



Ministry of
JUSTICE

Modernising the Criminal Justice System

The CJS Efficiency Programme

21 December 2011

Purpose

This paper fulfils the Ministry of Justice Business Plan commitment to:

“Publish proposals and implementation plans to increase the efficiency of the Criminal Justice System”

This paper sets out the main projects that form the CJS Efficiency Delivery Programme and summarises the progress made so far in implementing the efficiencies, details the governance arrangements and provides details of the delivery milestones.

A detailed plan outlining the milestones and benefits of the CJS Efficiency Programme is attached at Annex A.

The Efficiency Programme

The Efficiency Programme brings together Projects that have a clear and tangible effect in correcting some of the operational difficulties which drive inefficiency across the Criminal Justice System. The Programme will therefore help agencies to deliver and manage their planned reduction in spending whilst the Government continues to develop wider policy options to further reform the CJS. The Projects that form the Programme have been selected on the basis that they conform to the following principles:

- they promote collaboration across Criminal Justice System agencies and act as a catalyst for cultural change, as well as creating the opportunity for immediate savings; and
- changes in operational procedure and practice will help to improve transparency and accountability, as well as reducing waste and duplication of services.

The Criminal Justice System Efficiency Programme comprises two Projects – Streamlined Digital Working and Video Technology. Work is already well underway within both workstreams and good progress has been made as the workstreams continue to develop at pace to their April 2012 milestone.

Streamlined Digital Working

At present, the progression of cases relies heavily on paper and physical media being passed between agencies and defence. Transferring case material can be slow and is often costly; and significant effort is expended in preparing and receiving information physically. Delays can occur and there are significant costs to transporting and storing physical material. There is significant duplication of information which increases cost and risks causing confusion. Additionally, a number of administrative functions are replicated across police, CPS and HMCTS, particularly around the creation and management of the case file.

The Streamlined Digital Working Project addresses these issues. It aims to deliver:

- full implementation of the major streamlining initiatives – Modernising Charging, Streamlined Process and Criminal Justice: Simple, Speedy, Summary – as a first step toward introducing further streamlined processes;
- the digital transfer of all information from the Police to the Crown Prosecution Service;
- the digital review and preparation of case files by the Crown Prosecution Service;
- digital service of Advanced Information, committals and correspondence using Secure E-mail to defence and courts;
- prosecution advocates using a laptop or similar device to prosecution cases in court; and
- digital witness care units

Taken together, these measures will improve both the timeliness and quality of case preparation and progression, speed and ease the transfer of information between agencies, reduce the number of steps in the process and reduce the number of times information has to be captured or compiled for different purposes. They will also reduce the cost of storing the information. Ultimately this will enable the Criminal Justice System to maintain effectiveness and quality with less administrative effort, thereby reducing costs.

All CJS agencies are committed to working in a streamlined and digital manner by April 2012, with further improvements being delivered through to April 2013. Many parts of the CJS are already working in this way in some or all stages of the justice process.

Key milestones are as follows:

November 2011

- Police, CPS and HMCTS have coordinated implementation plans for Streamlined Digital Working in place

December 2011

- Document repository available to Early Adopter area.
- Tablet device rollout to CPS prosecutors begins.

April 2012

- Digital transfer of case information between CJS agencies.
- Streamlined digital working in place across all areas (includes compliance with Charging, Streamlined Process and CJ; SSS). Identify any business models that bring further improvements and simplification to the process

April 2013

- Identify appropriate Areas to implement business models that bring further improvements and simplification to the process
- Full digital working across the CJS.

Increasing the use of video technology

The aim is for video technology to be used routinely across the Criminal Justice System wherever it offers a more cost effective alternative to the physical movement of people, provided the interests of justice are protected.

The core components of this Programme are:

- *Prison to Court Video Links*
Defendants remanded in custody appear at court over a video link. The aim is to reduce the cost associated with prisoner movement between court and prisons and improve prisoner welfare.
- *Virtual Courts*
The main objective is to significantly reduce the time from charge to first hearing (often on the same day). The Virtual Court offers an alternative to the physical movement of defendants from the police station to the court, as first hearings are heard over a video link from the police station.
- *Live Links*
Allows police witnesses to give evidence in summary trials by video link from a police station instead of in person at court. Benefits include reclaiming time spent by police officers travelling to and from and waiting at court (where they are often not called to give evidence).
- *Offender Management Video Conferencing Technology (adults and youths)*
Aims to improve the engagement between offender managers, offenders and offender supervisors. Its objective is to use modern video conferencing technology across a number of probation offices, youth offending teams and prisons for key offender management meetings which would have ordinarily required probation staff to travel significant distances.

There are many benefits to greater use of Video Technology. The main benefits include reduced transport and waiting times and costs; improved prisoner welfare; reduced risk of escape or harm; reduced pressure on court cells; better access to justice; better for vulnerable victims and witnesses and reduced CO2 emissions.

Key milestones are as follows:

December 2011

- Recommendations about change to police, court and NOMS operating models to extend use of video beyond current capacity.

April 2012

- PCVL used for non-trial hearings wherever possible/appropriate
- OMVCT used for all suitable offender management meetings wherever possible
- Majority of Areas will be implementing or operating Live Links.
- Continue Virtual Courts in London, Kent, Hertfordshire and Cheshire.

Bringing together Streamlined Digital Working and Video Technology

Exploiting Video Technology has a close strategic fit with Streamlined Digital working. These two work streams should be mutually supporting in transforming the efficiency of the CJS. While video conferencing removes the need to move people around unnecessarily, streamlined digital working does the same for information. For some uses of video, such as Virtual Courts, video linking key parties and electronically transferring the information needed to support the dialogue go hand in hand.

The Programme as a whole will:

- help meet the government commitment to modernise and reform the CJS – “a simpler, swifter and more transparent service which meets the needs of victims and the public”;
- better enable agencies to work together, in a context of reduced budgets, to reduce waste and bureaucracy whilst maintaining levels of performance to provide a much more integrated service;
- enable us to collectively push this work further and faster end-to-end service; and
- not preclude the inclusion of many existing areas of work and change initiatives, with some new elements. More elements will be added as policy develops.

Annex A - Delivery milestones

Project	Main milestones	What will be different	Benefits
Streamlined Digital Working			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting CJS Agencies work digitally to reduce the number of times that information has to be written down, compiled or entered onto computer systems Integrate the administrative functions of the police, CPS and HMCTS to build a single, streamlined and proportionate case file from arrest to disposal, supported by efficient case progression. Extend postal charging and requisitioning to up to 30 police forces and to non-police prosecutors 	<p>May 2011: Strategic cross-CJS business case. [Completed]</p> <p>June 2011: Digital business design agreed with police, CPS and Courts. [Completed]</p> <p>July 2011: Communication of national expectations of delivery by April 2012 for police, CPS and courts. [Completed]</p> <p>September 2011: Defence digital working pilots commence. [Completed]</p> <p>October 2011: Phased commencement of postal charging and requisitioning. [Completed]</p> <p>April 2012: Digital transfer of case information between CJS agencies.</p> <p>April 2012: Streamlined digital working in place across all areas.</p> <p>April 2013: identify appropriate Areas to implement business models that bring further improvements and simplification to the process</p> <p>April 2013: Full digital working across the CJS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single digital case file in use across Police, CPS and HMCTS. Agencies will be working as much as possible on a paperless basis. Case file information will be exchanged between Agencies, including the Defence, by secure email or the document repository. Fewer staff needed in police and CPS criminal justice units and HMCTS pre-court administration sections. Efficiency savings and increased capacity for all criminal justice agencies. Police will be able to charge appropriate cases by post without bring suspects back to the police station. Requisitions on appropriate cases can be issued without the need for court scrutiny of the paperwork 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quicker, more accurate decisions made on cases. More efficient witness care with no duplication of contact. Reduction in printing and transmission of paper documents. Faster transmission of information with less scope for error and therefore reduced delays. Fewer witnesses called unnecessarily. More trials ready to proceed on the day. Proportionate file building and less rework on files. Fewer cracked, ineffective and vacated trials. Improved quality and timeliness of case files. Police hours saved through postal charging and requisitioning HMCTS legal adviser and court administrative resource savings from postal charging and requisitioning.

Project	Main milestones	What will be different	Benefits
Exploiting Video Technology			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting CJS agencies to ensure that Video is used routinely across the CJS wherever it offers a more cost effective alternative to the physical movement of people, provided the interests of justice are protected 	<p>March 2011: First Live Links cases heard in London. [Completed]</p> <p>November 2011: Phase 1 Virtual court rollout go live at Folkestone and Chester. [Completed]</p> <p>January/February 2012: Phase 2 extension of virtual courts.</p> <p>March/April 2012: Phase 3 and final extension of virtual court rollout.</p> <p>April 2012: OMVCT used for all suitable offender management meetings wherever possible</p> <p>April 2012: Live Links implemented/operating in majority of areas. .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive network of routinely used video equipment across police, court, prison and probation estate for court hearings, offender management and other purposes. Police, civilian and expert witnesses all routinely able to give evidence by video link. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced waiting times. More productive use of staff time. Less intimidating conditions for vulnerable victims and witnesses. Reduce pressure on court cells. Reduced likelihood of delays due to late delivery of defendants to court. Less disruption to prisoner regimes and interventions. Reduced risk of escape, harm or contraband entry to prison.