

To EURIM Members and Observers
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THE EUROPEAN
INFORMATION
SOCIETY GROUP

EURIM



EURIM Newsletter February 2007

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1) Improving Relations Between the ICT Industry and Parliament

The past decade has seen a proliferation of all-party groups and think tanks, but this has not led to a commensurate improvement in relations between the ICT industries, Parliament and Government. There is a clear need to reduce confusion and duplication of effort, and to better focus resources.

On Wednesday 28th March, 5.30 - 7.00 pm, the Industry and Parliament Trust has organised a meeting to discuss how to improve communication and agree actions involving industry, Government and Parliament in the fields of IT, telecoms, e-security, internet governance and crime (including child abuse, fraud etc). Two of EURIM's Directors, the Rt Hon Alun Michael JP MP and Ian Taylor MBE MP, both former industry ministers, will help "set the challenge", alongside Duncan Mitchell, current chair of the Information Age Partnership and UK Managing Director of CISCO. Margaret Moran MP (EURIM Chair) and Andrew Miller MP (PITCOM Chair) will open discussion on possible responses, alongside John Suffolk, Government Chief Information Officer, and Ed Gibson, Chief Security Advisor Microsoft UK.

This meeting presents a unique opportunity to make progress on a difficult but increasingly important topic, and is open to all EURIM members, Corporate and Associate as well as Parliamentary. Please e-mail Amelia Knott, ameliaknott@ipt.org.uk if you are able to attend (the meeting is scheduled to be in Committee Room 9). Please e-mail eurim@eurim.org if you are not able to attend but have views on the subject or would like to help implement the actions that we hope will follow.

2) Risking UK Success as an Innovation Economy

Publicity for recent and impending job losses in pharmaceuticals and aerospace, and the need to recruit graduates from other parts of the world to sustain UK-based research and development, because UK universities no longer teach the disciplines needed in the volumes required, are helping focus attention on the risk to employment in those constituencies where the next election will be fought hardest. Meanwhile the discovery that our communications networks now depend on advanced technology imported from China adds to the surreal nature of discussion on the security, stability and resilience of our critical national infrastructure, from emergency services to centralised record systems. We are therefore organising a briefing for MPs on Wednesday 25th April, 6.00 – 7.30 pm in the Grimond Room. This will be a joint meeting with Intellect and will feature presentations by representatives from four business sectors on what the UK must do to remain a location of choice for their businesses. Please e-mail emma.fryer@eurim.org if you have policy responsibility in the key areas of education, tax, labour markets and regulatory climate or are otherwise interested in helping secure action in this critical area.

3) Improving UK/EU Monitoring and Consultation Processes

To help support the planned upgrades to our policy monitoring and consultation activities, Will Roebuck (Bird & Bird and the E-business Regulatory Alliance) has agreed to lead updates of the EURIM briefings on UK and EU Consultation Processes and of the Guide to EU Decision Making produced some years ago. As with our other activities, we aim to improve services within existing budgets by better working with others. This exercise is intended to form part of the creation of a set of tiered, pan-European services, in co-operation with the ERA and its other partners. For details, including value-added services already available from ERA, please e-mail will.roebuck@e-ra.org.uk

4) Case Studies of Good Public Procurement Practice

“Transforming government procurement” heralds significant changes to central government buying: see www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/enterprise_and_productivity/public_services_productivity/ent_services_procurement.cfm This document also summarises the principles of good procurement practice and the actions necessary to deliver the vision. Ministers have also announced “the death of big bang” in favour of incremental change and re-using existing “assets”. Some claim this requires changes to EU procurement rules. Others say the problems are peculiar to UK interpretations of these rules. As put by the EU official in charge of enforcement at a EURIM workshop some years ago: “Please do not blame us for your English lawyers”.

Several members have long been frustrated with the processes used by those who think they are following good practice, but are actually ensuring their project will be overtaken by changes of policy, let alone technology, before it goes live, if ever. There is a long-standing need for succinct case studies of successful, rapid turn-round, public sector procurements, using processes that can be easily replicated without fear of challenge. We will be seeking examples from other Member States as well as from Local Government and Agencies. The aim is to demonstrate that the problems are not legal but cultural, including on the part of suppliers, and that pressures for “reform” could serve to delay genuine change. Please e-mail Dave Wright davywright2@ntlworld.com if you would like to help or, more especially, if you think this approach is wrong.

5) Progress with Guidance on Information and Identity Sharing

On 23rd February the Personal Identity and Data Sharing group had an excellent meeting with Government Connect on progress, governance and relationships, commitment to aims of the Varney review and the linkage with Government Gateway. A report of the meeting will be placed on the website www.eurim.org.uk/activities/pi/pi.php#Meetings alongside that of the meeting on Sir James Crosby’s Public Private Forum on Identity Management. The group’s next meeting on 14th March will be on the DWP Customer Information System, including its potential for meeting the needs of others in central and local government.

The growing recognition of the importance of managing the exchange of information at the “people” and not just technology level is welcome, but the proliferation of exercises to develop codes of connection and/or practice is not. The work of the EURIM sub-group, in collaboration with SOCITM and others, to collate current codes and distil good practice based on operational experience, is therefore proving to be every bit as timely as anticipated.

6) Organising International Co-operation: Report-back from Washington

The joint PITCOM/EURIM visit to Washington for the annual conference of the Internet Caucus Advisory Committee was very successful, and a meeting is scheduled for 27th February to review the results and agree how best to report back to members. Follow up plans are expected to be available for circulation shortly, and are likely to include a proposal for a reciprocal event in the UK that will focus on furthering Trans-Atlantic cooperation. This will be a major undertaking and the first step will be to identify those seriously interested in being partners/sponsors. Please e-mail Dan Mount MOUNTD@parliament.uk if you would like an invitation to participate in the planning group.

7) Update on Current Consultations and Recent Reports

Click on the "What's New" banner of www.eurim.org.uk to access the full list of current consultations and recent reports.

Public Broadband Schemes: A Best Practice Guide

This is a joint Department of Trade and Industry & Ofcom publication giving advice for public bodies who may be considering the use of public funds to support the provision of higher speed broadband networks in particular areas of the UK. It has been criticised as being highly negative, stressing the problems and need for caution, rather than suggesting successful models for replication.

www.ofcom.org.uk/media/mofaq/telecoms/pbs/dti_pbs.pdf

www.ofcom.org.uk/media/mofaq/telecoms/pbs/

Consultation Paper on Proposed Custodial Penalties for Breach of Section 55 of the Data Protection Act 1988.

Out of 63 responses to the consultation, 82% were fully supportive of the proposals (including that from EURIM), but a joint "press group" response was generally against.

www.dca.gov.uk/consult/misuse_data/cp0906.htm#responses

The revised **Code of Practice for RIPA Part III - Investigation of Protected Electronic Information**, taking into account responses and comments received during public consultation is at:

[http://p10.hostingprod.com/@spyblog.org.uk/blog/ripa3/2007-02-](http://p10.hostingprod.com/@spyblog.org.uk/blog/ripa3/2007-02-14%20RIPA%20Part%20III%20Post%20Consultation%20version2.pdf)

[14%20RIPA%20Part%20III%20Post%20Consultation%20version2.pdf](http://p10.hostingprod.com/@spyblog.org.uk/blog/ripa3/2007-02-14%20RIPA%20Part%20III%20Post%20Consultation%20version2.pdf)

BBC Trust Consultation on "on-demand" services

The Trust may not have a chairman but has launched a consultation that could have more far ranging implications for the UK on-line content industries than most recent Ofcom consultations:

www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/consult/open_consultations/ondemand_services.html

Responses by: 28th March 2007.

UK Input to the EU Review of the Regulatory Framework for Electronic Communications and Services

Publication of the Commission's proposals is now expected in June/July along with a review of Universal Service. DTI will be preparing UK responses & negotiating position. Background information & notice of any stakeholder activities will be posted to the following website:

www.dti.gov.uk/sectors/telecoms/2006review/page26449.html

Progress of MPS e-Crime Strategy

The paper attached to the Minutes of the January meeting of the Metropolitan Police Authority should be read by all those wishing to see effective action by UK law enforcement in this space.

<http://www.mpa.gov.uk/committees/mpa/2007/070125/10.htm>