

**Geographic Information Panel
Minutes of meeting held on
27 June 2006**

Present

Vanessa Lawrence (Ordnance Survey) – Chair
Simon Bevan (Ministry of Defence) for Nick Rigby
Stan Brown (Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland)
Simon Doyle (Association for Geographic Information (AGI))
Karen Dunnell (Office for National Statistics)
David Fry (Department for Communities & Local Government), for Michael Kell
Michael Fishwick (Demographic User Group)
James Kavanagh (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) for Rob Mahoney
Jim Meldrum (Registers of Scotland)
Cheryl Miller (East Sussex County Council)
Nick Starling (Association of British Insurers)
Phillipa Swanton (Defra), for Andrew Burchell

Apologies

Andrew Stott (e-Government Unit, Cabinet Office)

In attendance

Hugh Buchanan (Ordnance Survey) - Secretary

Action

1 The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true record.

2 Matters arising

a IP ownership of datasets

Cheryl Miller (CM) had circulated a note. Vanessa Lawrence (VL) tabled further clarification.

b Two tier engagement

CM repeated her offer of guidance on current good practice among local authorities.

CM

c The National Archives

VL had exchanged letters with the Chief Executive of The National Archives, and a meeting is planned.

VL

d INSPIRE

A briefing paper had been circulated. In discussion, the following points were made:

- The reasons for the Directive were summarised as the provision of geographic information to allow cost-effective European Commission grant making & response to environmental situations such as flooding.
- The Scope of the Directive is initially environmental information, but is expected to be extended to other sectors, such as agriculture and transport. Implementation of the Directive is expected in 2009/10.
- The emphasis of the Directive has been on data sharing, rather than focussing on the economic impact of its implementation. The fit of the Directive with existing legislation such as the Public Sector Information Regulations and

Access to Environmental Information Regulations is still to be determined.

- The effect of the Directive could be to compromise investment in information management.
- UK Government supports the principle of the Directive of supporting data harmonisation and efficient data sharing, but does not support the setting of data licensing policy by the Commission.
- NS said that EU wide initiatives should not cut across good work being done in the UK: unlike much of the rest of the EU, the private sector in the UK shares flood risk (via insurance). The Secretariat will arrange for a briefing on Inspire for NS and relevant ABI colleagues.

HB

e Olympics

VL has written to the Association of Chief Police Officers. Ministerial responsibility for the Olympics now lies with Jim Fitzpatrick (DTI), and VL is continuing to discuss related geographic issues with him. Simon Bevan reported that MoD and Metropolitan Police are liaising on mapping support including developing common symbols.

3 UK GI Strategy procurement

An update paper (GIP 4/2006) had been circulated. The Strategy Development Group of the GI Panel had assessed the bids received, and awarded the contract to Know Edge Ltd. A Project Initiation Meeting had taken place on 20 June. The Project Initiation Document had been circulated to Panel members. In discussion, the following points were made:

- What arrangements are in place for managing cost variations? VL indicated that any such requests would be tightly controlled, and that the Strategy Development Group would be mindful of the need to avoid extending the scope of the work beyond that which has been agreed. This is related to the need to manage risks associated with the development of the Strategy.
- The Panel is mindful that the GI Strategy report is to be submitted to the Minister, who will make a decision on the steps to be followed. Therefore, it is important that the conclusions of the report are not subject to public debate before going to the Minister.
- CM asked what supporting material from the Strategy would be published. VL indicated that the Key Stakeholder list, once agreed, would be published.
- VL explained that since Rob Mahoney is part of the consultancy team for the Strategy Rob had asked James Kavanagh of RICS to substitute for him on the GI Panel while the Strategy is being developed.

HB

Robin McLaren, Gavin Keith and Sheila Drew Smith joined the meeting to discuss the outcome from the Initial Workshop on the GI Strategy held on 23 June. Supported by presentations based around the outcomes from the Workshop, the Panel had a discussion:

- There is a need to ensure that stakeholders are encouraged to contribute across the range of their expertise, and not simply within the scope of one work package. The central issue is to capture the energy and interest of stakeholders.
- Part of the success of the Strategy will be as a means of engagement.
- Stakeholders will be identified as individuals with something to contribute, rather than as representatives of organisations. This is the approach taken in the Better Regulation Taskforce.
- Know Edge have established an email address to allow submissions to the consultancy team.
- Membership organisations face a challenge in coordinating their engagement.

The local authority community are organising workshops in early July to coordinate their engagement.

- The view was expressed following the Workshop on 23 June that the Strategy was a foregone conclusion. This view is worrying, and could undermine the credibility of the Strategy. It is important to tackle this misperception. Suitable pages will be added to the Panel website to explain the process being followed in order to communicate the process taking place more clearly. HB
- It is important to distinguish between the information gathering phase of developing the Strategy, which will encourage participation, from the later stage of discussion with Ministers.
- The development of the Strategy is a further opportunity to engage with a range of Chief Executives on the value of geographic information, and to make connections with the shared services and Transformational Government agendas.
- The Strategy needs to use language to attract interest beyond the GI community, by focussing on what it can deliver rather than what it is called.
- The Strategy needs to focus on business benefits, with a focus on individuals as customers, as well as citizens.
- The timetable for full implementation across all UK bodies of the Strategy should be at maximum 5 years. The drivers for implementation will need to be selected and prioritised, avoiding technical drivers, and focussing on business outcomes.
- VL will write to identified Key Stakeholders inviting them to participate in a session with the Consultants. These workshops will be held in London in July. VL
- For later work packages, there will be a need to select more technically oriented stakeholders. The consultants will draft and circulate their proposed list.
- HB will circulate a list of those who attended the 23 June Workshop. HB

4 GI Panel Annual Report

The circulated draft Annual Report was considered, and some corrections noted. Any further comments should be submitted to the Secretariat. ALL

Revised Annual Report to be submitted to Minister and published on Panel website. HB

5 Any Other Business

- a Comprehensive Spending Review:** The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2007 will determine departmental allocations for 2008/09 to 2010/11. Departmental submissions have to be made during summer 2006, with allocations expected to be announced in summer 2007. VL will raise awareness with relevant departments of the need to make allowance for the implementation of the GI Strategy. VL
- b UK Hydrographic Office:** VL distributed a summary of an adjournment debate in the House of Commons on 15 June 2006 on the UK Hydrographic Office.
- c AGI Conference:** Simon Doyle explained that the Association for Geographic Information would be holding its annual conference in London, starting on 12 September 2006. The intention is to invite GI Panel members to attend.

Dates of future meetings

Future meetings of the Panel are scheduled for:

20 September 2006, 2pm

14 December 2006, 2pm