 40 lower level applications to date.
- 3.4 OPSI met representatives of the Common Information Environment on 20/10 to discuss their commissioned research into Creative Commons Licensing by Intrallect and brief them on the Click-Use Licensing system. Further dialogue is continuing, and OPSI are working closely with them.

4. Progress Report on case studies on the re-use of PSI

- 4.1 Stefan Carlyle introduced the best practice case studies paper drafted by himself and Michael Clarke, and stated that the objective was to provide a framework for the case studies which informed the customer.
- 4.2 Discussion followed about whether the case studies were of organisations or of examples of re-use. It was agreed that examples of re-use should form the basis of the case studies, from the re-user to the provider. One member expressed the view that it was important to have examples of bad practice as well as good. There were overlaps with both the OFT study and with AKTive PSI, although the OFT study was focused at a higher level. The Chair stated that these case studies served a different purpose and were to be used to highlight success and 'give life' to PSI. It was agreed that a pilot should be produced and further discussion take place at the next meeting.

Action Point: Stefan Carlyle to produce a pilot case study to be discussed at the next meeting.

- 4.3 Members discussed potential case studies. Suggestions included the OS map reference library, National Land Information Service, National Prescription Pricing Authority, national retailers and genealogy. It was agreed that the case studies should not pass judgment on whether the re-use was good or bad but should only state the facts.

Action Point: Members to put forward suggestions for further case studies.

- 4.4 The Chair stated that APPSI should aim to get the case studies in the Annual Report after next. It was suggested that APPSI could look at applying the Wikipedia approach, which would generate responses from the online community. This suggestion raised issues about editorial standards, authorial stance and assessing the quality of Case Studies

Action Point: Andrew Eeles to ensure that the issues relating to editorial standards, authorial stance and assessing the quality of the Case Studies are discussed at the next meeting.

5. Strategic Organisational Issue

- 5.1 The Panel discussed the paper written by Chris Sellers. This paper would be useful for highlighting PSI issues.

Action Point: A revised version of the Paper to be produced by 9 December and circulated to the Panel.

Action Point: Comments on the revised paper to be forwarded to Chris Sellers before Christmas. The paper will then be discussed at the next meeting.

6. Transformational Government White Paper

- 6.1 The Panel discussed the government's White Paper and the Chair's draft article which will be published in The Times. It was noted that the deadline for comments on the White Paper was 3 February 2006. There was a general view that the paper was more concerned with technology and not policy or strategy. The concern was raised that by enhancing customer services and disseminating information, government could be disturbing private sector trading.

It was agreed that APPSI should respond to the paper. The Chair agreed to draft a response which would highlight the issues and themes brought out in the annual report and the brief to the Minister.

Action Point: Members to send comments in the form of bullet points to the Chair by 3 January 2006. The Chair will draft a response within the following 2 weeks.

7. ID Cards

7.1 The Panel considered Michael Clarke's paper on the data underpinning Identity Cards. Although there are data protection issues and much of the data would not be available for release, much of the information would not be tied to an individual and therefore releasable. This is therefore a PSI issue.

7.2 It was agreed that APPSI should put together a one page note setting out any PSI issues that relate to the wider debate about ID Cards. This should be done in January 2006.

Action Point: Christine Gifford to produce a one page note setting out the PSI issues to be taken account of in the wider debate.

8. OFT Commercial Use of Public Information (CUPI) Market Study (Update)

8.1 The Panel discussed the OFT update on the Market Study. There was agreement that the Market Study was a positive step. Concern was voiced that the scope was still not finalised, for instance whether or not public sector advertising was included, or local government and the NHS. There was also concern that the case studies were concentrating on the big trading funds.

Action Point: Carol Tullo to raise these issues at the CUPI government communication group after the APPSI meeting.

8.2 Carol Tullo notified the Panel that the Government Communications Group were meeting with OFT that day and circulated a copy of the meeting agenda. A representative from OPSI was attending the meeting.

Action Point: The Chair to contact Antoinette Graves (OFT). Trevor Fenwick to send draft wording to the Chair.

8.3 One member drew attention to the OFT Property Search study. The government would be producing a formal response to this study soon.

Action Point: The Secretariat to send a link to the government response once published.

9. Times Article

9.1 The Panel discussed the article the Chair had produced in response to an article written by Heather Brooke, published in The Times in September. It was agreed that this response was required as the original article contained misleading information that was now out of date in relation to PSI.

10. AKTive PSI Project

10.1 John Sheridan (Head of e-Services, OPSI) gave a presentation on the AKTive PSI Project that OPSI is running from January to October 2006. OPSI are working with Advanced

Knowledge Technologies (AKT), a collaborative research team from 5 universities, on a research project to develop tools and techniques for turning information into knowledge that can be managed. The focus was on information gain, and giving OPSI a better understanding of the problems faced by users. The project relates to OPSI's work on redeveloping the Information Asset Register. OPSI have invited selected public sector organisations to attend a briefing on the 13 December to consider potential contributions of content to the research project.

- 10.2 The Chair stated that recent reports had identified that many knowledge systems were crude and that there was a need to improve such systems if maximum benefit was to be obtained from basic information. One member queried why there was no input from the user end. It was stressed that this was a research project that would result in a working prototype that could developed at a later stage for information gain. The Panel gave their full support to the Project. Michael Allen agreed to be the APPSI liaison point.

11. Discussion Forum for the APPSI Website

- 11.1 John Sheridan gave a demonstration of the online Discussion Forum that has been developed by OPSI. This has potential for use by APPSI Members as a communication tool to share ideas, information, case studies and so on.
- 11.2 The Panel thought that the Forum was a good idea. The need to have a moderator was discussed. The Secretariat would need to take on the role of Moderator. The Discussion Forum could be put into place by the end of January. The Chair thanked John Sheridan for his presentations.

12. Progress on recommendations made in the Annual Reports

- 12.1 The Chair reviewed progress on the key message and recommendations made in the Annual Report.

1. We recommend, first, that the Ministers overseeing the implementation of FOI should be briefed on the new regime for the re-use of PSI and on the value of PSI re-use and, second, that an update on the re-use of PSI should be provided regularly to these Ministers through an appropriate forum. In large part, the value of PSI will come to be fully recognised and exploited if there is direct leadership from the top. Our recommendation would be a first step towards such leadership.

The Chair stated that it was imperative to meet with the Ministers.

2. We recommend that OPSI's programme for raising awareness of the re-use of PSI be more strongly supported across the public sector, both by Ministers and officials.

This would be dealt with when the meetings with the Ministers were re-arranged.

3. Ministers should expressly address, or cause to be addressed, by establishing a working party for the purpose, the ongoing tension in government policy as to the way in which the value of PSI re-use ought to be realised. This tension should be explained in the briefing described in Recommendation 1.

This would be dealt with when the meetings with the Ministers were re-arranged.

4. We recommend that practical guidance be produced for public bodies to help them handle electronic record keeping and document management, FOI, PSI re-use (and more) as a single activity rather than a collection of discrete tasks.

This issue fed into the eGovernment Metadata Standard programme being led by the eGovernment Unit in the Cabinet Office, with which OPSI was working.

5. We recommend that the Government undertakes or commissions a sustained and detailed study into the economics of government information, including but not limited to the activities of those trading funds whose main business is the collection, maintenance and dissemination of PSI. In turn, we believe this work will require more rigorous measurement of PSI re-use than has been undertaken in the past. APPSI will produce a specification for this study.

This issue is being addressed by the OFT study.

6. APPSI supports recent calls for a Government Minister to be given explicit responsibility for the proactive management of knowledge within the public sector. We encourage Ministers to identify one amongst their number to take explicit responsibility for this area.

This would be dealt with when the meetings with the Ministers were re-arranged.

7. We recommend that Ministers and senior officials across government are briefed regularly on the beneficial impact of PSI re-use and on the ongoing work of OPSI.

This would be dealt with when the meetings with the Ministers were re-arranged.

8. We recommend that OPSI considers producing an awareness-raising multi-media presentation on the re-use of PSI, which could be distributed widely on DVD and made available across the Internet.

This is still under consideration. The Environment Agency has made available a copy of their interactive DVD on FOI to see if it offers a potential model for presentation on the re-use of PSI. The DVD will be demonstrated at the next Meeting.

Action Point: A demonstration of the Environment Agency multi-media presentation on FOI to be arranged for the next meeting.

13. “Supertanker Issues”

13.1 The paper submitted to the Panel will be discussed at the next meeting.

Action Point: Paper on “Supertanker Issues” to be discussed at the next meeting.

14. Annual Seminar

14.1 The next APPSI seminar will be held at the Oxford Internet Institute on 16 March. As places are limited it will be on a first come first served basis. APPSI members who are interested should contact the Chair.

- 14.2 The Panel discussed the potential theme of the Seminar and who should be invited to attend. The outcome was that APPSI should look at ways in which the Seminar could be used as a platform for preparing a Ministerial brief on the potential of PSI. The Panel agreed that it should consider inviting a former minister or senior Civil Servant who had experience of what constitutes an effective brief.

Action Point: Members to e-mail the Chair with suggestions for discussion topics and whether they were interested in attending the Seminar.

15. Crown Copyright Regulation in the UK – Is the Debate Still Alive?

- 15.1 An abstract of this article by Dr Stephen Saxby published in the International Journal of Law and Information Technology, Volume 13, Number 3, was circulated to the Panel. The Chair pointed out that the article was over a year old. Copies of the full article will be circulated for discussion at the next meeting.

Action Point: Crown copyright article to be discussed at the next meeting.

16. Contacts

- 16.1 The Chair shared with the Panel some informal e-mail exchanges that he has been having with Professor James Boyle of the US about PSI, copyright and other related issues. Professor Boyle is involved with Creative Commons. The Panel agreed that Professor Boyle should have a meeting with the Chair and OPSI when he is next in the UK.

Action Point: Professor Susskind to find out when Professor Boyle is next in the UK and his availability for meetings with APPSI and OPSI.

17. Meetings

- 17.1 The Panel were informed that the November meeting with the Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office was cancelled by the Minister and that a meeting would need to be re-arranged for the New Year. A meeting with the Scottish Minister will be arranged before the end of the financial year.

Action Point: The Secretariat to arrange meetings with the Ministers.

18. Any other business

- 18.1 It was agreed that APPSI should look at increasing its capability for handling disputes by putting together a pool of reserve experts who could be drawn on when a possible conflict of interest arose. Following discussion it was agreed that former members of APPSI should be approached to see if they were prepared to join the panel of experts.

Action Point: The Chair to contact former member of APPSI about joining the panel of experts.

- 18.2 The Panel were made aware of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement [2/12] that Andrew Gowers, former Editor of the Financial Times was to lead a twelve month independent review into intellectual property rights in the UK. It was agreed that the Panel should monitor the progress of the review on the HM Treasury website and consider how it should respond in relation to PSI issues.

Action Point: The Gowers Review into intellectual property to be discussed at the next meeting.

- 18.3 The Panel were given a progress update on the comparative research that has been undertaken on how other countries manage PSI. The research papers will be cleared by the Chair before they are published on the website.

- 18.4 The Deputy Chair drew the Panel's attention to a recent paper on the *Markets in the Online Public Sphere* by William Davies (Institute for Public Policy Research). It was agreed that the paper covered issues that were of interest to APPSI and members were asked to read the paper and send their comments to the Chair.

Action Point: Members to send their comments on the IPPR paper to the Chair.

- 18.5 The Chair drew to the attention of the Panel a book of essays entitled *Public Sector Information in the Digital Age* edited by Georg Alcholzer and Herbert Burker (2004, Edward Elgar, ISBN 1 84376 383 4).

- 18.6 The Panel agreed that it would be of interest to compare the APPSI website with that of other Advisory Panels.

Action Point: Andrew Eeles to research other Advisory Panel websites.

19 Date of next meeting

- 19.1 The next meeting is scheduled for 23 February. The meeting on 23 May will be rearranged as this clashes with other commitments.

Action Point: Andrew Eeles to arrange a convenient date for the May meeting.

20. Action Points:

The following actions were agreed in the meeting:

- Stefan Carlyle to produce a pilot case study to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Members to put forward suggestions for further case studies.
- Andrew Eeles to ensure that the issues relating to editorial standards, authorial stance and assessing the quality of the Case Studies are discussed at the next meeting.
- A revised version of the Paper to be produced by the 9 December and circulated to the Panel.
- Comments on the revised paper to be forwarded to Chris Sellers before Christmas. The paper will then be discussed at the next meeting.
- Members to send comments in the form of bullet points to the Chair by 3 January 2006. The Chair will draft a response within the following 2 weeks.
- Christine Gifford to produce a one page note setting out the PSI issues to be taken account of in the wider debate.

- Carol Tullo to raise these issues at the CUIPI government communication group after the APPSI meeting.
- The Chair to contact Antoinette Graves (OFT). Trevor Fenwick to send draft wording to the Chair.
- The Secretariat to send a link to the government response once published.
- A demonstration of the Environment Agency multi media presentation on FOI to be arranged for the next meeting.
- Paper on “Supertanker Issues” to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Article to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Members to e-mail the Chair with suggestions for discussion topics and whether they were interested in attending the Seminar.
- Crown copyright article to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Professor Susskind to find out when Professor Boyle is next in the UK and his availability for meetings with APPSI and OPSI.
- The Secretariat to arrange meetings with Ministers.
- The Chair to contact former members of APPSI about joining the panel of experts.
- The Gowers Review into intellectual property to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Members to send their comments on the IPPR paper to the Chair.
- Andrew Eeles to research other Advisory Panel websites.
- Andrew Eeles to arrange a convenient date for the May meeting.

Minutes compiled by Andrew Eeles
Secretariat, Advisory Panel on Public Sector Information