



Home Office

# HOME OFFICE GROUP

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 THE GOVERNMENT AND HOME OFFICE ICT STRATEGIES

This Home Office Corporate Strategy describes our approach to delivering technology, systems and services for the Group over the next 5 – 7 years. The way we will do this is founded on our adoption of the **Government ICT Strategy** within the Home Office. This will mean:

- Use of Government wide commodity ICT as the default solution for the provision of core shared services for the Home Office including:
  - Adoption of the Public Sector Network (PSN) where appropriate
  - Use of the Government Application Store and cloud computing
  - Alignment with the Government Desktop Services
- Development of Home Office specific applications being informed by core aspects of the Government ICT Strategy including:
  - Mandatory use of Open Standards
  - Rigorous consideration of the use of Open Source compared to proprietary technology
  - Alignment with UK Government Architectures
  - Adoption of Agile methodology wherever appropriate

In many respects therefore, much of this document is about how the Home Office is laying the ground for, and then realising the implementation of the Government ICT Strategy within the Department.

## 1.2 BUILDING ONE HOME OFFICE

The Home Office provides leadership across government for immigration, passports, drugs policy, crime, counter-terrorism and the police. The department has had a devolved operating model that gives its Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) considerable autonomy, including the formulation of policy. This provides clarity of purpose and accountability for business outcomes.

However, this has led to a complex landscape with fragmentation and duplication in information, systems, and processes; missed opportunities for sharing between

businesses; and a piecemeal approach to managing interconnections and dependencies, particularly for programmes and projects. This has been exacerbated by the variety of approaches to the procurement and delivery of technology across the department. This devolved model is also expensive to control and maintain.

The future direction for the Home Office is a simplified, joined-up and supportive department. This will involve a more collective and common approach to many aspects of its ICT and which supports 'The Home Office we want to be' programme. Government wide commoditised services and other 'vanilla' or 'off the shelf' solutions will replace bespoke services and common policies, standards and processes will be developed for business areas to adopt as part of building one Home Office. This direction means that future decisions that benefit the Home Office Group will be preferred over local benefits.

The '80/20' rule will be adopted where sensible to help ensure solutions are not over engineered and that common components are re-used without the need for physical device configuration providing a 'plug and play' environment for much of our ICT across the department and wider government. This will enable the Home Office to drive out full value from its ICT spend and help to reduce the complexity of its current operation.

The Home Office ICT Strategy takes its direction from the Government ICT Strategy that was published in 2011. The Government ICT Strategy sets out an overarching approach to provide a common infrastructure, common standards and capabilities, which will cut the cost of ICT and deliver real savings across government. The Strategy identifies a list of actions to improve ICT procurement and aid reuse and sharing of ICT assets across the public sector in order to deliver better services, particularly through digital channels. The government strategy also seeks to robustly challenge and change outmoded, 'siloed' approaches that have traditionally been used within government departments.

The Home Office welcomes this approach and is actively engaged in many of the Cabinet Office initiatives in order to ensure their successful implementation within the Home Office Group and across government.

### 1.3 PURPOSE & SCOPE

This document sets out the Home Office Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy to facilitate a standardised, value driven approach to delivering and sustaining technology, systems and services for the Group over the next 5 – 7 years. A key focus for this strategy is to make real cost savings and ensure excellent value from ICT investment decisions. The strategic approach outlined here is intended to improve business operations, enable a more effective service delivery model, and improve engagement with citizens across the public sector and thereby support business outcomes. This Strategy applies across the Home Office Group encompassing delivery groups, delivery agencies and other delivery partners such as NDPBs.

ICT is a key enabler of change and business transformation across the Group and much of the ICT Strategy will be delivered through existing projects and programmes underway across the department e.g. E-Borders, Immigration Case Work (ICW), Disclosure and Barring, New Passport Programme, etc.

The ICT Strategy is also seeking to influence behavioural change – helping the Home Office to be clear about its business needs, re-examining its business requirements, buying only what it needs and strictly limiting bespoke solutions. The primary focus for the Home Office ICT Strategy will be the activities set out in the Government ICT Strategy and the implementation of those actions across the Home Office Group.

### 1.4 VISION

The Vision for the Home Office Group ICT Strategy is:

**To reduce the cost and increase the value of ICT investments through a shared service model using standardised government infrastructure and application services which are straightforward to administer and accessible to all via open standards.**

### 1.5 BACKGROUND

In 2006, the Home Office set out four principal objectives for its information, technology and systems:

- Sharing and reusing systems and technology
- Joining-up information flows and processes
- Exploiting information
- Compliance with legislation, regulations, standards and cross-government strategies

Delivering against these objectives has been challenging because of the devolved nature of the organisation, the complex mix of technologies, commercial arrangements, business processes and financial arrangements.

Despite these difficulties, good progress has been made in many areas, for instance cutting costs by over £100m, representing a 25% reduction, through joining up the Home Office Headquarters and UK Border Agency onto a single shared IT infrastructure, and saving £14m, representing a 33% reduction over the next 4 years through contract changes to telephony services. These successes demonstrate the size of cost reductions and improvements that can be achieved but a considerable amount remains to be done. The effort in delivering these savings has also highlighted the extensive skills and knowledge required by in-house Information Technology (IT), Knowledge and Information Management (KIM) and Programme and Project Management (PPM) professionals in order to deliver the ICT Strategy.

This type of work has also prepared the ground for the Home Office's implementation of the Government ICT Strategy. The Home Office continues to work to identify economies of scale and the appropriate skill sets required to deliver ICT across Government.

## 2. Future Direction

### 2.1 UNIFYING THEMES

Our future approach is based on three unifying themes:

- a. **Innovation and Agility**
- b. **Reuse**
- c. **Commoditisation**

#### A. INNOVATION AND AGILITY

The Home Office, particularly through its adoption of the Government ICT Strategy, will take a flexible approach to the development of information, systems and technology, including its commercial and delivery mechanisms. The Group will use a government-wide reference architecture, open standards and agile and lean methodologies, amongst other components, to bring about the changes required to deliver a consistent ICT approach.

#### B. REUSE

Any new applications and services will be developed and documented with a view to future reuse. Existing capabilities will be made available for reuse wherever appropriate.

Considerable effort has already been employed in strengthening the department's architectural approach to reuse, so that existing candidates for reuse can be more easily identified and that consideration of reuse is embedded into future project lifecycles. This work will continue and the Home Office will:

- Mandate that future systems are built based on a foundation of core capabilities in order to maximise reuse
- Ensure that requirements used to express any new business needs are written in a consistent way to enable the identification of existing core capabilities that can be re-used, and, should new services be required, ensure that they result in additional core capabilities which can also be re-used.

This approach will require a clearly expressed 'desired future state' for Home Office capabilities, commercial

arrangements (for example licences and terms of use), the service delivery model and the technology landscape, in order to avoid the trap of reusing inconsistent components/patterns which might hinder the departments strategic approach and increase future costs.

#### C. COMMODITISATION

The Home Office will use a set of core commodity shared services to deliver core ICT. Our default assumption is that those services will be those delivered through the Government ICT Strategy. Specifically we see:

- PSN and G-Cloud and a Government wide Hosting service as the vehicle for network services, storage and hosting **Government Cloud Strategy**
- Future desktop services being provided via the government services resulting from the delivery of the **End User Device Strategy**.

We also expect that there will be a set of other government wide commoditised components that are consistently used as the assumed input for any new development, which along with the use of Open Standards and the Home Office implementation of the UK Government Reference Architecture will allow for the easy and effective reuse of capabilities.

### 2.2 DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES

In addition to the Government ICT Strategy, a number of internal and external drivers and challenges have influenced the department's approach to its ICT strategy. These include:

#### NEW PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Government Procurement, led from the Cabinet Office, is building on existing operations to deliver sustainable cost savings for Central Government departments by streamlining current procurement processes which will include negotiating contracts for widely used goods and services for the whole of Government at a single, better price thereby ending the

signing of expensive deals by individual departments. The Home Office's Commercial Director is one of the seven Crown Commercial Representatives for Government and will lead in managing a number of the top suppliers to Government. The Home Office will ensure that it leverages the buying power of the Home Office Group and wider Government as appropriate to provide value as well as consistent pricing and margins for similar products and services.

## LEGACY CONTRACTS

The Home Office has a tight control of its contracts but many of its ICT contracted obligations and commitments were agreed some time ago and some no longer provide good value to the business. As legacy contracts need to be updated to reflect new ICT requirements and the changing environment across government, the management of these contracts becomes increasingly challenging and the costs of these changes can be prohibitive. The Home Office has an ongoing review of its ICT contracts with a view to renegotiate and where appropriate, to trigger break clauses.

## ENDING OF MAJOR ICT CONTRACTS IN 2016

A number of large Home Office contracts will end in 2016 and, in line with the Government ICT Strategy, the Department is preparing to move to a 'best-of-breed' procurement arrangement, converging onto the Government shared services as appropriate.

## EXISTING PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES IN FLIGHT

Much of the transformation underway in the Home Office Group is ICT enabled. The majority of this is managed through programmes and projects in flight across various parts of the business. The existing portfolio of programmes and projects will continue to be the primary delivery route for the Government ICT strategy, central initiatives and the Home Office's Group ICT strategy and will therefore need powerful oversight and governance arrangements.

## ROAMING APPLICATIONS BETWEEN ACCESS DEVICES

Mobile and flexible working delivers many benefits; it optimises property estate usage, reduces costs and increases employee opportunities to work, whilst improving work-life balance. The Home Office has already made good progress in this area and will continue to implement this flexible approach across the Group in order to better support its workforce. Being able to access applications regardless of location and/or device helps the workforce to operate more effectively and thereby improves the overall effectiveness of the business.

## INABILITY TO WORK ON MULTIPLE SECURITY LEVELS USING ONE NETWORK

Many business areas such as crime, counter-terrorism and policing require multiple security levels. The Home Office has a number of different CONFIDENTIAL information systems which have been developed over time to meet specific business requirements. This has resulted in several discrete systems, each with its own 'siloes' technology stack and supporting services which have become complex and costly to maintain. The Home Office is working to define a CONFIDENTIAL solution that provides flexible access to applications and joins up systems and is PSN compliant thereby reducing the cost of networking. Cabinet Office has initiated a review of the Government Protective Marking System (GPMS) and recommendations from this review will be factored into any plans for future secure information system.

## HOME OFFICE STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL CHANGES

The Home Office businesses have historically had a large number of structural and/or functional changes due to policy changes or new initiatives and undoubtedly the department will continue to evolve. Such changes have the potential to add significant complexity and cost to its ICT arrangements so it is necessary to ensure that the ICT implications for any changes are fully assessed and understood to avoid mushrooming costs and unnecessary complexity.

## SHARING INFORMATION MORE EFFECTIVELY

Information and its effective use is the lifeblood of the Group. The unformulated growth of the organisation in the past has made it difficult to map out the key interactions and information flows required within and between business areas and the wider public sector. Joining up the Home Office Group ICT onto a common infrastructure and sharing applications and capabilities is providing new opportunities and easier ways to share and exploit information and support collaboration. The Home Office is also tackling a number of other related information issues and their resolution will complement the development of a common infrastructure such as open standards, descriptions, registers (including data quality characteristics), the ability to search for, and link, information and a governance mechanism that allows information to be shared and reused appropriately.

## CYBER SECURITY AND INFORMATION ASSURANCE

Appropriate management of the Home Office's information assets, systems and processes is an important aspect of all the organisation's ICT arrangements. In accordance with **Robert Hannigan's report on data handling**, the Home Office Group has developed a strong set of policies, systems, process and a robust set of security measures. Given the increased focus on the internet for delivery of services, the Home Office is working with the Office of Cyber Security & Information Assurance (OCSIA) at the Cabinet Office to ensure that the department continues to keep its information and data safe and secure whilst balancing this with transparency and openness.

## TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS

This is a key part of the Government's efficiency and reform agenda and has the potential to:

- Deliver a safe, secure and appropriate flow of information within and outside of government
- Strengthen the public's trust in government

- Realise significant economic benefits by enabling businesses and non-profit organisations to build innovative applications and websites using public data
- Encourage greater participation in decision-making
- Deliver better value for money in public spending

In relation to ICT, the department has already worked with groups of talented computer programmers and designers to 'hack' government data as part of a drive to invent more helpful and user friendly ways to present data electronically via **www.data.gov.uk** and contribute to making government more open and accountable to the public. The Home Office is committed to improving data flows and to making information accessible, which will in turn help the public evaluate whether policies and services are appropriate and represent value for money.

## TIGHT FINANCIAL CONTROLS ON ICT AND INCREASED EFFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

A strong emphasis across government is the pooling and reuse of systems and technology resources wherever possible. This is even more important at a time of financial constraints. The Home Office is committed to reducing its ICT costs wherever possible and maximising the benefits from each and every investment. This has meant that many planned ICT upgrades have been stopped or put on hold and large projects have been broken down into smaller managed phases. The department has sought opportunities to make do and mend ICT systems and the lifespan of some systems has been extended to drive more value from their increased use where this provides value for money.

## LEGACY IT PROVISION

A number of Home Office functions continue to run legacy systems because they still meet the users' needs even though newer technologies or more efficient methods are available. Integration of these legacy systems with newer systems can be challenging as the existing systems usually run on slow or obsolete hardware that can be hard to maintain, improve or

expand and may have vulnerabilities. The kind of bridge hardware and software that might be required is sometimes not available and bespoke bridges are developed which adds to the overall cost of ICT. The Home Office plans to move from its legacy IT systems and hardware to the Government Shared Service Model. This will require business areas to change processes and procedures and adapt to the new technologies in order to drive out efficiencies and reduce costs.

## 2.3 BUILDING BLOCKS

The Home Office will meet the challenges outlined above by adopting and, where appropriate, building locally on the Government ICT Strategy. We will:

- Drive out value through the use of Government-wide ICT services, so that
  - Networks including CONFIDENTIAL networks will be converged to provide a single unified network infrastructure under PSN
  - A common desktop will be used across the Home Office
  - Applications and hardware will be rationalised and reused
  - Telecoms will be aggregated and a unified communications approach developed
  - Existing data centres and hosting arrangements will be further consolidated
- Support sharing and reuse by creating a capabilities catalogue and then adopting a capabilities-based approach to drafting of specifications and requirements to specify what the business needs
- Solve both real and perceived security issues that impede progress – particularly in consolidating Impact Level (IL)4 (CONFIDENTIAL) networks and adopting a single IL4 desktop
- Innovate and exploit technologies to improve business processes and rigorously compare Open Source with proprietary solutions to ensure best fit and value
- Ensure that common and consistent business and technical architectures are developed to enable the joining-up and sharing of systems and data, building on the UK Government Reference Architecture
- Identify and manage ICT interconnections and dependencies for projects and programmes to support planning and portfolio management
- Use open standards to allow sharing across the wider public sector and also enabling engagement with SME's and citizens where appropriate.
- Ensure that ICT takes account of both the business requirements for remote, mobile and flexible working and our shared services strategy for estates rationalisation

Many of these building blocks are closely linked to the actions in the Government ICT Strategy and are being actively tackled in the Home Office.

For example the Home Office has already:

- realised significant savings in its major IT and telephony contracts and in the cost of shared services through its reuse approach
- achieved significant convergence towards Group wide desktop and hosting arrangements over the last three years (see figure 2. on page 10)
- carried out significant rationalisation of Data Centres with suppliers' co-operation

And the Home Office is:

- starting to streamline and reduce the number of its various networks in a coherent and manageable way in advance of adopting PSN
- successfully employing virtualisation as a way to reduce spend on expensive hardware components whilst maintaining performance and service level standards
- leading the way for Government on the potential uses of Cloud Services, acting as a Foundation Delivery Partner

The Home Office intend that these building blocks are shaped to align with the Government ICT Strategy and its **Implementation Plan**.



### 3. Strategic Alignment

As described in the introduction, the history and devolved nature of the organisation has led to a number of separate and independent systems and technology solutions having been developed over the years using various standards. These have been complex to develop and are costly to maintain.

This approach has not been favoured by the Home Office in recent years. The department has sought to remove the stovepipe/vertical models and has promoted reuse and sharing of its capabilities, where practical and cost effective to align with a Service Towers model (see figure 1. below). This has started to show the expected benefits in terms of cost reduction and reduced complexity.

Central to this is the development of an architecture which identifies and organises the capabilities needed by the Home Office, from both business and ICT perspectives. Business outcomes are the key driver for change to the Home Office's ICT and the department

is using an agile approach to deliver the building blocks described in section 2 above.

Past experiences, coupled with a multi-sourced supply model, have highlighted the need for a particular set of skilled professionals within the organisation to enable full and successful implementation of the ICT strategy. The Home Office is building a strong in-house capability through its professional groups such as IT, KIM, and PPM. These groups have developed good links with professional bodies across government to ensure skills are further developed and kept up to date.

Overall, the Home Office has made good progress on its convergence journey since 2006 and is now aligning its ICT strategic approach to other, wider government strategies and initiatives to enable sharing, reuse and joining up to be extended beyond the borders of the Home Office to the wider government environment (see figure 2 on next page).

Figure 1: Home Office Service Delivery

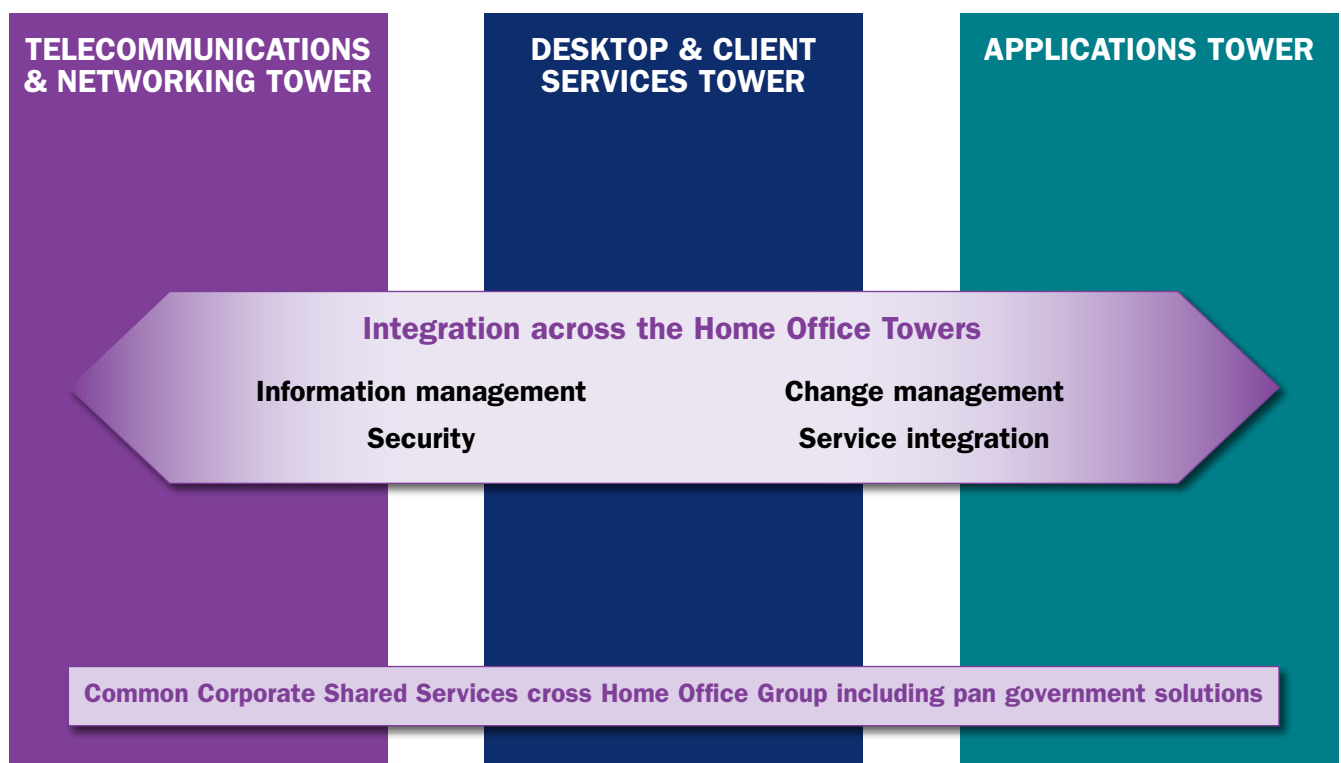
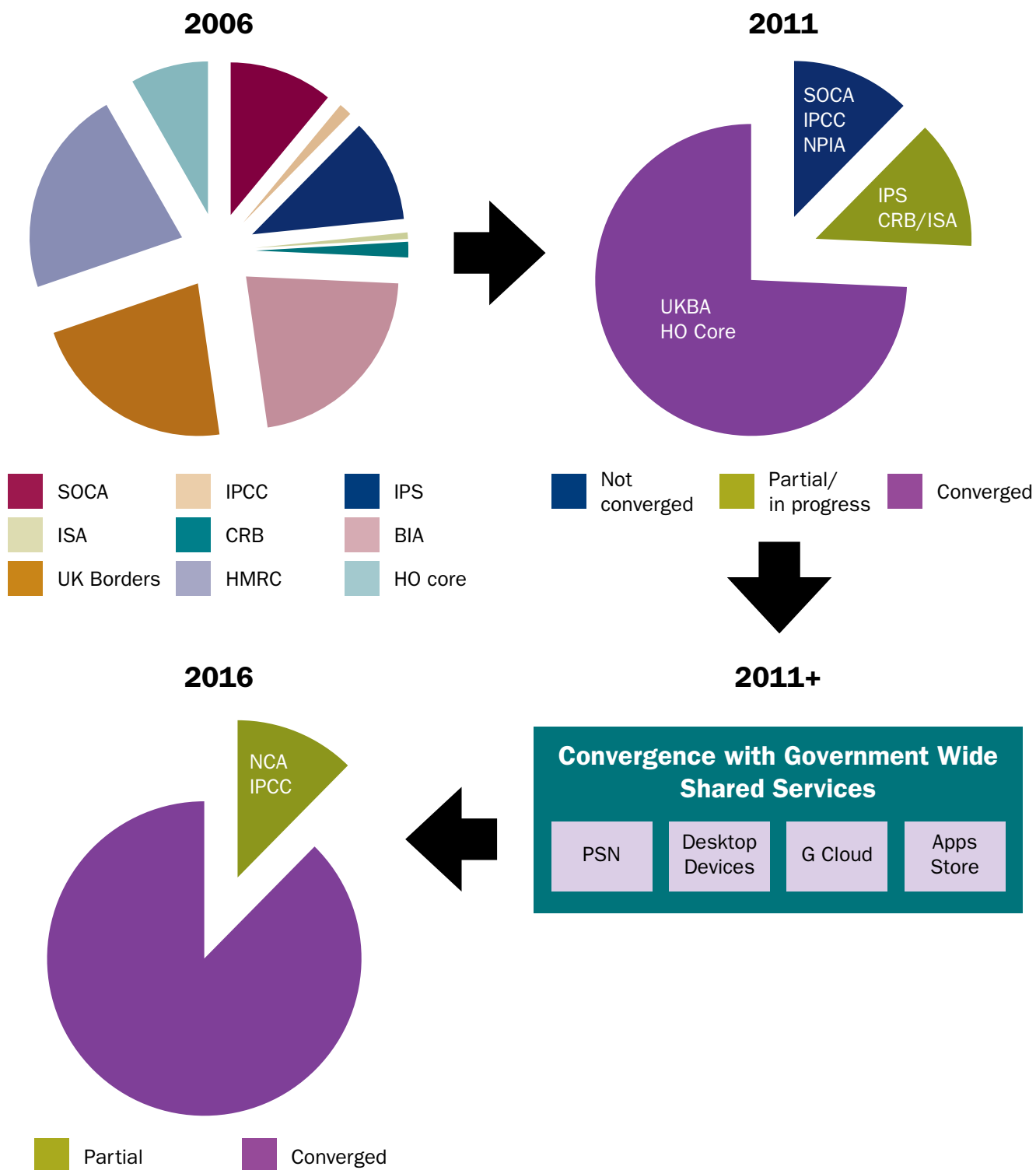


Figure 2: The Home Office convergence journey 2006-2016

## The Home Office strategy to converge on to a Shared Service Model



# 4. Sourcing

Traditionally the Home Office has had three very distinct approaches to sourcing our ICT:

1. ‘Traditional’ output based contracts where much of the solution is determined by the supplier. The supplier builds and runs the systems and reuse does not feature in the contract.
2. Business change programmes run in-house with strands looking at process simplification and standardisation, legal simplification, system design, and technology evaluation, either Commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) or bespoke, are seen as a business enabler, with its specific capabilities derived from the business requirements and not vice versa. A system integrator is typically hired to build but not necessarily run the ICT system.
3. Business change programmes developed by suppliers drawn from a pre-competed framework contract. Proposals for a given business outcome are sought from the suppliers on the framework. Typically two will then be selected to engage in a dialogue to shape the solution, ensure interoperability, etc.

This has led to systems being procured using several different commercial arrangements. Although,

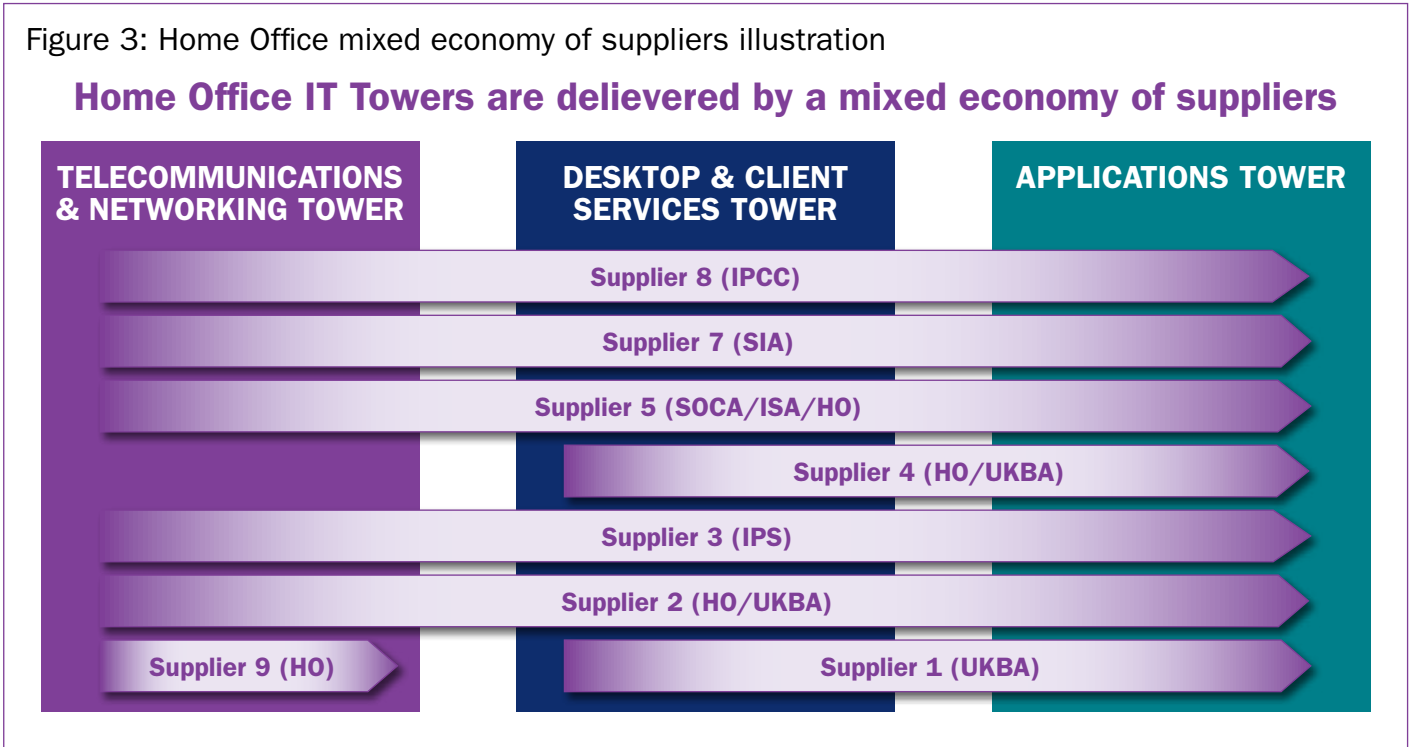
many Home Office systems have functions in common, which may or may not be recognised early on, they still have not been reused to deliver best value. Rarely has demand for software licences been shared or even aggregated.

This approach is no longer satisfactory and the strong push from the Cabinet Office to change the culture of government procurement and spending is helping to significantly change the landscape for ICT procurement and licensing arrangements. The Home Office Group Commercial Director, in consultation with the Home Office Group CIO, are working closely with the Cabinet Office to help develop a more flexible and iterative approach to procurement which will include:

- multiple suppliers, to introduce competitive tension and reduce reliance on a ‘monolithic supplier’
- use of a commoditised approach to procurement in order to simplify costs and delivery, and ease future transition arrangements

This approach is reflected in the Home Office ICT commercial strategy and will enable the delivery of the Home Office ICT Strategy across the organisation.

Figure 3: Home Office mixed economy of suppliers illustration



## 5. Policies and Standards

The Government ICT Strategy identifies the need for a common set of policies and standards across government. The Home Office is already engaged with this cross-government activity and will ensure that any Home Office requirements are represented in the development of these policies and standards. A number of mandated corporate policies and standards are required in order to ensure strategic alignment of ICT across the Home Office Group. Too often differing policies, standards and terminologies used in

various parts of the business have helped to stifle an ambition to join up, share and reuse ICT across the organisation. The diagram in figure 4 below shows the major policies and standards that will need to be developed and adopted across the Home Office Group. In the first instance, the Home Office will seek to adopt cross government policies and standards where appropriate; for example, the Home Office plans to comply with the Government ICT Standards and Architecture Framework.

## 6. Demand Management

In order to manage planning, production and delivery of ICT there is a need to balance requests for ICT products and services (demand) with an ability to produce them in terms of group priorities and resource and scheduling constraints (supply). If not managed firmly and effectively it can severely hamper the ability of the organisation to deliver its ICT strategic goals in an effective manner. In the past a lack of effective prioritisation with limited resources and unmanaged scheduling of service requests,

incidents, changes, continuous improvement efforts and ongoing re-planning of projects has led to multiple demand queues with little guidance for prioritisation. The Home Office has been working to improve its demand management; to funnel requests and put in place appropriate resources and approved priorities criteria for scheduling. Enhancements to the current model for demand management will be incorporated into the demand management policy and standards to create an effective model for the future.

Figure 4: A common set of policies and standards required to support the ICT Strategy



## 7. Skills, Knowledge and Ability

It is important that the department becomes a more intelligent customer and to have much closer links between the IT, KIM, PPM and Commercial professionals to ensure that their combined technical and business skills, and their knowledge and abilities are collectively delivering the ICT strategy required to successfully support the business.


The department has an ongoing review of its IT workforce plan and will use this to identify and fill any gaps in areas where specific expertise is required. The Home Office has already faced challenges in recruiting and retaining the calibre of IT professionals required to deliver major elements of the ICT strategy. To retain skilled staff the Home Office must ensure that IT and other related professionals have a clear career path within the department and across wider government and, that it creates a more vibrant technical in-house community which will help grow and retain key IT professionals.

To this end, the Home Office has adopted an IT profession function to cultivate talent across the organisation and to create a self-sustaining community of IT professionals which uses the **Skills Framework for the Information Age** (SFIA). This provides a step towards establishing a 'currency' which will allow people to be moved/assigned to appropriate roles across the Home Office, and also across other government departments.

Development opportunities, using both classroom based and eLearning packages, with an accreditation/certification framework will continue to be publicised to encourage technical employees to undertake training in a cost-effective and timely manner. The IT profession will continue to be supported by a visible commitment from senior management in recognising and rewarding technical contributions and successes.


## 8. Controls and Governance

Strong and directive governance arrangements for ICT are a vital component for delivery of the ICT strategy. The levers of control across the department will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that they provide the level of control/mandation required to deliver the strategy. ICT representatives from across the businesses will need to have the appropriate authority to make decisions on behalf of their business area and assure implementation of the ICT strategy and government initiatives.



**'Strong governance is essential and efficiency gains are proportional to the level of mandation in the use of shared services'**

Lesson 5 from Government Shared Services: A Strategic Vision July 2011



## 9. Implementing the ICT Strategy

Home Office IT (HOIT) and the Office of the CIO (OCIO) will direct the implementation of the ICT Strategy in co-operation with the business areas and in consultation with other corporate services including commercial and estates.

The Home Office ICT strategy is not an end in itself but rather an overarching approach which needs to be distilled, adopted and implemented by business and operational areas throughout the department in order to support a successful Home Office (see figure 5.)

Given the strong steer from central government regarding the future direction of ICT and given the devolved nature of the Home Office, the organisation must achieve a sizeable change in its culture in order to successfully delivery against the ICT strategy.

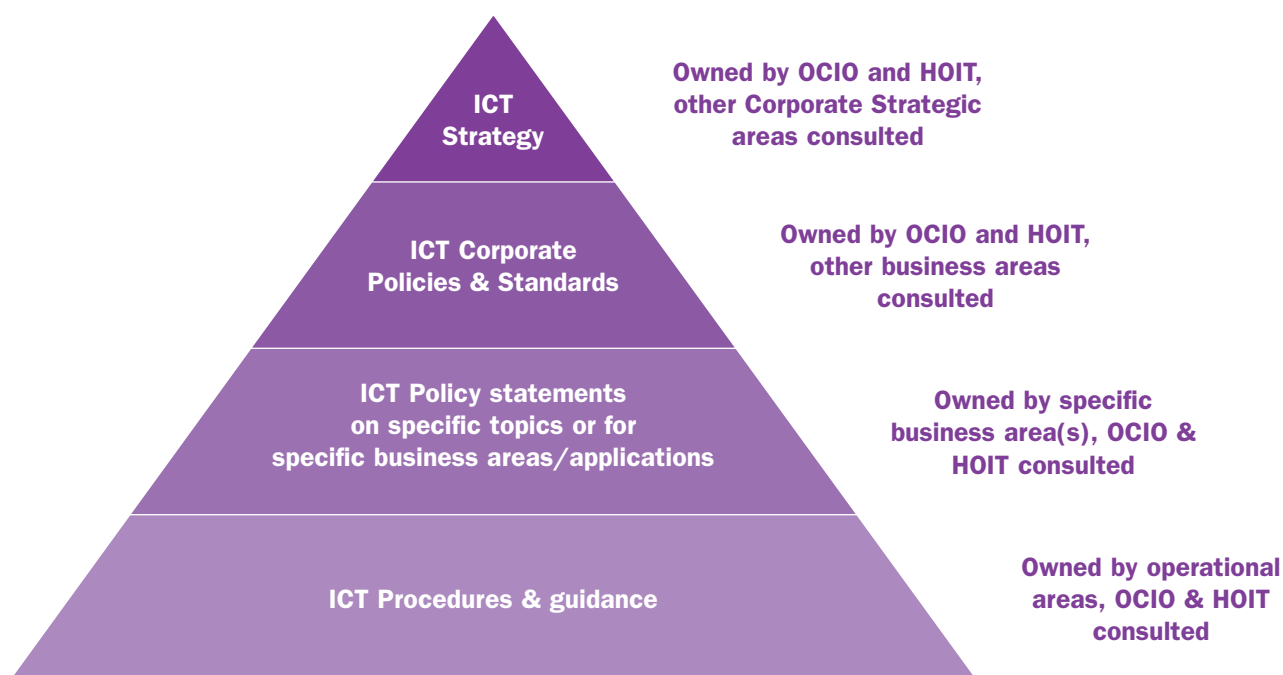
There are many stakeholders who must be addressed both internally and externally:

- business professionals, procurement professionals, and programme and project professionals, information professionals and IT professionals
- Senior leadership and management from across the various business areas, many of whom are SROs for programmes which are ICT enabled
- The supplier community, both advisers and bidders

This will take a determined and sustained commitment from the Home Office at all levels and is likely to involve a large number of directive policies and standards in order to achieve the behaviours required.

This Strategy will be used as the basis for a detailed implementation plan linking the actions from the Government ICT Strategy and the steps required to take forward the Home Office ICT Strategy. The plan will set out the strands of activity with a timeline for development and implementation and will identify the leads for each strand to ensure visible and accountable ownership. Implementation of the plan will be a critical element in the successful delivery of the ICT Strategy.

Figure 5: Home Office ICT Strategy – the pyramid approach



# Appendix A

## Bibliography and where to find more...

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<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/uk-government-ict-strategy-resources>

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### **Want to know more..? Getting the Most Out of Our Information, January 2010**

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/information-management2835.pdf?view=Binary>

### **British Computer Society (BCS) – the Chartered Institute for IT**

<http://www.bcs.org/>





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In line with the Home Office Sustainable Development Action Plan, this document is being primarily distributed in electronic form. Please consider the environment before printing.

ISBN: 978-1-84987-566-0

Published by the Home Office

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