



DSA/DQ Hub Peer Review Group Meeting Summary

Attendees

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| <p>Jenny Brooker, Chair (GDS) Nicholas Oughtibridge (NHS England) Barny Letheren (ONS) Tanita Barnett (ONS) Rob Lee (HMRC) Francesca Henshaw (DWP) Tom Smith (MHCLG)</p> | <p>Firoze Salim (GDS - Presenter) John Olatunji (GDS - Secretariat) Jody Parker (GDS) Suzanne Fry (GDS)</p> |
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Record of discussions

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| 1 | <p>Welcome, introductions and agenda Jenny Brooker (JB), Chair</p> |
| | <p>The Chair welcomed participants and provided a brief overview of the meeting objectives: findings and recommendations of the Essential Shared Data Assets (ESDA) and data ownership model beta.</p> <p>Participants, especially those deputising for others, were encouraged to introduce themselves in the chat.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Presentation on ESDA and Data Ownership Model Beta Firoze Salim (FS)</p> |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">Essential Shared Data Assets</p> <p>Background FS provided an overview of the work undertaken to develop the Essential Shared Data Assets (ESDA) and the Data Ownership Model. These initiatives originated from commitments made by the previous government as part of the roadmap for digital and data, which included objectives related to critical data assets and a unified data ownership framework. Despite the change in administration, these initiatives remain aligned with the current government's priorities, particularly in maximising the value of government-held data and the development of a Data Marketplace and National Data Library to that end.</p> |

Development Journey

FS outlined the journey undertaken, which included an alpha and beta phase involving all central government departments. The work was developed under the oversight of the DSA. Following the completion of the beta phase in October, a report was produced based on analysis, departmental feedback and peer review. The next steps involve obtaining approval from the Steering Board for the findings of the review of the Beta and recommendations for next steps before publication of revised artifacts.

Findings from Beta Phase

FS summarised the key findings, noting that departments were generally supportive of the ESDA definition and guidance but highlighted areas for improvement:

- Clarification was requested regarding the inclusion of open data.
- Departments suggested incorporating data of public interest considerations into the process.
- The language within the guidance required improvement, with efforts underway to consolidate the policy paper and guidance into a more user-friendly format with examples.

Challenges Identified

The beta phase highlighted several challenges, including:

- **Metadata Quality:** Departments displayed varying levels of maturity and capability, resulting in inconsistent metadata quality. Efforts are being made to provide clearer guidance and reduce the burden through automation (e.g. linking APIs to internal catalogues and using web forms).
- **Resource Constraints:** Departments face significant capacity and resourcing challenges, with multiple requests being received simultaneously. It was acknowledged that better sequencing of requests is required to ease departmental workloads.

Participation and Engagement

FS reported that 21 public sector organisations participated in the beta phase, with 191 designated assets identified. A phased approach was taken to ensure thorough testing rather than overwhelming departments with large-scale requests. Departments were also encouraged to identify assets they rely on, leading to productive discussions regarding data dependencies and alignment.

Next Steps

FS outlined the next steps in the process, which include:

- Revising the guidance based on feedback and making it more user-friendly.
- Implementing greater automation to reduce manual effort.
- Presenting the revised work to the peer review group for final sign-off before seeking full approvals

Data Ownership Model

1. Core Principles:

- The model aims to define roles and accountabilities for managing data assets, ensuring they meet minimum standards of governance.
- Departments are encouraged to adapt the model flexibly to fit their existing structures, provided core accountabilities are designated to appropriate people.

2. Findings from Engagements:

- Many departments expressed satisfaction with the ownership model’s focus on outcomes, rather than imposing rigid titles or structures.
- Some departments preferred to retain the IAO framework, as it was already well-embedded.
- Departments expressed the need for clear mapping between the IAO framework and the data ownership model to reduce ambiguity.

3. Recommendations for Improvement:

- Provide case studies and examples of how the ownership model can be implemented.
- Clearly define the distinctions and interactions between data and information, particularly in relation to IAO roles.
- Support departments in aligning their models without disrupting well-established systems.

Strategic Importance of the Initiative

- FS highlighted the criticality of ESDA and data ownership in enabling the National Data Library and improving data sharing across government.
- By understanding the demand for key datasets and ensuring proper governance, the initiative aims to maximise the value of government data assets.

Next Steps for ESDA and Data Ownership

1. Revise guidance to reflect feedback from the beta phase, incorporating plain English descriptions and best practice examples.
2. Work with departments to automate metadata ingestion.
3. Include new content setting out alignment of IAO roles and accountabilities with the data ownership model
4. Focus on communication and engagement with senior leadership to secure buy-in and prioritise the initiative across government.

This section laid the groundwork for the following discussion, which addressed concerns and gathered further input from attendees.

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| 3 | Discussion and Feedback All |
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Rob Lee (HMRC):

- Asked whether the ongoing work on ESDAs and the data ownership model will be incorporated into this year's Data Maturity Index.
- Emphasised the need to assess the maturity of departments in adopting these practices.
- **FS:** Confirmed that efforts are being made to align all discrete pieces of work under the Government Digital Service (GDS) maturity model and also highlighted that the maturity model aims to provide insights into key aspects such as metadata capability and ownership of assets.

Francesca Henshaw (DWP):

- Highlighted the burden of implementing ESDA while addressing organisational resistance to change, particularly from senior leadership and requested clearer guidance on mapping IAO and data ownership roles.
- **FS:** Acknowledged the challenge and emphasised the importance of senior-level engagement and providing support to departments for upward communication. He went on to confirm that mapping exercises are underway to help departments integrate the two roles flexibly.

Tom Smith (MHCLG):

- Asked how the impact of the ESDA framework and marketplace would be evaluated and also suggested involving local governments and combined authorities, highlighting the importance of their datasets.
- **FS:** Explained that understanding the demand for key datasets will enable evidence-based prioritisation and strategic discussions. FS agreed with the suggestion about involving local government and advised that there are ongoing efforts to align ESDA with local government initiatives.

Nicholas Oughtibridge (NHS England):

- Observed inconsistencies in how IAOs are defined and implemented across organisations.
- **The Chair:** Confirmed that IAO roles vary significantly and emphasised the need for tailored recommendations based on organisational context.

Domain Expert Group Update

- **FS** shared updates on the Domain Expert Group focused on defining standards for the "Person" entity and its attributes.
 - Progress includes consolidating existing models and drafting a concept model and attribute definitions.
 - A meeting to workshop these drafts is currently being scheduled to take place in the coming weeks.
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| | <p>Conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Board approved the findings and recommendations of the review• Revised ESDA artifacts will be circulated for feedback and final approval in the first instance via the Working Group.• The Domain Expert Group will meet to review the draft "Person" concept model and attributes.• Further engagement with local governments and combined authorities will be scheduled. |
| <p>4</p> | <p>AOB Next Steps and Close: Jenny Brooker, Chair</p> |
| | <p>The Chair asked if members had any other business they wished to raise, thanked attendees for their valuable contributions and brought the meeting to a close.</p> |