

**Transformational Government Enabled by Technology:  
The role for visual communications**

**Response by TANDBERG**

**Executive Summary**

TANDBERG is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the Cabinet Office's consultation, *Transformational Government Enabled by Technology*.

The strategy sets out a bold vision for the better use of technology to deliver public services and policy outcomes that have an impact on citizens' daily lives.

At its heart is a view of technology as a strategic asset – a view that is also at the centre of our business. At TANDBERG, we have been pioneering new technologies since 1933 and are proud of our reputation and capability to innovate and use technology effectively as that technology is itself changing.

We believe that **visual communications** is ideally placed to play a transformational role in:

- **“delivering better public services..”**. By providing more personalised service, more access to expertise and faster decisions.
- **“reducing burdens on front line staff..”**. By giving individuals the tools to be more effective.
- **“.. and overall, improving the economy through a more efficient government..”**. By more efficient service delivery, more effective customer service and significantly improved performance in meeting Sustainable Development travel targets.

In this response, we set out some of the ways in which we believe visual communications solutions can deliver these aims, with specific case studies to demonstrate the results that have already been achieved.

The basics of visual communications solutions are relatively well understood. Video brings people together for meetings without them having to be physically present in the same location. This improves productivity, saves travel time and costs, helps meet sustainability targets and allows more frequent face-to-face contact with colleagues, partners, suppliers, and customers.

The case for visual communications is also supported by the findings of a number of research studies that compare the variety of means of communication. But there is still much untapped potential for visual communications as an effective delivery partner for Government. For example:

- giving the opportunity to share scarce resources in innovative, vital and exciting ways

- providing access to remote experts, allowing education institutions to reach more students
- increasing access to specialists to people in more remote areas
- cutting diagnosis and treatment times
- providing the opportunity to meet sustainability targets
- allowing Emergency Services to communicate in real-time in the field

Finally, video conferencing has itself transformed over recent years. Often, people's perception of the technology is based on previous experience of out-of-date systems that bear little comparison to today's systems. These new technologies provide the highest video and sound quality, are based on emerging standards and kept up to date by software upgrades. Additionally they can also provide the capability to share presentations, and other computer applications, with live video, to record video meetings for later streaming to the desktop, to exploit the reach of the internet, to allow 3G video calls and to be integrated with typical enterprise collaboration software tools such as those from Microsoft and IBM Lotus.

**The Transformational Government strategy should include a specific role for visual communication.  
We would welcome the opportunity to discuss, and perhaps demonstrate, the role it could play.**

## Introduction to TANDBERG

TANDBERG is a leading global provider of visual communication products and services. The Company has dual headquarters in New York and Norway. TANDBERG designs, develops and markets systems and software for video, voice and data. The Company provides sales, support and value-added services in more than 90 countries worldwide

Government agencies throughout the world are using visual communications to speed up decision-making, provide employees with increased access to experts and information and to provide real-time public safety responses. TANDBERG has been at the forefront of this development. In the UK, we work with a range of public sector clients including the emergency services, schools and Local Education Authorities, universities, Primary Care Trusts and central Government Departments.

We also provide services for some of the leading private-sector companies in the country.

## The role for visual communication

TANDBERG believes that visual communication could form a valuable role in delivering the three transformations identified in the *Transformational Government* strategy.

The strategy frequently refers to envisaged future delivery and communications channels, for example:

- the widespread and growing use of the mobile phone and other technologies which Government have yet to exploit properly (para 19)
- over the next decade, the principal preferred channels of delivery of information are seen as “*telephone, internet and mobile channels – as well as the increasingly important channels within the digital home*” (para 32)
- a “*step change will be made in the use of mobile phones and other mobile devices to exchange information and transact directly with citizens and front line staff*” (para 33/4)

In each of these instances, there is a valuable role that could also be played by visual communication products and services. Exact uses of visual communication vary widely, but what remains unchanged among users is the value it adds to business operations. These include:

- Reduction in travel
- Reduction in employee time away from the office
- Increased efficiency from faster decision making

- Improved work/life balance
- Higher employee satisfaction
- Ability to access centrally based experts in remote locations and local offices
- Opportunity to expand services to a wider audience
- Improved ability to foster relationships
- Increased security
- Help to meet SDiG targets for lower CO2 emissions by reducing travel etc
- Improvements in recruitment

The applications for this in the public sector are considerable. TANDBERG has a track record in delivering in defence, health, education, central government departments, the emergency services and local government, and the four case studies appended at the end of this document demonstrate this.

In each case, success is due to both the technology used and the research, training and planning that accompanies its roll-out. To briefly outline:

**1. South West of England Regional Development Agency:**

Since the introduction of video conferencing, the agency has reported a fundamental change in the culture of working and service delivery. Travel times and costs have fallen dramatically, and greater time is spent engaging directly with private and public sector organisations through teleconferencing.

**2. Haringey Primary Care Trust:**

Video conference technology is used at the Broadwater Farm Health Centre in Haringey to help ethnic minority communities to access primary care services.

**3. University of Glasgow:**

The University of Glasgow has solved capacity problems in its lecture halls by installing video conference equipment to deliver lectures to hundreds of students located in a split campus.

**4. Northern Ireland Prison Service:**

The installation of TANDBERG systems in prisons, courts, police and related agencies in Northern Ireland provide more efficient cooperation and collaboration between law enforcement and judiciary.

We are also aware of the challenges identified in the strategy, and are confident that visual communications can help address these (para 19). In particular:

- **Security:** TANDBERG Visual communication technology can be encrypted to the highest level of security. Indeed, TANDBERG systems are used by Government leaders around the world at the highest level of security clearance. The public at large are also increasingly concerned by identity theft and information assurance. Visual communication can help ease those concerns by providing a degree of visible reassurance where practical. Furthermore, departments can see positive outcomes, because it is

reasonable to expect that benefit fraud and overpayment can be significantly reduced by adding a face-to-face element to complex claims.

- **Technologies emerge into widespread use:** Visual communication uses existing broadband infrastructure in new and innovative ways, creating additional benefits. This reinforces the intention of the *Transformational Government* strategy to apply different and new technology solutions within existing frameworks in order to help support public policy goals.
- **Sophisticated, holistic policy solutions:** Visual communication provides a simple, cost-effective solution to increasingly demanding policy agendas. For example, increasing patient choice, tackling health inequalities and improving access to primary care services can partly be addressed by providing wider, more flexible and equitable access to specialists through visual communication.
- **Public use of the internet rising:** Visual communication is interoperable with all broadband technology and so can be accessed by an increasing number of people. With the growing availability of 3G networks and multi-media 'smart' phones, it is clear to see the growing trend towards video-enabled services. Visual communication will become a natural expectation.

#### Learning from best practice

The case for visual communications is also supported by the findings of a number of research studies that compare the variety of means of communication. A recent survey by RoperASW and TANDBERG found that the methods businesses use most heavily to communicate outside the office – e-mail and telephone – are insufficient to establish the foundation for smart business decisions. In total, 56% of business professionals estimate that they 'waste' at least 30 minutes each day using inefficient communication methods. This costs UK government and the taxpayer millions of pounds every year.

Business professionals overwhelmingly say that face-to-face communication – when compared to audio and online/web-based communication – is easier to understand, is more personal, enables quick decisions, builds high trust, makes negotiating easier, reduces confusion and misunderstanding, makes people more accountable and is better for detailed explanations. The survey results strongly indicate that in today's 'wired world', face-to-face presence has become more important than ever.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, with the targets set by the Gershon Review and the drive towards efficiency in the provision of public services, visual communications provides an opportunity for the Government to achieve cost-efficiency, culture change and best of use of scarce resources – in short, a way of “*doing IT differently*”.

**Transformational Government provides an excellent opportunity for the Government to explore the potential for visual communications, and the way in which this technology can help to achieve the vision of public service reform based on joined up service delivery that is personalised and more effective in terms of policy outcome.**

**Case Study 1**  
**South West of England Regional Development Agency:**  
**Cutting mileage, saving time, changing culture, meeting objectives**

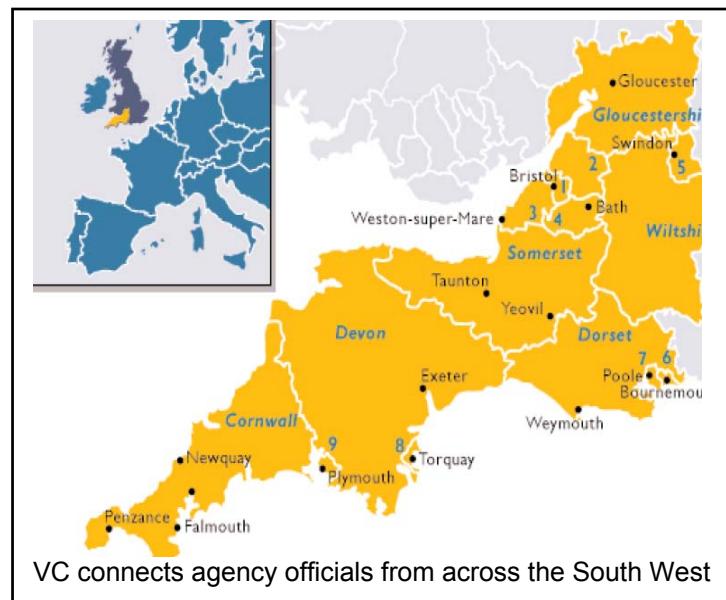
TANDBERG helped the South West of England Regional Development Agency (RDA) cut travel mileage by 200,000 miles per year and £150,000 in associated transport costs by installing video conference technology across the region's six county offices.

The TANDBERG system was designed around the needs of the agency's 300 employees, who needed to drive up to four hours every day to meet colleagues throughout the South West to discuss joint initiatives. The agency teams from Bristol, Poole, Truro and Plymouth responsible for delivering investment projects had to meet every two weeks in Exeter and spent much of the day on the road. Now they meet by video and save up to £26,000 in costs.

Since the introduction of video conferencing, the agency has reported a fundamental change in the culture of working and service delivery. Travel times and costs have fallen dramatically, and greater time is spent engaging directly with private and public sector organisations through teleconferencing.

The agency has subsequently become an example of best practice in reducing inefficiencies, opening-up access to services and information, and helping to stimulate regional economic growth.

The use of video conferencing by the South West RDA helps to deliver *Transformational Government* goals by using technology to improve the delivery of public services, reducing the number of face-to-face meetings, and improving 'behind the scenes' ICT infrastructure. Video conferencing has also helped to deliver better policy development and delivery by improving productivity and enhancing staff training.



The transport cost savings associated with the use of video technology help the RDA contribute to the objectives of the Government's 2004 *Efficiency Programme*, which is designed to deliver public spending savings through ICT. They have also helped the agency demonstrate a commitment to reducing inefficient public spending, a key target for the Government's forthcoming efficiency and spending reviews.

**Case Study 2**  
**Haringey Primary Care Trust:**  
**Helping ethnic minority communities access health care**

Video conference technology is being used at the Broadwater Farm Health Centre in Haringey to help ethnic minority communities to access primary care services.

For many non-English speakers living in London, visiting the local GP surgery can be a frustrating and daunting experience. Professional interpreters are not often available at multiple locations, and the resulting shortage of translation services creates a significant access barrier for ethnic minority communities.

Desktop video conference units allow doctors and patients to connect directly to interpreters based at the local hospital. The high-quality picture and speed of the connection allows the language barrier between health professionals and patients to be overcome, demonstrating significant improvements over previous webcam and telephone conferencing solutions.



The introduction of video conferencing in this primary care setting has helped support the *Transformational Government* goal of helping doctors be more effective. It has also provided a solution to health care access barriers which have in the past excluded ethnic minority communities, helping to fulfil the policy objective of using ICT to support public service improvements.

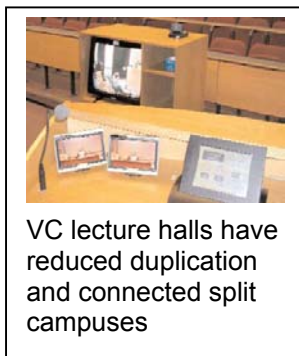
The initiative will also help deliver wider policy goals championed by the Department of Health, such as reducing health inequalities and using telemedicine to improve health outcomes – both of which are priorities in the recently published White Paper *Our health, our care, our say*.

**Case Study 3**  
**The University of Glasgow:**  
**Increasing capacity, sharing expertise**

The University of Glasgow has solved capacity problems in its lecture halls by installing video conference equipment to deliver lectures to hundreds of students located in a split campus.

The university's lecturers were forced to hold the same lecture up to three times a week to accommodate the large number of students. The introduction of a high-capacity data network allowed the university to create six video-enabled lecture halls on the Gilmorehill campus with a connection to the satellite building at Crichton in the southwest of Scotland.

Lecturers now address up to 800 students at once in multiple locations, reducing the burden on staff and saving thousands of teaching hours. The educational experience has also been enhanced by using multimedia presentations on large data projectors. By reducing duplication, staff now have more flexibility to invest additional time in preparing new lecture materials and conducting research. Thousands of students now rely on video conference lecture delivery as a fundamental part of their learning process.



TANDBERG technology has helped the university fulfil many policy objectives identified in *Transformational Government*. Video conferencing has created time-efficiency savings, reduced duplication and routine processing, maximised the benefits of existing ICT infrastructure and improved the delivery of the university's curriculum. This new model of delivering learning and teaching has been specifically designed around the needs of both public servants and the end-user, and demonstrates a drive towards more efficient service delivery.

The video lecturing experiment at Glasgow has been so successful that the university plans to expand its network capacity and boost data transmission speeds. The expansion of this innovative infrastructure will not only improve inter-university communications, but also enable students to interact with academics from across the country and the world.

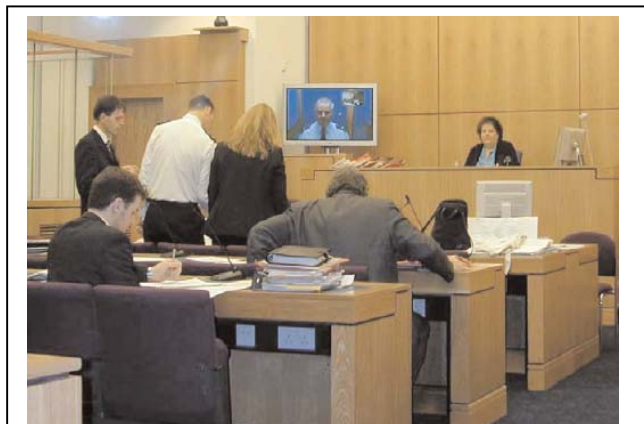
**Case Study 4:  
Northern Ireland Prison Service:  
Improving cooperation between law enforcement and judiciary**

The Northern Ireland Prison Service has completely reformed the way prisoners attend court hearings by installing 132 video conferencing units as part of an integrated network across the criminal justice system. Inmates no longer travel to court for bail or remand hearings, but appear over video link from the correctional facility where they live. The savings from transport costs alone are estimated at £10 million per year.

Officials throughout the criminal justice system rely on TANDBERG network to streamline administrative business. The network links-up two dozen courthouses, three correctional facilities, 17 police stations, the Youth Justice Agency, the Department of Public Prosecutions, the Crown Solicitor's Office, the Probation Board, the Legal Services Commission, the Police Ombudsman's Office and the Assets Recovery Agency.

The resulting cost-saving benefits have been significant. Police officers have been transferred from escort duty to crime fighting, and the throughput of cases in court has been sped up. Around 50 percent of all pre-trial hearings are now conducted via video conferencing, including almost all bail and remand hearings.

The technology has also helped support public policy initiatives on improving effective consultation and engagement. Between 130 and 210 legal and other consultations take place every week over video conferencing.



Video conferencing has changed the face of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland.