MINUTES OF DfT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Date: Wednesday 1 June  
Time: 1315-1500  
Venue: Room 5/13, Great Minster House

**ExCo Members**

Lin Homer (Chair)  
Richard Hatfield  
Steve Gooding  
Lucy Chadwick  
Christopher Muttukumaru

**Apologies**

Clare Moriarty

**Other Attendees**

**** (Private Secretary to Permanent Secretary)  
**** (Board Secretariat)

**Item 1: Weekly Update**

1. Lin Homer reported back from the Permanent Secretary’s meeting earlier that day. It had discussed the revised key focus of the National Audit Office, Public Accounts Committee and Public Administration Select Committee.

2. Christopher Muttukumaru had chaired the first Red Tape “Star Chamber” the previous week. It had discussed the prospect of adding a schedule to a clause of the Transport Bill and listing in that schedule all the regulations that were to be repealed.

3. Steve Gooding updated ExCo on High Speed 2. It was agreed that a future ExCo meeting may need to make short-term resourcing decisions. ExCo members agreed to consider their fast-stream staff and how they could be deployed. One potential solution was for fast-stream staff to replace experienced staff, who could in turn be transferred into teams such as HS2 and the Olympics Team.

   Action: DGs/General Counsel

4. ExCo discussed the continued need for staff with commercial and financial modelling skills. Lucy Chadwick reported that a paper on DfT’s commercial skills was due to be considered by BICC and that the outcome of the BICC discussion would be reported to ExCo.

5. Richard Hatfield reported that he had volunteered to be DfT’s Armed Forces Advocate.

The names of non-SCS staff have been redacted in accordance with DfT’s publication policy.
6. The Permanent Secretaries’ Employee Relations sub-group had discussed the possibility of industrial action by civil service unions in response to staff reductions and potential changes to civil service pensions. In Clare Moriarty’s absence, Christopher Muttukumaru agreed to speak to Mervyn Thomas with regard to briefing the Secretary of State the following week on contingency plans.

**Action:** Christopher Muttukumaru

**Item 2: Security Emergency Response Plan**

EC(11)46

7. Richard Hatfield had circulated a minute the previous week, updating ExCo members on progress in issuing a revised Security Emergency and Response Plan (SERP) and Concept of Operations for Crisis (CONOPS).

8. The discussion took place in light of the previous week’s volcanic eruption, which had caused some disruption to air travel due to the ash emitted. The disruption had been less extensive than that caused by the previous year’s eruption. This had been due to the nature of the eruption and to the disruption to air travel not having taken place over a weekend or at a time when large numbers of British citizens were abroad.

9. The contingency plan devised by DfT had worked well, assisted by Network Rail’s postponement of overhead wire maintenance work on the West Coast Main Line. Having the designated ‘incident room’ close to Ministers’ offices had assisted communication with Ministers.

10. Lessons learned from this and previous incidents included a need for:

   - assurance that stakeholders were carrying out the actions expected of them;
   - officials able swiftly to devise robust ‘lines to take’ for Ministers and spokespersons;
   - prompt notification of policy developments;
   - the separation of the decision-making role from the briefing role; and
   - a wider range of senior staff to have received crisis management training.

11. ExCo was informed that a programme of crisis management training was being arranged for the autumn for directors and divisional managers. It was also informed that Adam Simmons was looking into the possibility of DfT gaining the capability to set up its own conference calls, rather than having to go through the No.10 switchboard.

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12. ExCo agreed that there was a need for a rota of ExCo members being on call at weekends and public holidays. The Secretariat was asked to draw up a rota for the next 12 months, taking account existing leave arrangements and endeavouring to even out on-call responsibility over long weekends. Lin Homer stressed that, once this rota had been drawn up, it would be for ExCo members to negotiate swaps amongst themselves.

Action: Secretariat

Board Secretariat
3 June 2011