DIGITAL FORENSICS SPECIALIST GROUP

Notes of the sixth meeting, held at 12:00pm on Wednesday 14 July 2010 at the Home Office, London

Present:

Jim Fraser	University of Strathclyde (Chair)
Mark Cameron	Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
Neil Cohen	Home Office Scientific Development Branch
Paul Downing	NPIA (for Andy Kay)
Steve Edwards	Met Police (for Charlie McMurdie)
Geoff Fellows	LG Training Partnership
Angus Marshall	Forensic Science Society
Miranda Moore	5pb Chambers
Andy Rennison	Forensic Science Regulator
Peter Sommer	LSE
Merv Valentine	Greater Manchester Police
Kenny Chigbo	Home Office (Secretary)

In attendance

Dave Compton	Forensic Science Service
Simon Iveson	Home Office

Apologies

Nigel Jones	Technology Risk
Andy Kay	NPIA
Charlie McMurdie	Met Police
Tony Sammes	Cranfield University
Craig Wilson	Digital Detective

Introduction
1.1 Jim Fraser welcomed all to the sixth meeting of the group

Minutes of the last meeting
2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Matters arising
3.1 Andy Rennison saw the work of this group expanding to cover all aspects of digital evidence including CCTV images. He also announced that Jim Fraser was standing down as chair of the group to take a up a new role on the Fingerprints Specialist Group. Mark Stokes, Head of Digital and Electronic Forensic Service at the Metropolitan Police, has agreed to take over leadership of this group. He is also leading for the police service on accrediting police labs.

3.2 All the other actions from the last meeting were either cleared or are agenda items for this meeting.

Codes of Practice and Conduct

4.1 Andy Rennison informed the DFSG that the previous format for the standards document he published for consultation was revised because UKAS could not accredit against those standards. The revised format is more usable and is about to be published for a final consultation. The plan is for this consultation to be just among a small group of stakeholders. The End User Specialist Group suggested that the document should be called a "Code of Practice" instead of standards. There is a possibility that the codes could be underpinned by statute in the future. But for now, regulating will be by agreement. The Regulator welcomed feedback on the codes, saying that UKAS were comfortable with it. There will be some pilots before the new framework is rolled out.

4.2 The main changes from the previous version of the document were in the validation section, which is significantly different and the reporting section, which has more flexibility in terms of timing. There was a concern about how to keep up with the validation process in a constantly-changing environment. The DFSG acknowledged the work done in producing the document and thought it was well-drafted. Simon Iveson was thanked for his efforts.

Digital forensics appendix

5.1 The appendix was drafted about a year ago. It has now been revised to fit into the new format of the Codes of Practice. New text was added on validation.

5.2 The DFSG made the following comments on the appendix:
- The references to ACPO principles should be removed.
- In paragraph 4.13.2 (d) and (e) should be reconciled.
- The list of National Occupational Standards on page 5 should be left out.
- There should be a definition of "computer"
- There should be a reference that allows the applicable international standards

5.3 Skills for Justice were running a pilot on applying international standards in the forensic arena and this includes digital forensics. After the reports have been evaluated Andy Rennison will provide feedback to the DFSG.

Action: Andy Rennison

5.4 The grey areas of the appendix cover new text that has been contextualised to fit in with the Codes of Practice. Angus Marshall and Craig Wilson were nominated to work with Simon in editing this section.

Action: Angus Marshall/Craig Wilson/Simon Iveson

5.5 The DFSG was asked to send any further comments on the appendix to Simon Iveson.

Action: All

Validation of methods

6.1 Dave Compton gave a presentation on the FSS's experiences of validating digital forensic services within ISO17025. Validation in this context was to demonstrate that tools used are fit for purpose. The validation must be transparent and can be challenged. What need to be validated are the product, method, process and services. Validation also needed to consider the user requirement. Dave Compton's presentation slides will be circulated with the minutes of the meeting.

Action: Soheel Joosab

Claims Test Mark

7.1 Simon gave a presentation on this. A working group was set up to look at the Claims Test Mark and establish if it was fit for purpose. It involved using Independent Characteristic Validation, in which a joint venture special purpose vehicle is used to federate all common functions. This supports multiple themes of validation through testing houses. Simon invited the DFSG to consider whether this was worth pursuing.

7.2 The DFSG considered it was useful and had the potential to reduce duplication. It was a good idea on principle. However, the costs and delays involved are drawbacks.

7.2 Angus Marshall will be meeting with those behind the proposal and will report to the DFSG at the next meeting.

Action: Angus Marshall

Work plan and rollout of standards framework

8.1 The Codes of Practice will be published in the next few weeks. A rollout plan needs to be developed. The target is 2013 for all providers' labs to be accredited. The Regulator understands the difficulties meeting this standard will pose in the current financial climate. He will be asking ACPO to sign up in principle to the new framework.

AOB

9.1 Angus Marshall gave feedback on a BSI meeting he had attended. They are working on a draft ISO document on information security. Most of the UK amendments were not accepted because they will delay publication of the document.

9.2 Andy Rennison thanked Jim Fraser for his work as the Chair of the DFSG and this was supported by members.

Date of next meeting

10.1 The date of the next meeting will be discussed with the new Chair and suggested to the DFSG.