

OGC Gateway™ Review 0: Strategic assessment

Programme Title: Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority Implementation Programme

OGC Gateway™ ID: 1554

Privacy Marking: UNCLASSIFIED



Office of Government Commerce

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OGC Gateway™ Process
Review 0: Strategic assessment

Version number: Final 1.0

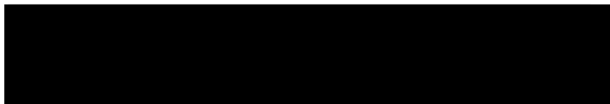
Date of issue to SRO: 1 July 2010

SRO: Andrew McDonald

Department: Not applicable

Agency or NDPB: Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority

OGC Gateway™ Review dates: 28 June 2010 to 1 July 2010



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OGC Gateway Delivery Confidence Assessment

Delivery Confidence Assessment	Amber/Green
<p>The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority Implementation Programme (the Programme) is now drawing to a close.</p> <p>At the time of the first Gateway Review, in October 2009, the task before the Programme looked extremely challenging. The Review Team finds that the Programme has consistently met its milestones: the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) Board has been appointed, and the Scheme for MPs' expenses is in place; IPSA has working accommodation, systems and processes; and staff are in place. MPs and their staff have had salaries paid by the Authority, and the first expenses claims have been paid.</p> <p>The major task left for the Programme is to ensure IPSA's readiness for publication of expenses claims in mid-July. The timetable for this is an example of the tight timescales to which the Programme has worked and delivered throughout: consultation on the proposed publication scheme is due to be completed on 7 July, with publication following [REDACTED]. From the Programme's track record, the Review Team would expect this final key milestone to be met, but because of the time pressures, we give the Programme an Amber/Green Delivery Confidence rating.</p> <p>We have heard little but praise for the competence, integrity, enthusiasm and hard work of the Programme team, and we concur with that. We commend the team for delivering so completely in a short period with a fixed end date. Although there have been a very few examples of where things might have been done differently, these have not been significant, and these suggestions were made with the benefit of hindsight.</p> <p>IPSA is a new body, set up in a controversial area, where opinions differ and are strongly held. As with any new organisation, there have been teething troubles, but we consider that these have been over-emphasised by those with an axe to grind.</p> <p>That said, those emerging issues do need to be addressed, but that is a matter for IPSA, not for the Programme.</p>	

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The Delivery Confidence assessment RAG status should use the definitions below.

<u>RAG</u>	<u>Criteria Description</u>
Green	Successful delivery of the project/programme to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery significantly
Amber/Green	Successful delivery appears probable however constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery
Amber	Successful delivery appears feasible but significant issues already exist requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun
Amber/Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme is in doubt with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent action is needed to ensure these are addressed, and whether resolution is feasible
Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme appears to be unachievable. There are major issues on project/programme definition, schedule, budget required quality or benefits delivery, which at this stage do not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The Project/Programme may need re-baselining and/or overall viability re-assessed

Summary of Report Recommendations

The Review Team makes the following recommendations which are prioritized using the definitions below.

Ref. No.	Recommendation	Critical/ Essential/ Recommended
1.	A comprehensive communications plan is needed for the launch of the publication of MPs' claims, and enough staff should be available in the information team to deal with the likely surge in demand.	Critical
2.	Workforce planning through the summer and autumn needs to be flexible to ensure that staffing levels are sufficient to meet demand.	Essential
3.	The Programme should ensure that the lessons learned are promulgated across Government, and remain accessible during future phases of IPSA's development.	Recommended

Critical (Do Now) – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of the greatest importance that the programme/project should take action immediately

Essential (Do By) – To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome the programme/project should take action in the near future.

Recommended – The programme/project should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation.

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Background

The aims of the Programme:

The vision of the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority is to realise the goal of sustained public confidence in the way in which MPs are funded from the public purse.

To realise this vision, IPSA will develop a new settlement for MPs' expenses, pay and pensions which properly supports them in their democratic duties and serves the interests of the public. IPSA intends to build an independent organisation which sets itself the highest standards of public service. IPSA's focus is on the future, not the past. It will be consultative and open in its approach, but will exercise its own judgement on what is right.

The Programme aims to deliver an Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority which is fit for purpose, and to do so transparently, cost-effectively, and according to an agreed timetable.

The Programme has four strategic objectives:

- Enabling an independent & authoritative IPSA
- Getting the right people in the right place
- Creating effective and efficient processes
- Publicly visible and accountable

The driving force for the Programme:

The intention to create the IPSA was announced in the House of Commons on 20 May 2009 in response to public concern surrounding the disclosure of allegedly inappropriate allowances that had been claimed by MPs.

As a result of the three main parties agreeing that there was a need for the independent administration and scrutiny of MPs expenses, the principles of what is now the Parliamentary Standards Act 2009 were drawn up. It is this Act which requires the establishment of IPSA.

In moving from a system of MPs and the House Authorities setting and administering their own allowances, the establishment of this new body will represent a break from old practices and put in place a new independent system for the payment of salaries and allowances for MPs. The system will also seek to promote transparency in Parliamentary allowances to restore public confidence in the UK Parliament.

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The procurement/delivery status:

All significant procurements have been completed satisfactorily.

Current position regarding OGC Gateway™ Reviews:

Previous Gateway 0 Reviews of the Programme were undertaken in October 2009 and January 2010.

A summary of recommendations, progress and status from the later of these two OGC Gateway Reviews can be found in Appendix C.

Purposes and conduct of the OGC Gateway™ Review

Purposes of the OGC Gateway™ Review

The primary purposes of an OGC Gateway Review 0: Strategic assessment, are to review the outcomes and objectives for the Programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to Ministers' or the departments' overall strategy.

Appendix A gives the full purposes statement for an OGC Gateway Review 0.

Conduct of the OGC Gateway™ Review

This OGC Gateway Review 0 was carried out from 28 June 2010 to 1 July 2010 at IPSA's offices in Portland House, Victoria, London. The team members are listed on the front cover.

The people interviewed are listed in Appendix B.

The Review Team is grateful [REDACTED] and their teams for all the help and assistance they have provided during the Review: their support and openness has contributed to the Review Team's understanding of the Programme and the outcome of this Review. In particular we should like to thank [REDACTED] for ensuring that the detailed day to day arrangements for the Review ran so smoothly.

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Findings and recommendations

The Review, the IPSA Implementation Programme and IPSA

This is the third review of the IPSA Implementation Programme, which is now drawing to a close. IPSA itself has been in existence for some months, and has gradually taken on its responsibilities: paying MPs and new MPs' staff at the end of May, paying all MPs' staff at the end of June, and paying a first run of expenses in June. It is now preparing for the first on-line publication of expenses claims in July. (Other functions, such as reviewing and setting MPs' remuneration, and taking responsibility for the payment of MPs' pensions, were not intended to be, and will not be, tackled in this financial year.)

The remit of this Review Team is to consider the success or otherwise of the Programme, and, since that is now approaching closure, outstanding issues are largely for IPSA, rather than the Programme, and are thus formally beyond our remit.

Progress to date

It is easy for Reviews of this nature to criticise, because few things in life go absolutely to plan, and, indeed, later in this report we note areas which need addressing.

But it would be ungracious were we not first to record our appreciation of what has been achieved. At the time of the first Gateway Review, in October 2009, the task looked well nigh impossible: to deliver accommodation, IT, systems and processes to a new organisation, and to staff it up ready for full operation. The rationale for that new organisation was to devise and deliver a Scheme for MPs expenses, but it had no Board members to determine what that Scheme should be, and the Programme Team itself was still being formed. All this was to happen against a turbulent political background, with ostensible agreement on the way forward, which masked a great deal of concern amongst MPs, and opposition from many, considerable media interest, and uncertainty amongst House of Commons staff involved with the system then existing. The Programme had a fixed target by which to deliver – the requirement was that the new system should be operational as the new Parliament gathered after the General Election – but with no certainty about the date of the Election.

Eight months later, the impossible has been delivered. This has required a willingness to work long and hard for protracted periods, and to take decisions rapidly. This is perhaps best exemplified by the events that transpired during the four days of the previous Review five months ago: during those few days heads of terms were signed for premises, after prolonged negotiations for other accommodation had suddenly fallen through, and the prime IT contractor was also appointed. By then, good working level arrangements were in place with the House authorities, the IPSA Board had been appointed and the Programme team was at full strength.

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Today, the new premises are occupied and suitable, fully fitted out with IT and telephony; a Scheme has been devised, consulted upon and put in place; some staff have been transferred from the House, with arrangements in place for the remainder to transfer in August; staff terms and conditions have been established; payments of salaries and expenses to MPs and their staff have been made; and plans for publication of expenses are well in hand. The opposition of some has not gone away, and this has had the effect of increasing workload, and the inevitable teething troubles of a new organisation have given the naysayers grounds on which to base their complaints. But this has been a success story, and deserves to be recognised as such.

Without exception, the views expressed about the Programme team were positive: 'very high calibre', 'enthusiastic', 'hard working', 'committed' and 'outstanding' were terms commonly used. 'Gone remarkably well given the scale of the challenge and the external environment' was one summary with which we can only concur.

Leadership and management of the Programme and of IPSA were highlighted, and Andrew McDonald was frequently cited as providing both, and showing an ability to relate to, and enthuse, staff at all levels. Similarly, more junior staff both on the Programme and in IPSA (and some moved from one to the other) had been enthusiastic and worked long hours.

The successful delivery of all the essential elements of the Programme in such a short time is clear evidence that the Programme applied PPM principles effectively. It was clear that they did not adhere rigidly to all the processes laid down in the handbooks, but rather used a fit-for-purpose approach more suited to the very short timescales they faced. Their handling of risks was very impressive. Even with the benefit of hindsight, we could identify only two areas where things might have been done better: communications with MPs and process mapping for the expenses scheme. That said, it is very difficult to see what could have been done in practice to prepare MPs better for the change, given the manifest unwillingness of Members to engage at the time. We were told that the process mapping has now been carried out.

What remains to be done

The transition between the Programme and the activities of IPSA has been gradual and is largely complete. There remain two significant strands of activity which we believe legitimately fall under the heading of the Programme, even though much of the work is now being carried out by IPSA staff.

Publication

IPSA is aiming to launch its publication of MPs' claims before the end of July. We were given a demonstration of the website and the processes behind it. It is a well-established system with a proven track record, and the technical risks to delivery seem small. However, at time of our review, the publication proposals were still out to consultation, with a closing date of 7 July. That will leave a very short time

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between the final policy decisions on exactly what should be published and their implementation, which clearly adds to the risk.

There are other risks associated with the launch of publication which may be more serious. The volume and tone of the press coverage that IPSA receives clearly suggest that publication will attract a lot of media and public attention. It is also likely to result in a lot of reaction from MPs. IPSA will need a comprehensive communications plan both to prepare the media and Members for the event and for dealing with the consequences. The latter will almost certainly include a considerable increase in work-load for the information team and more staff may be needed to deal with the pressures. At such a critical time it will be very important for IPSA's reputation to ensure that telephone calls are answered and emails get prompt replies.

Recommendation 1: A comprehensive communications plan is needed for the launch of the publication of MPs' claims, and enough staff should be available in the information team to deal with the likely surge in demand.

Completing the staff transfer from the House of Commons

The second tranche of House of Commons staff is due to arrive at the beginning of August. We understand that an outreach programme is already in hand to help prepare them, and all new staff undergo an intensive induction course of a week. So these staff should be well-prepared to take up their duties. For the most part, they will be replacing staff currently employed as temps, and the latter are scheduled to finish at the end of August, which should allow for an effective hand-over without a dip in performance during the transition. However, we are concerned that the volume of work facing IPSA is very difficult to predict. It is possible there will be a drop in demand during the recess, but equally possible that many Members will use this period to catch up with their registration and claims. The same uncertainty applies to the demand when MPs return in September. Managers should monitor the trends carefully and workforce planning needs to be sufficiently flexible to ensure that the teams can cope with whatever transpires without having to work the sort of long hours that have characterised the first few weeks of IPSA's existence.

Recommendation 2: Workforce planning through the Summer and Autumn needs to be flexible to ensure that staffing levels are sufficient to meet demand.

Lessons learned

Lessons learned from the Programme have been recorded, with a further Programme Board in July which will add to these. The Review Team considers that these are of considerable value, and should be circulated to assist those involved in future in setting up a new body; and also embodied in the IPSA corporate memory –

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legislative changes now under consideration may require IPSA's role to change in future. We commend the efforts being made by the Programme team to ensure promulgation.

Recommendation 3: The Programme should ensure that the lessons learned are promulgated across Government, and remain accessible during future phases of IPSA's development.

The Review Team recommends that the IPSA Chief Executive determine when a final OGC Gateway™ Review should be held, to assess realisation of strategic benefits. We expect that this will not be before Spring 2011.

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APPENDIX A

Purposes of OGC Gateway™ Review 0: Strategic assessment

- Review the outcomes and objectives for the programme (and the way they fit together) and confirm that they make the necessary contribution to overall strategy of the organisation and its senior management.
- Ensure that the programme is supported by key stakeholders.
- Confirm that the programme's potential to succeed has been considered in the wider context of the organisation's delivery plans and change programmes, and any interdependencies with other programmes or projects in the organisation's portfolio and, where relevant, those of other organisations.
- Review the arrangements for leading, managing and monitoring the programme as a whole and the links to individual parts of it (e.g. to any existing projects in the programme's portfolio).
- Review the arrangements for identifying and managing the main programme risks (and the individual project risks), including external risks such as changing business priorities.
- Check that provision for financial and other resources has been made for the programme (initially identified at programme initiation and committed later) and that plans for the work to be done through to the next stage are realistic, properly resourced with sufficient people of appropriate experience, and authorised.
- After the initial Review, check progress against plans and the expected achievement of outcomes.
- Check that there is engagement with the market as appropriate on the feasibility of achieving the required outcome.
- Where relevant, check that the programme takes account of joining up with other programmes, internal and external.

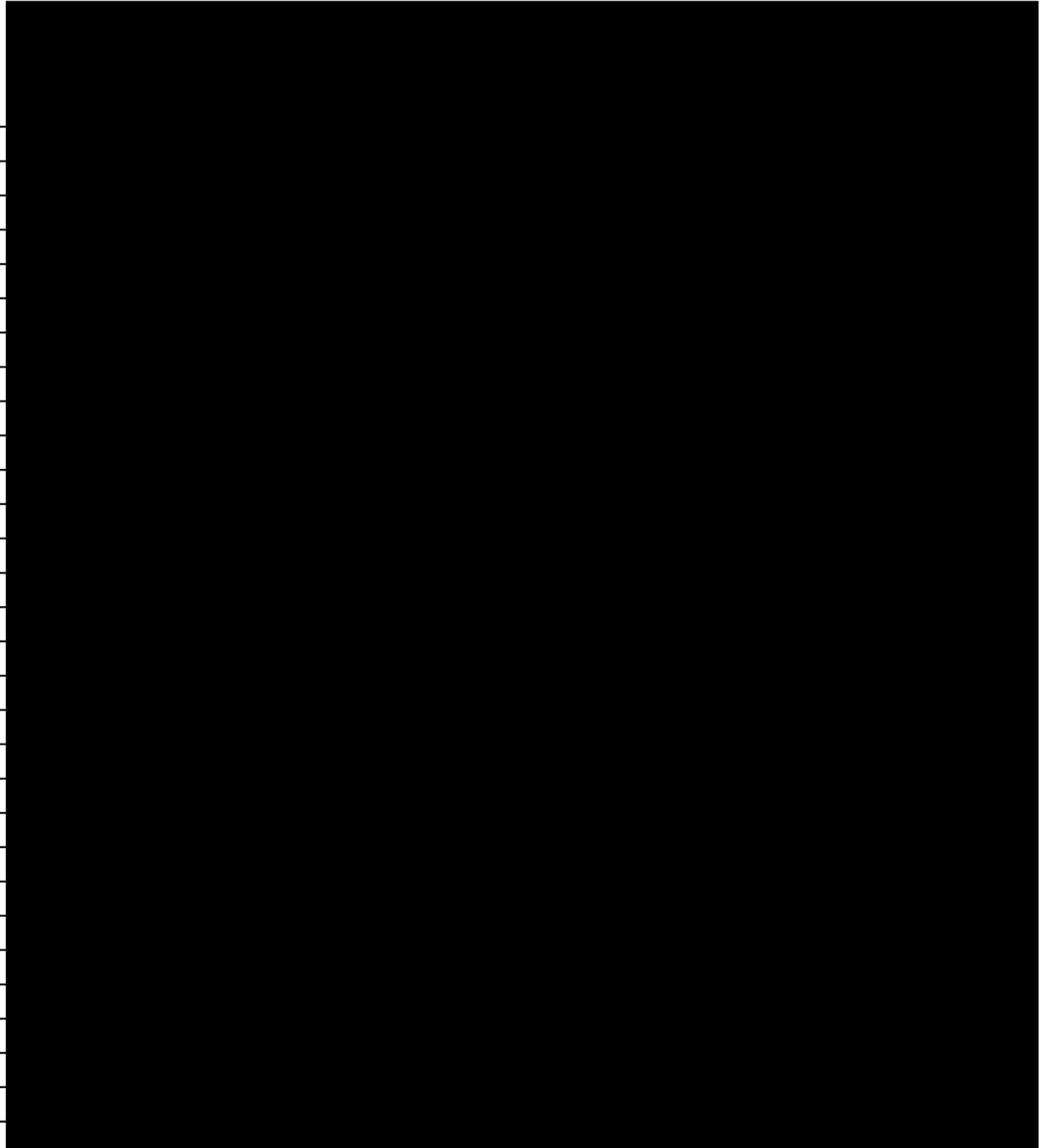
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APPENDIX C

Recommendations from previous OGC Gateway™ Review

<u>Action Plan Update</u>			
No	Recommendation	Action	Due Date
1.	The Programme should review and clarify the “must-have” elements for the start of live working and the dates by which they are required, and communicate these clearly so that everyone concerned knows exactly what they mean.	Detailed change schedule communicated to staff [REDACTED]	22/2/10 COMPLETE
[REDACTED]			
2.	That the SRO escalate the early release of House of Commons Operations Directorate staff to the highest levels, should the deal that has been struck not be confirmed and implemented within the next few days.	Staff transition schedule to be agreed [REDACTED] or escalation triggered [REDACTED]	12/2/10 COMPLETE
[REDACTED]			
3.	Decisions on the package to be offered to staff should be made and communicated as soon as possible, and it is important that the overall package of tangible and intangible benefits is attractive.	Initial Staff T&Cs to be confirmed and issued as per plan [REDACTED] Further detail to be developed and issued on intangible terms ([REDACTED])	19/2/10 COMPLETE 16/2/10 Underway
[REDACTED]			

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Action Plan Update			
No	Recommendation	Action	Due Date
6.	Andrew McDonald should, within the next month, construct an outline plan for the period after live working has commenced, to include a log of the tasks to be completed, the transition(s) between the current and future structure, and resource and knowledge management plans.	Change plan ([REDACTED]), post go live strategy ([REDACTED]) and IPSA realisation approach interface with post go live work off issues to be baselined ([REDACTED])	25/2/10 workshop held, immediate post live plan to be – established, 15/4/10 – Draft 3 month plan agreed at SMT 14/4/10 CLOSED
[REDACTED]			
7.	Andrew McDonald should, within the next month, develop a robust and comprehensive Communications Plan and ensure that it is adequately resourced.	Comms plan to be baselined ([REDACTED])	25/2/10 Ongoing, Draft plan issued 15/4/10 – due to be baselined prior to Election

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