

## A Short Guide to UK Political Players on the Information Society Scene: May 2009

This guide is regularly updated as organisations come and go. Please send any comments as to significant errors and omissions to [eurim@eurim.org](mailto:eurim@eurim.org).

### 1 Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology

[www.parliament.uk/parliamentary\\_offices/post.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_offices/post.cfm)

POST is the UK Parliament's in-house source of independent, balanced and accessible analysis of public policy issues related to science and technology. It uses secondees from academia and industry to help provide support for select committees and reports on topics decided on by a board of MPs and Peers. Most years it has at least one study on an ICT related topic. Last year it reported on "Next Generation Broadband Access". It is currently working on a report on "Technology and the Olympics", including topics such as security and spectrum for the emergency services.

### 2 House of Commons Library

The permanent staff of the Library includes subject specialists who produce briefing papers on ICT matters when these are of interest to a critical mass of Parliamentarians or likely to be the subject of legislation. These are viewed by MPs as the "Gold Standard", superior in balance and accuracy to any other source. The staff also maintain files of subject specialists and sources of information for use when topics arise, whether to aid briefings or select committees.

### 3 Registered All-Party Groups

Registered Parliamentary Groups must have at least 20 MPs across the main parties in membership and all officers must be members of the House or Commons or House of Lords. Registered groups cease to exist when a General Election is called and must be formally recreated and re-registered for the new Parliament. There are around 500 in total, 2/3<sup>rd</sup> intra-UK and the remainder covering relations between the UK and current/would-be nation states. The oldest is the Parliamentary and Scientific (P&S), founded in 1939. The second oldest is the **Parliamentary Information Technology Committee (PITCOM)**, founded in 1981.

Those relevant to Information Society issues include:

- **ICT (5)** Information Technology (PITCOM [www.pitcom.org.uk](http://www.pitcom.org.uk)), Communications (ApComms [www.apcomms.org.uk](http://www.apcomms.org.uk)), "Cable, Satellite and Digital", "Engineering and Information Technology" and Space.
- **Distribution and Content (14)** BBC, British Museum, Commercial Radio, Community Media, Digital TV Switchover, Film Industry, Identity Fraud, Intellectual Property, ITV, Libraries & Information Management, Media, Media Literacy, New Media.
- **Wider Knowledge Economy (25 +)** from Corporate Governance to Management and from Aerospace through Intelligent Energy, Financial Markets & Services, Insurance & Financial Services and Medical Technology to Pharmaceuticals.
- **Application of technology (70+)** including over 50 concerned with medical care alone.

Some have administrative support from trade associations or professional/consumer/patient groups, others from public relations firms. The P&S and PITCOM are unusual in being funded by subscription (PITCOM has 88 Corporate members) and having a ban on lobbying. The chairmen and executives of PITCOM and ApComms meet with EURIM (see below) to discuss their programmes and exploit opportunities for co-operation. They also organise a joint annual conference on Parliament and the Internet [www.parliamentandinternet.org.uk](http://www.parliamentandinternet.org.uk).

#### **4 EURIM – “The Information Society Alliance” [www.eurim.org.uk](http://www.eurim.org.uk)**

EURIM brings politicians, industry and officials to set political agendas across party, industry and interest group boundaries for the creation of a wealth creating, socially inclusive and democratically accountable Information Society: the use of ICT not the technology itself. The membership (including of the board of directors and governing council) overlaps with PITCOM and from 1994 - 2005 it “reported” to PITCOM Council meetings, but it is legally and financially independent. It is a company limited by guarantee, outside the rules for registered groups. Where-ever possible it works with and through relevant all-party groups (no longer just PITCOM) as well as via the policy teams of the main parties, think tanks, government departments and across industry and interest group boundaries to secure agreed results. Its current working groups are on Knowledge Economy, Public Service Delivery, Information Governance, E-Crime, Workforce Skills and Communications Policy. The objectives, strategy, tactics and deliverables programmes for each are on the website.

#### **5 Westminster Media Forum [www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk](http://www.westminsterforumprojects.co.uk)**

This was spun-off from the All-Party Media Group in much the same way as EURIM was spun off from PITCOM. It runs sponsored but balanced consultation workshops on topics of current political interest with sessions chaired by MPs at venues in easy reach of Parliament. Forthcoming topics include “The Emergency Service and Public Safety Spectrum”, “Priorities for Digital Britain” and “Broadband for All: Access and Inclusion and Media Literacy”. The group also run an eForum and forums covering Education, Health and Food/Nutrition issues.

#### **6 The UK Internet Governance Forum [www.nominet.org.uk/about/events/UKIGF](http://www.nominet.org.uk/about/events/UKIGF)**

This is not so much an organisation as a “space” in which people can work towards common outcomes linked by a series of events (Forums) at which issues are identified and participants form consortia to address them and report back on their progress and experiences. Like the Global IGF itself, nobody “owns” the UK IGF and it is not intended for it to be a new organisation. The first UK IGF received a report back from the IGF in Rio, had workshops on the issues raised and discussed an outline of the plan of action to demonstrate results by the time of the next global IGF, in Hyderabad. The second explored the four “themes” identified for the Hyderabad and the third was the report back. The next meeting will almost certainly be on the UK inputs to the next IGF in Sharm el Sheik.

#### **7 ICT Trade Associations**

**Intellect** [www.intellectuk.org](http://www.intellectuk.org) is the UK trade association for the IT, telecoms and electronics industries (which together generate around 10% of UK GDP and 15% of UK trade). Its members account for over 80% of these markets and include blue-chip multinationals as well as early stage technology companies. It also hosts the **Broadband Stakeholder Group**, the UK Government's independent advisory group on broadband.

The **Internet Service Providers Association** [www.ispa.org.uk](http://www.ispa.org.uk) and **Internet Telephony Service Providers Association** [www.itspa.org.uk](http://www.itspa.org.uk) represent the Internet Services Providers and Voice over IP suppliers respectively.

The **Direct Marketing Association** [www.dma.org.uk](http://www.dma.org.uk) has most of the On-Line and E-Commerce players in membership.

The **Internet Advertising Bureau** [www.iabuk.net](http://www.iabuk.net) represents the UK digital marketing sector, including advertisers and agencies, but is mainly run for digital media owners (i.e. those that host advertising on their sites).

The **Internet Enforcement Group** [www.ieg-uk.org](http://www.ieg-uk.org) brings together the industry groups concerned with protecting intellectual property rights (including films, music, software, brands etc.).

## 8 ICT User Interest Groups

**National Computing Centre** [www.ncc.co.uk](http://www.ncc.co.uk) was created by government in 1966 to foster the use of what is now IT and incorporates a variety of industry groups, such as the **Institute of IT Training** [www.iitt.org.uk](http://www.iitt.org.uk). The collective memberships of these include around 1600 users, over 200 suppliers and most of those providing employer-funded ICT training in the UK. It also has around 70 staff.

Some of the main suppliers still have their own user groups (e.g. the **IBM CUA** [www.ibm-cua.org.uk](http://www.ibm-cua.org.uk)). There are also generic interest groups such as the **Internet Society UK Chapter**.

**The E-Business Regulatory Alliance** [www.e-ra.org.uk](http://www.e-ra.org.uk) was created in 2002 with support from CBI, EURIM, Intellect and the Direct Marketing Association and some of their leading members to monitor and respond to proposals and initiatives to regulate e-commerce and on-line services and transactions. It is now funded by membership subscriptions and works in close co-operation with other ICT industry groups in London and Brussels.

## 9 ICT Professional, Personal Development and Skills Organisations

The **British Computer Society** [www.bcs.org](http://www.bcs.org) is the chartered body for Computer professionals, awarding CITP, CSci and CEng as appropriate. It has over 60,000 members in over a hundred countries, a thriving qualifications business, a wide range of specialist groups and over 200 staff. It also hosts the **Communications Management Association** [www.thecma.com](http://www.thecma.com) (the voice of communications managers in organisations large enough to have them) and provides the secretariat for **Information Assurance Advisory Council** [www.iaac.org.uk](http://www.iaac.org.uk) (which brings together corporates and individuals).

The **Institution of Engineering and Technology** [www.theiet.org](http://www.theiet.org) has around 150,000 members globally, supported by 450 staff worldwide. It is the professional body for the increasingly inter-disciplinary fields of IT, communications, electronics, electrical engineering, power engineering, software, control, informatics and manufacturing and awards Chartered Engineer status in these fields.

The **Institute for the Management of Information Systems** [www.imis.org.uk](http://www.imis.org.uk) has around 14,000 members, most of whom work outside the UK in the growth areas of Africa and Asia.

The **Society of IT Management** [www.socitm.gov.uk](http://www.socitm.gov.uk) has over 500 local government authorities/agencies (including police, fire, ambulance etc.) in membership.

**The Information Security Awareness Forum** [www.theisaf.org](http://www.theisaf.org) brings together the relevant activities over twenty professional bodies, trade associations and interest groups including the UK activities of: the **Information Systems Security Association** (ISSA) which has 14,000 members world-wide and 1,100 in the UK, **ISC2**, (the International Information Systems Security Consortium) the largest of the US-based IS security accreditation bodies and **ISACA** (Information Systems Audit and Control Association) which similarly accredits those who audit computer systems. The **Institute for Information Security Professionals** (IISP) is a new higher-level accreditation body.

**E-Skills** [www.e-skills.com](http://www.e-skills.com) is the Sector Skills Council for ICT and Telecoms (including user skills). Embedded software is covered by that for science, engineering and manufacturing as whole, **SEMTA** [www.semta.org.uk](http://www.semta.org.uk). Multi-media is covered by **Skillset** [www.skillset.org](http://www.skillset.org).

**Council of Professors and Heads of Computing** [www.cphc.ac.uk](http://www.cphc.ac.uk) brings together those responsible for ICT teaching and research, including multi-media as well as computing and communications etc.

## 10 Think Tanks

Several of the mainstream political think tanks, such as **Demos**, **ippr**, **iSociety**, **The Work Foundation** and the **Adam Smith Institute** have organised relevant events and studies but the **Conservative Technology Forum** [www.conservative-technology.org](http://www.conservative-technology.org) and the Labour **e-futures group** (no web site) are the only ones focussed almost entirely on ICT and Internet topics.

## 11 Other Relevant Groups

The **Worshipful Company of Information Technologists** [www.wcit.org.uk](http://www.wcit.org.uk) is the 100<sup>th</sup> Livery Company of the City of London.

The **Real Time Club** [www.realtimeclub.org](http://www.realtimeclub.org) is the main ICT dining club.

**Nominet** [www.nominet.org.uk](http://www.nominet.org.uk), the .uk domain name registry is a company limited by guarantee, owned by its 3,000 + members, including Internet users as well as suppliers. It has 115 staff, a turnover of £14 million and a significant role in UK Internet governance.

**LINX** [www.linx.net](http://www.linx.net), the London Internet Exchange is similarly owned by its 250 members: those Internet Service Providers who are connect direct.

The **Internet Watch Foundation** [www.iwf.org.uk](http://www.iwf.org.uk) is funded by the EU and the wider internet industry to operate a national Hotline to handle reports of criminal content specifically child sexual abuse content hosted anywhere in the world and criminally obscene and incitement racial hatred hosted in the UK and thereafter to issue notices to takedown such content as is hosted in the UK.

The **Children's Charities Coalition for Internet Safety** <http://chisuk.blogspot.com> brings together the on-line child protection actions of the main children's charities.