



CabinetOffice

Public Sector
Network
Programme

Communications Strategy

2009

**Making
government
work better**

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The Public Sector Network (PSN) has been designed to radically change the way Government and its associates buy and use Voice and Data Networks. It will drive efficiency savings, while setting a range of technical and service standards.

The ultimate vision:

A community of static and nomadic users seamlessly linked through a 'network of networks' – using the best and most cost effective services.

In central Government the PSN Services Programme, led by Cabinet Office, will be the first PSN compliant framework procurement. At a local government level, Hampshire County Council is leading the way, joining together 16 public sector bodies with a shared unified network – an early PSN pathfinder Programme - and others are following suit.

PSN will cover:

- all Departments and Agencies in England;
- Devolved Administrations;
- Local Government;
- International Bodies; and
- the Third Sector.

The PSN will create a Virtual Private Network for the Public Sector from the existing commercial networks. It will not buy infrastructure or capability. Instead it will develop a market place providing opportunities for industry and savings for the Public Sector.

The PSN will not appear overnight. Delivery of the service will be incremental, with contractual 'vehicles' appearing across a common core network.

At the end of the day PSN will sharpen public sector procurement, and provide common standards across what will be 'network or networks'. In a nutshell, it will allow users to do more for less and bring savings when the public purse is under severe pressure.

In the words of the PSN Programme Director: "We are creating a 'fifth utility', where computer resources, computer cycles and storage, are accessed on demand like the existing electric, gas or water utilities."

The Plan

The Communications Strategy - developed in conjunction with the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy - will support and facilitate the business aims of the PSN through: a clear and concise central communications framework; and appropriate and timely plans. The virtual nature of the Programme means that the delivery strategy will be dominated by electronic means – through the

CIO website. But crucially, in-person events will also play an important part in the engagement process, as well as specific print publications.

Direct stakeholder communication is currently undertaken through the PSN Forum, which is held on a regular basis. These will be supplemented with ad-hoc events for specific developments and milestones – both in London and around the country. There is also scope to promulgate PSN messages at external events, such as exhibitions and conferences.

Due to the on-going nature of the Programme, communications activity will develop to promote milestones, as well as commercial, technological and policy advances. Evaluation techniques will be applied, from time to time, to gauge the effectiveness of communications.

Ambassadors

Ministerial support for the PSN Programme is vital, and the Cabinet Office Minister responsible will be briefed, as various milestones emerge.

The Government CIO and the CIO Council have already been engaged as ambassadors for the PSN. High level sign-off has been achieved within Cabinet Office – including the Cabinet Secretary. Crucially, the Treasury's Operational Efficiency Programme and other key cyber strategies have recognised the PSN's strategic importance.

Additionally, the PSN will continue to identify other heavy weight 'champions' and 'speakers' who will promote the aims of the Programme.

PSN is a vital component of the Government's overall ICT strategy. While it has 'sign-off' at the highest levels, promotional activity will continue at the appropriate level.

Key Messages

A number of high level messages for the PSN have been identified. These core statements include the following:

- a new concept in Government procurement based on collaboration between the Public Sector and Industry – revolutionising the way the public sector buys and uses Voice and Data networks;
- users seamlessly linked through a 'network of networks', governed by uniform standards and capable of accessing a range of business services when they need them with security and integrity guaranteed;

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- a versatile private network for the Public Sector, allowing Departments, Agencies and others to connect and share services;
- driving efficiency savings, setting a range of technical and service standards, and improving the effectiveness of services;
- helping make substantial savings – up to £500m a year – on the Government's £16.5bn annual ICT spend;
- collaborative procurements providing a range of compatible and compliant services - creating an innovative market place to buy competitively priced services;
- providing a way for the Public Sector to buy approved services 'off-the-shelf' through a standard catalogue or directory; and
- building ICT partnerships that will drive the Transformational Government agenda.

Target Audiences

Target groups of varying importance include the following. (The list is not exhaustive).

Prime Minister's Office
PSN Services Programme
CO – Cab Sec, Ministers and Management Board
DA (PED) – Ministerial Sub-Committee
NHS, the Police, the Judicial system, and other Whitehall departments
PSN Programme Board
Hants County Council
Pathfinder Local Authorities
Local Government Association (LGA)
SOCITM
SOLACE
T M Forum
Parliament – devolved and domestic
Other public sector bodies – including SIA, CPNI, GCHQ
Third Sector (charities and NDPBs)
mySociety and the Information Commissioner
Industry Leads – including BT, Fujitsu, and Siemens
Specialist media – print, on-line and broadcast
General Public

These groups can be categorised into three tiers – relating to their importance to the success of the Programme. Messages will be tailored to broad groups (e.g. Central Government, Local Government, and Industry) and are addressed in a separate matrix.

Methods

With limited resources available for communications activities, effort will be needed to leverage in support from key PSN stakeholder communications divisions – making the work, by necessity, a team effort.

General Communications Activities

- Developing and maintaining marketing materials
- Developing and maintaining an events grid
- Developing and maintaining a message matrix
- Developing and maintaining a practical communications plan
- Developing and maintaining a range of fact sheets, newsletters and e-publications, as required
- Developing and maintaining PSN web content
- Developing and maintaining regular 'op eds' bulletins authored by key stakeholders
- Developing and maintaining FAQs and a glossary
- Developing and maintaining a core PSN presentation pack
- Developing and maintaining other presentation packs and various display materials
- Leading on Parliamentary liaison
- Providing overall communications advice to the PSN management team
- Maintaining a 'bigger picture' view of the PSN, beyond the Programme

- Providing support to the Programme Director
- Monitoring and rebutting erroneous and ill-informed coverage
- Working closely with the PSN Stakeholder Communications Manager – and other Workstream Leads – to develop a coherent, integrated and homogeneous approach to communications activities
- Helping develop PSN as a ‘Pathfinder’ Programme for Central and Local Government
- Developing and maintaining effective links with external communications teams – Central and Local Government, and Industry
- Developing appropriate media and other outreach contacts
- Facilitating various forums
- Developing, subject to resources, video content from PSN forums and events – webinar/www content/DVD/other social media
- Leveraging stakeholder and partner communications and promotional activities, where appropriate
- Supporting cross-Government cyber strategies, as they develop
- Developing communications input from Workstream Leads

PSN Communications Activity

Communications activity will continue to be integrated into PSN policy formulation work. In practical terms, the adviser will attend a wide range of meetings to build and maintain 'product knowledge'. This approach guarantees the adviser will absorb some of the more subtle nuances of the Programme – and help build a more effective approach to communications.

An 'organic' grid will list a series of events over the short to medium term. The grid will be populated – with the help of Workstream Leads and the Programme Director - on a regular basis and used as a framework for on-going communications work.

Measuring Effectiveness of Communications

The effectiveness of PSN communications will be monitored, from time to time, using web links, email contact, and 'warmth' surveys when appropriate.