



Attorney
General's
Office

Minutes

Meeting: Serious Fraud Office (SFO) Ministerial Strategic Board (MSB)
Date: 21st January 2019

Board members:

Attorney General (AG) – Chair
Solicitor General (SG)
Director of the SFO, Lisa Osofsky (LO)
Director General of the AGO, Rowena Collins Rice (RCR)
SFO Chief Operating Officer, Mark Thompson (MT)
SFO Non-Executive Director, Tony Osbaldiston (apologies)

Secretary:

Director of the AGO, Michelle Crotty (MC)

By invitation:

HMCPsi Chief Inspector, Kevin McGinty (KM)

Item 1 – Introductions

1. AG welcomed attendees to this first meeting of the MSB, setting out aims to formalise accountability processes already in place. The MSB will provide a mechanism for the AG to regularly review, in a transparent and recordable way, the performance and finances of the SFO, whilst rightly respecting and protecting the independence of the SFO. It was confirmed that the Law Officers and LO would continue to meet separately on a one to one basis in addition to the MSB.

Item 2 – Framework agreement and signature

2. The Framework agreement was agreed by the Board and signed by the Law Officers, RCR and LO. The agreement will replace the Attorney General's Protocol, setting out the superintendence relationship between the Law Officers, the SFO and the AGO.
3. The Framework will be published on 22 January. The Board agreed that it should be lodged in the library in the House of Commons.

Item 3 – Terms of Reference for the MSB

4. RCR set out the purpose of Board; to support the roles and responsibilities of Law Officers and the Director of the SFO. The Terms of Reference (ToRs) are a standard document including the usual provisions regarding proceedings and papers. The ToRs will be reviewed at least annually including a review of the effectiveness of the Board.
5. The Board agreed the ToRs with no amendments.

Item 4 – Strategic plan

6. LO presented the SFO's draft Strategic Plan and vision for the SFO. The Plan has been drawn up with input from the senior management team across the SFO and the Director of the AGO and focuses on four key areas: Operations, People, Stakeholders and Technology.
7. The Board discussed the overall vision and strategic objectives, the role of the SFO as part of the Government's wider response to economic crime and how this is reflected in the Plan.
8. The Plan also includes the Director's revised Statement of Principle which reflects the SFO's difference to other law enforcement agencies/prosecutors, that it is taking on cases where the Roskill model-approach is required.
9. The Board agreed the four key areas in the Plan.
10. The Board broadly agreed to the strategic priorities but agreed further work could be undertaken to:
 - a. consider additional priorities on domestic engagement and public education role of the SFO; and
 - b. reflect wider government strategies in the plan.
11. Further iterations of the Plan will be circulated to the Board before publication.
12. The Board agreed to the timetable for next steps and finalisation of the Plan.
13. The SFO will sight the Board on the content of the business plan before publication.

Item 5 – Performance dashboard

14. MT set out the context in which the SFO's performance dashboard has been established. The objective is to use the dashboard to measure SFO's performance against its strategic objectives – some of the data does not move hugely between quarters. The format follows NAO guidelines. MT took the Board through the latest data.

Item 6 – Finance

15. MT presented the latest budget reports and advised the Board on current spending risks and the effectiveness of the new funding model.

Item 7 – Communications Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

16. The Board agreed the MoU as drafted.
17. It was agreed that joint quarterly reports by the Heads of Comms would be provided to this Board.