ICT Capability Strategy Implementation Workstreams

Introduction

This document supplements the Government ICT Capability Strategy. It sets out more detail on each of the implementation workstreams described in the Strategy document. In one-page summary form it answers the questions "why, how, what, when and who?" as in October 2011.

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Workstream: Blueprint – Career paths (MainStreams & Talent Management)

Issue to be addressed

Currently there is an over reliance on consultants and external assistance in the IT profession across Government. There is no common language to describe IT roles and IT career paths, with the result that movement of IT staff across government to fill vacancies with in-house staff is hampered. In addition, there is no common toolkit used across government to enable both individuals to manage their own careers and line managers to help them to do this. Each Department and organisation within the public sector has its own model for IT professionals. In order to achieve the aims and objective of the ICT Capability Strategy, i.e., to increase the capacity of IT professionals, across government we need to define fully the roles, the competences, both core and functional, qualifications and experience and devise common structures. This will facilitate movement of staff between departments, training and development and progression. By showing a clear route for progression and growing our own cohort, it will enable us to reduce the reliance on contractors, consultants and external recruitment to deliver savings. The career paths will also enable staff to drive their own career, rather than expect to be "looked after".

Approach

The work will create a toolkit, enabling the following:
- A common view of IT role profiles, agreed and embedded into the recruitment, performance management, learning and development and progression processes for IT staff across all Departments.
- IT career paths and supporting role profiles are an enabler for staff to develop their potential and are the primary tool for continuous professional development for all IT staff
- Clear entry points to the profession at all stages, for instance for the unemployed
- Using existing HR policy within Departments to set rules of engagement, e.g., to facilitate the exchange of staff between Departments
- Career paths are transparent and used as a guide for staff and their line managers seeking promotion within the IT profession

Milestones

- Skeleton Framework and some worked examples published as part of the Blueprint – late 2011
- Full Framework published – Summer 2012

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Jane Wharton, Ministry of Defence, with support from members of the CIO Delivery Board's departments, the British Computer Society, SOCITM, and Intellect, and input from e-skills UK and the SFIA Foundation.

Workstream: Blueprint – Technology in Business Fast Stream

Issue to be addressed

We need to make the Technology in Business (TiB) Fast Stream programme relevant, measurable and attractive to more people at a very early stage, even in schools. Central government has few 'home grown' IT leaders, remaining overly dependent on senior level recruitment from the private sector and high cost interim managers. The programme has been in operation for a number of years, long enough to measure meaningfully its effect and the degree to which it has provided the benefits intended. The current programme lacks the structure and content needed to ensure participants gain the competency and experience necessary to progress to leadership through well defined assignments. Interchange of TiBers between Departments is very limited, narrowing their development and contribution as a group to government. Cooperation between and consistency across departments in operating the programme is limited and inconsistent with current government policy of collaboration, flexibility and sharing. The programme will be enhanced, based on learning so far, the changed needs of central government and the changed world of IT.

Approach

The workstream will increase the ICT professional capability in the public sector and reduce expenditure on external expertise by defining and implementing a pan-civil service programme which will recruit, develop and retain a cadre of high quality graduates to be the IT leaders of the future. It will:

- Assess strengths and weaknesses of existing practice within TiB and other fast stream programmes against required future state
- Define best of breed, focusing on re-use of existing practice wherever possible and taking input from wider capability programme and industry best practice, including criteria for entry and completion such as accreditation and assessment centres
- Formal re-launch
- Establish TiB Advisory Board to gain input from industry and education.

Milestones

- Identify and implement short term changes to maximise benefits of current arrangements – Dec 2011
- Implement for current cadre from May 2012
- Implement for new cadre from autumn 2012

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Jan Ford, ministry of Justice, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments and Technology in Business fast streamers.

Workstream: Blueprint – IT Apprentices

Issue to be addressed

Currently DWP, runs a scheme for IT Apprentices. The IT Apprentice scheme gives Apprentices exposure to IT and equips them with a variety of IT related skills and experiences that would give them an increased chance of finding employment in this profession, or indeed other professions. Learning from past experience, recruitment and NVQs are managed by a third party, placements are short (approx 6 months) and do not affect headcount in DWP.

Ministers are encouraging all departments to try to offer as many apprenticeships as possible in the SR10 period.   Ministerial backing for the IT Apprentice scheme has continued and indeed there is now a desire, through the ICT Capability strategy work to continue further with the scheme and to expand this into other Departments to widen the scheme.

The rationale behind this widening of the scheme is that across the IT Industry there is continued need to source suitable young people to have the opportunity to develop into careers in the IT profession in to Private as well as the Public sector.   In a retained IT organisation in Government these technical first career step roles will be very small in number but an apprentice scheme can provide an alternative entry route in addition to Technology graduates to meet future IT Skills demands.

Approach

The workstream will:

- Define the appetite in government departments with large ICT functions to support an IT Apprenticeship scheme
- Agree and implement a cross government scheme for the training and deployment of IT Apprentices (in accord with the Government Apprentices commitment).
- Increase the awareness of and buy-in to the IT Apprentices scheme of the ICT Profession across government and to the wider IT industry, and demonstrate the value that this can bring to the Business and individuals.
- Form a strong partnership with the IT Industry in particular to secure their buy-in and willingness to take-on suitable Apprentices from this X-Government scheme.

Milestones

- Recruitment of Apprentices from the summer of 2012 into one scheme operating in several government departments' IT functions.

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Ruth Dunlop, Department for Work and Pensions, with support from the four departments with large IT functions and their suppliers.

Workstream: Blueprint – IT & CIO Academies

Issue to be addressed

Government needs to be more self-sufficient in senior staff appointment. There is little evidence that it is coherently developing a pipeline of talent to grow its own candidates for senior positions. Development of talented staff is piecemeal and inconsistent across the public sector. An IT Academy was operated from 2005-2008 with partial success. The cost of the interventions was a barrier, and too much central effort was expended on securing delegates for individual events. There was no concept of a curriculum or of membership of a cadre, as has been successful in other programmes such as Preparing for Top Management. In the current financial climate, departmental budgets for learning and development are very tight. However, there is a continuing need, because here is no cross-government way of coherently developing IT professional talent, and there are key public sector skills areas (e.g. delivering through suppliers, managing policy implementation) for which no commercial interventions exist.

Approach

The workstream will:

- establish and launch selective programmes of targeted and affordable interventions for key skill requirements for talented Grade 6/7 and SCS IT professionals, including profession-specific skills which are not currently met by any other means
- develop cadres of talented IT professionals so that they are ready to make the move from Grade 6/7 to SCS and from SCS to CIO
- ensure processes for ongoing quality assurance of the interventions, and administration of participation, which can be sustained in the current financial climate, given that it is likely that we need this programme to run over an extended period of the order of 10 years.

Milestones

- Define needs and curricula and develop prospectus by March 2012
- First IT Academy selection process September-November 2012
- First IT Academy cadre (c. 25 members) January 2013-December 2014
- Acquire CIO Academy interventions by March 2013
- First CIO Academy selection process October-December 2012
- First CIO Academy cadre (c. 10 members) March 2013-March 2015

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Simon Jones, Department for International Development, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments, Civil Service Learning, and learning and development providers.

Workstream: Blueprint – Accreditation

Issue to be addressed

The development of standards of professional practice and professional conduct against which ICT professionals can be assessed and accredited will go some way to assuring the quality of senior leadership, reducing the risk of projects failing; and act as an inducement to recruitment and retention as the status and profile of the profession is enhanced over time. At present across government departments there are no universally agreed standards of professional practice against which individuals can be independently assessed and accredited, therefore no common approach to verifying that an individual has the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to undertake a role. This also hinders mobility and flexibility.

Approach

The workstream will put in place an agreed approach to the accreditation of central government IT professionals based on set of national standards. It will create:

- A statement of the nature of the problem and picture of the current environment (against which to later benchmark progress)
- Options appraisal – what are the options for certification and which is the preferred option including costs
- Agreed set of professional standards
- Timeline illustrating the planned accreditation pathway
- Accreditation process or processes
- Plan for maintenance, management and development of the accreditation scheme

Milestones

- October 2011 – February 2012 stakeholder engagement and consultation on scope and standards
- March 2012 options appraisal complete and plan for 2012 – 2013 activity in place
- Draft scheme (initial phase) with standards June 2012
- Proof of concept July – December 2012
- Refinement of scheme January 2013
- Accreditation scheme launched April 2013

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Di Millen, Department of Health, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments, the British Computer Society, SOCITM, and Intellect.

Workstream: Supply Frameworks

Issue to be addressed

In general each government department has tended to set up its own supply contracts for learning provision therefore limiting opportunities for maximising purchasing power and for driving an agenda of consistency. The overall spend across government bodies is likely to be significant and there is great potential to bring requirements together driven by the common curriculum. There are examples across departments where the same suppliers are used for similar products but yet there is a great diversity in cost and charging models together with a variety of terms and conditions and products delivered. The purpose of the Supply Frameworks workstream is to drive better VFM through rationalising procurement – driving increased efficiency from capability suppliers and transforming how we currently source the learning essential to increasing IT capability. In addition to achieving greater purchasing efficiency having a more joined up and co-ordinated approach will underpin our drive for a common curriculum by delivering greater consistency in products, approach, standards and accreditation.

Approach

The workstream will create a clear and unambiguous Supply Framework linking to SFIA and the curriculum that provides

- appropriate learning products which can be delivered to increase individual and organisational capability and knowledge related to the IT Profession
- provision for contractor supply, with a pricing structure that is clearly competitive and with appropriate delivery quality and contractual monitoring built in.
- the ability to reflect emerging changes in technology to ensure that its products remain fit for purpose and it must underpin the Government's common curriculum and accreditation strategies.

Milestones

- First cut baseline current professional skills learning spend, data on current supply contract content and start/end dates by December 2011

- Implementation plan based on data, contracting options and procurement procedures, by April 2012

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Jayne Dyson, HM Revenue & Customs, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments, trade unions, the Government Procurement Service, individual departmental capability/learning business partners, e-skills UK.

Workstream: Talent and workforce planning

Issue to be addressed

Currently talent and workforce planning takes place within departments, rather than by profession. Departments have recruited from the external market to fill vacancies before looking across government for suitable resource as there is limited supporting material to do so. With a freeze on external recruitment this is no longer possible. The purpose of this workstream is to improve talent identification, the logistics and availability of managed moves between departments and form a cross-government approach to succession management. Although varying levels of succession planning and talent management being performed by departments, there is not a standard approach and no cross-government view. Departments are hindered by the logistics when making managed moves which makes it a less attractive option than it should be when filling vacancies.

Approach

The workstream will start with the identification of SCS Pay Band 1 and Pay Band 2 IT professionals in central government. It will address processes for their deployment for best use across Government, identification of high development potential staff and succession planning. The processes will be piloted and rolled out below SCS if successful. It will deliver:

- A staffing list, Organisation Chart and roles performed for SCS in central Government at PB3/2/1
- A proposal on cross Government IT Talent Management at SCS and 1st cut
- Workforce principles to enable greater ease for cross government moves
- A proposal for talent management of specialists as well as SCS leaders in the IT profession.

Milestones

- Feasibility study, staffing list, organisation chart and roles performed for SCS in central Government; proposal on cross-government talent management for at least PB2s – by end 2011
- Workforce plan to enable cross government moves & succession plan for critical roles – by summer 2012

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Melanie Steel, Department for Work and Pensions, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments, Cabinet Office and Civil Service Resourcing.

Workstream: Community Networks

Issue to be addressed

There are a number of networks in place in both the public and private sectors operating on different models (some commercial) to varying degrees of success. Limited use is made of some of these by IT professionals in government. This workstream will identify the role community networks play in supporting and developing IT professionalism, learn from current best practice and develop a strategy for the development or use of appropriate networks within government and the wider public sector.

Approach

The workstream will consider physical and virtual (electronic) community networks within both the public and private IT sector and:

- Establish the value of community networks to IT professionalism in government and the wider public sector
- Identify or create appropriate sustainable valuable community networks, and encourage engagement by IT professionals
- Measure the impact of participation on IT professionals.

Milestones

- an IT community networks strategy – January 2012

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Neil Moore, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments, volunteers from the emergency services, and network communities.

Workstream: Communications

Issue to be addressed

Communications to the IT Profession across government have been fragmented. Considerable effort has gone into ensuring that information on previous professional initiatives reached as wide an audience as possible. However, these have been hampered by a lack of knowledge as to who exactly constitutes the Profession, where they are located and how best they could be engaged. Channels into Departments have tended to rely on an active Head of Profession disseminating information or staff proactively subscribing to relevant websites or searching our information. The Government IT Profession community space, for all IT professionals working in the public sector, is a good example of work already underway. This workstream will design and deliver a communications programme in support of the delivery and implementation of the ICT Capability Strategy, communicate tangible improvements in our ICT capability, and demonstrate how these contribute to better IT in Government.

Approach

The workstream will identify stakeholders, communicate the ICT Capability Strategy messages, and assist in creating an identity and community for the IT Profession. It will:

- identify and categorise the stakeholder community for communications on the ICT Capability Strategy; at a minimum to include the IT profession within Government, external partners and professional bodies
- define what constitutes an IT professional across all Departments and the wider public sector aligned to the Blueprint
- identify and agree appropriate and cost effective communications channels to the stakeholder groupings
- set up the process and procedures for authoring, assuring and disseminating messages
- undertake a baseline measurement of the how the IT profession in government is currently perceived.

Milestones

- Initial communications launched in line with Strategy publication – October 2011
- Review of channels and available material from other workstreams – November 2011
- Communication in line with outputs from other workstreams – ongoing

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Anne Moises, Scottish Government, with support from DWP, DFID, members of the IT Profession Board's departments, the British Computer Society, e-skills UK, SOCITM, and Intellect.

Workstream: Retained ICT Function

Issue to be addressed

ICT operating models and structures vary widely across Departments, ranging from highly centralised models (e.g. DWP), through federated models (e.g. HO) to minimal models (e.g. DECC). This workstream will establish a common understanding of the functions that fall within the ICT remit in Whitehall departments, a common terminology for addressing these, and a model or models of ones most desirable to retain with the skills needs implied by them.

Approach

The workstream will to define which functions fall within the ICT remit, and which are excluded. The focus will be on functions, not departmental team structures. It will:

- agree a shared terminology for ICT functions in government
- define a standard operating model(s) for retained ICT functions
- facilitate the production of departmental implementation plans.

Milestones

- Models produced by end 2011

Responsibilities & Participants

Workstream leader: Robin Pape, Home Office, with support from members of the IT Profession Board's departments, and external sources of expertise.