

APPENDIX 2

QUARTERLY REPORT (April - June 2014)

Quarterly report activity

Government website domains have been procured from as early as the 1990s when there was no requirement upon government departments to retain a formal record of ownership. With staff changes and new departments formed, it became apparent that departments did not have a complete view of all sites in their estate.

The Government Digital Service (GDS) has worked closely with these departments to identify legacy websites which we were not originally aware of, by going through the complete list of gov.uk domains managed by Cabinet Office, under the second level domain (SLD), gov.uk. A full list of gov.uk domains can be viewed [here](#). As well as websites on the gov.uk SLD, we had found that there are a number of legacy websites owned by departments under a .org.uk or co.uk SLD. Because we do not own these SLD's, information on whether a department has ownership was not so easily accessible, but a strong working relationship with department leads has since helped to identify the majority of these sites.

Previously, the Ministry of Defence conducted their own rationalisation of MOD and the armed forces sites. At the beginning of this reporting period, we agreed to include these sites to ensure a consistent approach.

Since the last report of April 2014:

- 13 websites have closed
- 9 have transitioned to GOV.UK
- 8 Justice and Judiciary subdomains have closed to become directories of their respective parent websites, and
- 13 websites have come into scope.

As government websites migrate to GOV.UK, the responsibility for reporting a department's content will become an overall GOV.UK reporting requirement e.g. www.justice.gov.uk/about/noms/index.htm.

The GOV.UK website, created and managed by the Government Digital Service in Cabinet Office, provides a single point of access to HM Government services in an easily accessible way. GDS works closely with departments to close existing websites and migrate their content where necessary to GOV.UK. GDS is able to show transparency in reporting and a clearer, comprehensive picture concerning the management of government websites, whilst ensuring that data and information, vital and relevant to the public, becomes available on GOV.UK.

Background

Number and list of central government open websites – 418 at the end of this reporting period.

The Cabinet Office committed to begin quarterly publication of the number of open websites starting in the financial year 2011.

Definition of a website

The definition used is user-centric. Something is counted as a separate website if it is active and either has a separate domain name or, when as a subdomain, the user cannot move freely between the subsite and parent site and there is no family likeness in the design. In other words, if the user experiences it as a separate site in their normal uses of browsing, search and interaction, it is counted as one.

Definition of a closed website

A website is considered closed when:

- it ceases to be actively funded, run and managed by central government, either by packaging information and putting it in the right place for the intended audience on another website or digital channel, or
- by a third party taking and managing it and bearing the cost.

Where appropriate, domains stay operational in order to redirect users to the [UK Government Website Archive](#). As sites migrate to [GOV.UK](#), the full list of websites to be reported on will be reduced.

Definition of the exemption process

The [GOV.UK](#) exemption process began with a web rationalisation assessment of the government's Internet estate to reduce the number of obsolete websites and to establish the scale of the websites that the government owns.

Exclusions from the central government list

Not included in the number or list are:

- websites of public corporations as listed on the [Office for National Statistics website](#), partnerships more than half-funded by private sector
- charities and national museums
- specialist closed audience functions, such as the BIS Research Councils, BIS Sector Skills Councils and Industrial Training Boards, and the DEFRA Levy Boards and their websites
- public bodies set up by Parliament and reporting directly to the Speaker's Committee and only reporting through a ministerial government department for the purposes of enactment of legislation (for example, the Electoral Commission and IPSA).

As agreed in the quarterly report of February 2013, the following sites have been included in the list:

- '.independent' sites
- national parks

Inclusion under department name

Websites are listed under the department name for which the minister in HMG has responsibility and includes sites of independent bodies, which have been set up by a legislative body and which are reported to Parliament.