

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE

ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Minutes of meeting held at 11:45 on Thursday 28th January 2016

At: BFPO, West End Road, Ruislip, HA4 6DQ

PRESENT

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Tim Drye	Direct Marketing Association
Alun Evans	Mail Competition Forum
Rhona Parry	Royal Mail Group
Carolyn Valder	CACI
Boris Huard	Experian
Iain McKay	Improvement Services (Scotland)
Melanie Allsop	Mail Users' Association
Razia Ahamed	Google, Internet organisations representative
David Heyes	Wigan BC, Local Government representative

Also in attendance

Scott Childes	AMU	items 6 - 13
Ian Evans	AMU	items 6 - 13

Apologies

Ian Paterson	Mail Competition Forum
Steve Rooney	AMU
Paul Tatman-Madsen	AMU

The Board were the guests of BFPO Headquarters. Colonel Tim Blackmore, Officer commanding BFPO, gave a short presentation on the history of BFPO and the rapid developments of recent years. This was followed by a demonstration of the BFPO management information system, the electronic 'bluey' and a ruggedized portable postal office for deployment with troops serving overseas. The Board then had a conducted tour of the BFPO facilities.

1. Matters arising

PAF(15)6th Meeting Minutes

There were no matters arising outside of the outstanding actions from the PAB meeting on 17th December 2015.

2. Outstanding PAB actions

PAF(15)28

The chairman focused in on a number of the actions outstanding from the PAB meeting on 17th December.

- Board membership replacement for Terry Hiles. This had not yet been confirmed.

ACTION: The Chairman to contact GB Group and other SPs to solicit nominations

ACTION: PAB members to provide suggestions on a potential replacement

- Tim Drye had met with a potential provider of research into the future of the data market. This was to be followed up in the coming weeks.

ACTION: The Board invited Tim Drye to update on the emerging discussions at the next PAB meeting

ACTION: The Board invited Rhona Parry to discuss the potential for Royal Mail Group to become involved in a wider capacity

- Nominations for possible attendance at a user group meeting had not yet been received.

ACTION: PAB members to submit nominations to the Chairman by 8 February.

3. Chairman's update

The chairman reported on the visit by some of the PAB members to the AMU Team in Doxford, Sunderland, on 20th January.

The visit was seen as very positive, with the PAB members recording heartening feedback on the professionalism and attitude of the AMU staff on site, noting that the Team demonstrated a sense of pride in providing solutions to customer requests & issues.

4. PAB website update

PAF(15)20

The Secretary gave an update on the PAB website development. Initial designs for the website had been produced and the project was on track for the new website to be ready in time to go live by the next PAB meeting.

ACTION: The Secretary to circulate the website designs to PAB members for input prior to final designs being signed off.

ACTION: The Secretary to check on the status of intellectual property rights for the website, to ensure the Board retained ongoing ownership.

5. PAB member descriptions on PAB website

Some PAB members had submitted a request for all member titling on the PAB website to become consistent and outline which parts of the marketplace each member represented.

ACTION: PAB members to provide details to the Secretary for inclusion to the PAB website.

6. Royal Mail regulated accounts review (AMU PAF® accounts)

The AMU provided an update of their accounts, showing a comparison between 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Costs incurred in the Royal Mail Operations had reduced marginally as had AMU direct costs.

AMU revenues had remained broadly stable in the two years, resulting in a slight increase in the AMU profit margin to 10% on turnover.

Cost reductions were driven primarily by more effective ways of working in the Royal Mail operational area, staffing effectiveness and IT efficiencies.

The AMU reported that they had been working closely with the Royal Mail Operation to drive further ways of working improvements and subsequent cost reductions.

The PAB view was that the AMU could undertake a more radical review of the cost base, including options for using techniques to establish whether the existing business model could be set up differently to maximize the quality of the product offering and customer experience offered.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to assess the feasibility of joint research with the PAB to review the AMU cost base in a transformational way, and report back to the next PAB meeting.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to investigate whether the revenue figures could be split down into main user groups by the next PAB meeting.

7. AMU Licensing Trends YTD (2015/16)

The AMU provided a provisional update on licensing in 2015/16, based on the first 8 months of the year.

The AMU indicated that variations in licensing due to timing of payments meant that there would be a much clearer picture of trends once a full year's data was available.

On the Core PAF Licence (stripping out usage in respect of Public Sector Licence members) a year-on-year analysis for the period suggested that organisations using PAF had increased by 2% over the previous year, while revenues were slightly down. As expected, there had been some shift from User based licensing to use on a Transactional Licence basis.

ACTION: The PAB invited the AMU to present a more detailed breakdown of the revenue picture, to show the types of user organisation (large corporate, bureau, et al).

The PAB enquired about the communication to SPs in respect of the AMU decision to leave the User definition unchanged following reported issues with the new definition. The AMU reported the FAQ section of the PAF Licensing Centre website was being updated to include additional scenarios to help Solutions Providers.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to review the FAQs to ensure all relevant definitions and main exceptions were included.

8. Update on the data quality audit

The AMU updated the PAB on results from the Q2 data quality audits.

Results were not in line with previous quarters, as some issues with researchers being unable to find correct addresses on site had been experienced, as well as incorrect information being included within the overall result.

The AMU would be meeting DQM urgently to ensure that a consistent process was being applied as part of the research activity, something which did not appear to have occurred in the Q2 analysis.

In a wide-ranging discussion, differing views were expressed about the desirability of enhancing the PAF file and drawing users' attention to the additional information in the alias files and files currently outside the regulated PAF boundary. The majority view was that the AMU should be looking to enhance the customer experience in using PAF; a minority felt, however, that the PAF file should be commoditized and maintained at the lowest possible cost.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to take account of the views expressed.

9. AMU blogs – data and future plans

Due to the fact that the AMU had only just started a programme of blogging, robust data on the benefits of the blogs, including customer/ user views and reactions were not yet available.

PAB members reviewed the AMU plan for blogs for the year ahead and recorded supportive views of the programme as a positive step in helping customers understand the key PAF areas. The PAB invited the AMU to pay particular attention to a planned blog about using PAF to verify addresses, and suggested the blog could contain key advice for driving PAF accuracy.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide an update at the next PAB meeting.

10. AMU response to address change portal inputs

The PAB had previously provided inputs on the new address change portal. The AMU had responded to the PAB inputs, but the PAB expressed disappointment that the response had not been more action oriented.

11. Other Outstanding AMU actions

PAF(15)28

Ian Evans from the AMU had met with Laurence Hopper, a member of the Government Digital Services Team, to discuss how policy for the use of data to support Government was changing.

The AMU confirmed that they would continue to engage in discussions with the GDS Team and other parties to identify how PAF, and the Public Sector Licence, could help support the use of data within Government.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide regular updates on progress of the discussions.

ACTION: The Chairman would invite Nigel Shadbolt, Chairman of the GDS advisory board to address the PAB.

12. Taking the pulse of PAF

The Board took note.

13. Future items for discussion

- Further to the PAB visit to the AMU Team in Doxford. PAB members requested visibility of the response rates to AMU issued communications to businesses asking them to confirm their correct address. The Board also suggested that some of the fields of data captured from the returns could potentially be used to enhance the quality of PAF and associated datasets.

ACTION: The Board instructed the Secretary to include discussion of the data arising from the business address checks on the agenda for the next PAB meeting.

Next meeting

17th March at Experian in Clapham, London.