

To EURIM Members and Observers
From Philip Virgo, EURIM Secretary General
E-mail: virgo.philip@eurim.org



EURIM Newsletter July 2008

1) Setting the Agenda

EURIM Three Year Objectives and Strategy approved

On July 15th the Council approved a three-year strategy to move from reacting to proposals to working in alliance with others to set the political agenda for “the creation of a globally competitive, socially inclusive and democratically accountable Information Society”. The stated mission is unchanged, what has changed is the priority being given to working in high profile partnership with others (hence the new strapline: “The Information Society Alliance”) to achieve our fourth aim “to ensure that rapid and effective action follows” once we have found all-party consensus on what needs to happen. The work programme has been restructured round six working groups: Knowledge Economy, Public Service Delivery, Information Governance, Workforce Skills, E-Crime and Communications Policy. All groups have now agreed their objectives, delivery strategies, target audiences and partnership strategies. Most have also agreed their short-term recruitment, press and delivery plans to demonstrate results and what the appetites of their current and potential supporters and partners. Details are in the members’ area of the website at: <http://www.eurim.org.uk/members/TYP2008.doc> Please e-mail eurim@eurim.org if you have lost your password.

2) Attracting and Growing Knowledge Businesses

Raising the level of political interest and focussing debate on what matters and works

Wealth creating employment and taxable revenues are increasingly dependent on businesses that could be located anywhere in the world with access to those who possess world-class skills, experience and talent. That “access” is increasingly via synchronous broadband to those working with partners around the world for employers in different jurisdictions. We can see UK and European governments and local authorities planning “fibre islands” and “media cities” but few actually listen to those growing the intellect or computation intensive industries of the future. Even fewer appreciate that, from the billion pound computer games industry, through electronic publishing to financial services, high added-value local employers may well be able to relocate faster than obtain a tax, regulatory or planning decision. The “Knowledge Economy” group therefore plans to work with Local Futures (<http://www.localfutures.com>) to build political understanding of what is at stake, including programmes to help MPs understand the jobs at risk in their own constituencies and to help employers understand the value of working with and through their local MP.

3) From Data Protection and Security to Information Governance

Promoting a holistic approach to rebuilding confidence in the security of the on-line world

The departmental reports into Data Losses, such as that from Sir Edmund Burton on the MoD losses: <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PolicyStrategyandPlanning/ReportIntoTheLossOfModPersonalData.htm> or from Kieran Poynter on those from HMRC www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/0/1/poynter_review250608.pdf can now be reviewed in the context of the “Cabinet Office Report on Data Handling Procedures”, the “Cross Government Actions: Mandatory Minimum Measures” and the original “Independent Review of Government Information Assurance” (all available at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/data_handling.aspx), the “Review of Data Sharing”

by Richard Thomas and Mark Walport at www.justice.gov.uk/reviews/datasharing-intro.htm and the progress reports and objectives for the reform of public service delivery - see section 4) below.

One effect of all the publicity for data losses has been a drop in public confidence that information is safe in “official” hands, let alone on a public sector computer system. We have to build confidence that the lessons have been learned before any major new programme is likely to command political support. But what are the lessons? The problems have been well identified as being “cultural” - but most of the solutions so far proposed are for better enforcement of new variations on the “add-on security” processes that had been bypassed to save time and money after recent re-organisations and staffing cuts. Private sector experience from those organisations which have had to take security seriously, because their systems have been under regular criminal assault for decades, is that the “solution” requires a combination of “security by design” (built in from the inception of the system, not added later) and mandatory training (with regular refreshments) for all, from receptionist to director. Moreover, some of the most critical vulnerabilities result from the mandatory retention of sensitive data for possible access by regulators or law enforcement in the name of consumer protection or the fight against crime.

The new EURIM “Information Governance” Group therefore plans to build on the work of the previous Personal Identity and Data Sharing Group and the success of the event of on June 10th. (on good practice in secure information sharing and identity management) with a “Directors’ Round Table” to test support for resetting political and regulatory agendas around practitioner experience, public and private sector, including cross-boundary and international. This is an ambitious objective and the first step is to identify whether there is the support necessary to create the professional and political alliance, backed by ICT suppliers and users and the various civil interest groups, to succeed. Hence the strategy of beginning with a round table event, organised in co-operation with potential lead partners. Please e-mail Ed Phelps PHHELPSE@parliament.uk if you would like to participate in the organising team or register as a supporter for the follow up.

4) From Transformational Government to the Reform of Public Service Delivery

Let the people speak: how to achieve citizen-centric service delivery

[Transformational Government - our progress in 2007](#) has now been published and contains much good news, including the bringing together of the Cabinet Committees for Systems (PSX(E), Identity Management (ID) and Information Sharing (MISC31) in a single committee, DA (PED), governing the delivery of public services. It should be read alongside “Understanding the Public Services Industry” <http://www.berr.gov.uk/files/file46965.pdf> by Dr Deanne Julius, "Excellence and Fairness: Achieving world class public services" <http://www.pm.gov.uk/files/pdf/psr.pdf> from the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit paper and the reports referenced in section 3 above..

That comparison illustrates some the tensions and trade-offs that DA (PED) has to resolve. It will need all the help it can get in order to maintain the current rate of progress, let alone achieve that targeted for the years ahead. The final report of the EURIM Transformational dialogues, “Let the People speak: how to achieve citizen centric service delivery” suggests how Parliament and Industry can help. http://www.eurim.org.uk/activities/tgdialogues/TGD_IntegratedReport.pdf The EURIM dialogues brought a panel of Parliamentarians, with experience of chairing or sitting on select committee, alongside a team of industry experts, with experience of delivery, to collect, collate and analyse material and testimony from government advisors, trusted intermediaries, front-line practitioners, service users and benefits recipients. They looked not merely at what was happening but why, including why those forming and implementing policy did what they did. The short report contains many recommendations and has hot links to much supporting evidence, but homes in on two main points of leverage:

- The power of the select committees of Parliament to change the climate in which policy is formed and performance measured, including for services which cut across departmental boundaries
- The need for current and would-be service providers (including voluntary sector and commercial) to agree, promote and enforce good practice if they wish to rebuild public confidence in delivery

Without action by the select committees and suppliers the pressures on ministers, advisors and officials that have led to the current situation will continue and we will not be able to resolve tensions between, for example demands for “community choice” and against “Post code lotteries”.

5) From Social Inclusion to Information Society Workforce Skills

Rebuilding the skills base from top-down not just bottom-up

The Chairman of PITCOM, Andrew Miller MP, led an all-party delegation, including Ian Stewart MP and Ian Taylor MBE MP, accompanied by representatives from the Conference of Professors and Heads of Computing, e-Skills and the British Computer Society to meet the Minister with responsibility for Workforce Skills, Bill Rammell MP, on 14th July. The follow up to that meeting is expected to be led via PITCOM and one of the tasks of the workforce skills group will be to help with whatever support, including inputs from employers, is requested.

In July the participants in the second workshop of the Cybersecurity KTN skills mapping exercise, reviewed the inputs to date, agreed the format for the final report and discussed the main points. Not only were the previously expected problems confirmed but training to create systems and processes that are “secure by design” (see section 3 above) appears to be non-existent. The team has yet to find a course that teaches it, as opposed to “add-on security” or security as a separate discipline/profession. There are also very few programmes to develop investigative skills, other than those run by the police and a handful of Universities.

The draft report is currently being produced but one of the recommendations will be for Universities and/or those running accreditation programmes to make much clearer what is, and what is not, covered by the courses they currently offer. Given current UK accreditation structures this is much easier said than done. Moreover, ICT skills markets are global. The change therefore has to be led by employers, via their choice of professional bodies and trade associations, not driven by funding agencies tasked to meet government targets. It helps that Cybersecurity KTN has many of the major players on board. The discussion on how to deliver that particular recommendation will, however, be most interesting. Please e-mail eurim@eurim.org if you would like an invitation.

6) The UK Internet Governance Forum and E-Crime Reduction Partnership

From rhetoric to action: the delivery of partnership policing

The sessions on Security, Personal Internet Safety and the E-Crime Reduction Partnership at the UK Internet Governance Forum on 11th July produced much food for thought. The next stage is to identify projects that will rapidly demonstrate that a partnership approach can be translated from words into action and deliver results that whet the appetite of participants for more. Please e-mail Dan Mount MOUNTD@parliament.uk to volunteer participation.

In parallel, revised “maps” of players and initiatives were used to support workshops at the ACPO E-Crime conference in late June and are available in the members areas of the EURIM website. They are currently being revised in the light of feedback for reissue in advance of the Parliament and Internet Conference on 16th October.

Updating the on-line Child Protection scene

The most serious finding from the “mapping” workshops at the ACPO conference was that the computer forensics teams of the UK police forces again have backlogs of six months to two years, caused by the need to analyse images of child abuse. The situation is actually worse than at the time of Operation Ore because the investigations are based on better information. The draft EURIM “map” of Online Child Protection Initiatives (currently in the members’ only area) was very popular with the Police audience.

This is being updated in the light of recent feedback and will be placed on the EURIM website, with supporting papers on the current situation from CEOP and others, during August, to enable reference

during the run-up to the launch of the new Internet Safety Council, as recommended in the Byron review.

The other current task of the child protection sub-group is to help assemble the advance brief for Margaret Moran's meeting with the Prime Minister on filtering and related issues. Please e-mail Lucy Fairbrother FAIRBROTHERL@parliament.uk if your organisation would like to volunteer support for the follow up

7) Communications Policy and Regulatory Structures

Next generation access to a converged world

The overall objective of the Communications group is to encourage the generation and implementation of European, national and regional policies in the area of converged communications. This includes

- supporting a single, pan-European market in telecoms networks and services,
- UK inputs to European Policy
- reviewing the Communications Act 2003, "to ensure that the UK communications infrastructure is fit for the demands that will be placed on it in 2012"

Depending on the outcome of the CIAO review, the group will also seek to identify whether there is support for a short-order exercise to remove supposed barriers to infrastructure investment – e.g. broadband rates.

In each area the group plans to work with others and has already agreed co-operation with the E-Business Regulatory alliance on mapping and monitoring the many UK and EU consultations and initiatives in this space.

The next meeting is planned to be in Paris (provisionally 22nd September) to put current EU programmes into the context of the objectives of the French Presidency and "next generation access". It is apparent that the major equipment suppliers share with business users' the objective of expediting investment in local access to world-class synchronous broadband before their European staff are locked out of on-line global research, design, supply and distribution chains – unless they live and work in city centres, university towns and other "islands of fibre".

There is also a perceived need to move debate from concerns over broadband facilitated revenue destroying peer-to-peer piracy, towards support for revenue generating on-line, role-playing, interactive high-resolution video gaming, social and market networks. France has now followed Canada and others in giving film-industry style tax breaks to games developers. EURIM currently has no plans in this area, other than in the context of removing barriers to investment in the communications infrastructures necessary to support both the supply chain and the domestic market. The intention is instead to support the work of others, e.g. ELSPA, in the contact of the objectives of the Knowledge Economy Group.