

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Minutes of meeting held at 13:00 on 20th July 2017

At the offices of Experian, George West House,

2-3 Clapham Common North Side, London SW4 0QL

PRESENT

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Iain McKay	Improvement Service, Scotland
Carolyn Valder	CACI
Jason Goodwin	Experian (items 1 – 6)
Tim Drye	Direct Marketing Association
Ian Paterson	Mail Competition Forum
Dan Cooper	Allies Computing
Charles Neilson	Mail Competition Forum
Paul Roberts	Secretary to the Board

Also in attendance

Scott Childes	AMU	(items 5 – 13)
Ian Evans	AMU	(items 5 – 13)

Apologies

Darren McDonnell	Mail Users' Association
David Heyes	Wigan BC

1. PAB 10th Anniversary

The Chairman reported that to mark the tenth anniversary of the PAB a token memento would be given to PAB members past and present, and to those from the AMU who had been closely associated with its work.

The Chairman also reported that the PAB logo had been redesigned to mark the anniversary and would be used on correspondence and the PAB website henceforth.

2. Matters Arising

PAB (17)3rd meeting minutes

Addressing Anomalies: The Chairman updated the Board regarding the addressing anomaly highlighted at the May 2017 PAB meeting. Findings from the local authority representative on the Board suggested that a developer had added street names to a business park without local authority consent. There were indications that this was not an isolated incident, especially where business parks were developed.

ACTION: The Chairman to write to the AMU with the findings and suggested actions that the AMU could undertake to minimise such anomalies.

The Chairman reported that the AMU has not yet fully responded to 2 actions outstanding from the March 2017 PAB meeting (ease of customer use of 2015 contracts, and PAF account management information).

ACTION: The Secretary to request responses from the AMU to the 2 actions concerned.

3. Chairman's Update

Chairman

The Chairman reported that the AMU had completed the move of its office from Portsmouth to Southampton.

The Chairman also advised that Steve Rooney had taken on additional responsibility within Royal Mail for the Redirections File. The Board questioned what implications this might have for the ring-fenced AMU responsibilities.

ACTION: The Chairman to contact Steve Rooney requesting an update on the implications of his taking responsibility for the Redirections File.

Martin Taylor from Royal Mail Operations was announced as the new Royal Mail representative on the PAB. It was hoped that Martin would take up membership of the Board from the September 2017 meeting. The Chairman was also pursuing other opportunities to add one extra Board member.

4. NYB to PAF Research

Chairman

The Chairman confirmed that independent research to assess the effectiveness, accuracy and timeliness of NYB data migrating to live addresses on PAF would shortly be commissioned. The budget for carrying out the research had been approved and Data Advance Ltd would be appointed to conduct the research. It was expected that the work would start shortly with results expected during the autumn.

ACTION: The Chairman to invite David Heyes to discuss the local authorities to be included in the sample with Data Advance.

5. Future of the PSL

Chairman & AMU

The AMU advised that they had been in discussions with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) regarding potential future extensions of the PSL agreement.

BEIS view was that, given the similar amount of work involved in negotiating either a one-year extension (2018/19 only) or three years (2018-2021), it would seem prudent to progress a three-year extension, pending a continuing proven value for money case.

The AMU advised they were currently gathering data to build the case for an extension and welcomed PAB input. The Board advised that not extending the PSL would likely have significant impact not only on public sector organisations but also solution providers. It was disappointing that the Government had not set monitoring processes in place from the outset, but take-up of the licence as reported in the Pulse figures pointed to an increase in the number of organisations being licensed under the PSL, and since there was no licensing cost at the point of use of PAF it was unlikely that user numbers would have fallen.

ACTION: The Chairman to liaise with Allies Computing and the AMU in the first instance to develop suggested approaches and identify supporting data required.

6. PAF Code of Practice Update

AMU

The AMU delivered a short presentation outlining the history of the Code of Practice for proposed changes to the addresses.

- The Code of Practice was established in 2002 and reviewed in 2004, 2008 and 2010.
- The Code enabled Royal Mail to work consistently in many areas concerning addressing, especially in dealing with address/ locality change requests
- 279 customers/ customer group requests had been taken through the code process since 2008, mainly focused on requests for locality changes by addressees. 57 of the 279 requests involved more than 200 Royal Mail delivery points.
- 83k Royal Mail delivery points had been affected since 2008.
- The costs of administering requests had been borne by Royal Mail, including customer correspondence regarding changes.

Ofcom had recently indicated (in Spring 2017) that they were content with the current code of practice, suggesting that the AMU regularly review the operation of the code with the PAB.

The Board asked whether the AMU monitored rejected requests for changes. The AMU advised there had been 12 instances of rejected requests since 2008, mainly due to requests where not all local stakeholders had approved the suggested change.

The Board questioned whether there were instances where the code of practice for dealing with address change requests had not been triggered. The AMU advised that this had only occurred where a request had come through without the appropriate local authority support, and was rare.

ACTION: The Chairman to notify Ofcom that the Board had reviewed the operation of the Code with the AMU and were satisfied that no immediate changes were required.

7. Business Mailing Innovation

AMU

The AMU updated the Board on the four innovations identified at the May 2017 PAB meeting.

- To include a statement on the mailing envelope along the lines of, 'Does Royal Mail have your correct business name', to encourage response. The AMU confirmed this had been added.
- To add a tick box on the form to indicate whether a change to PAF was required (to save businesses filling in forms unnecessarily). The AMU advised that, given the majority of returns did have changes, the tick box did not need to be added.
- To develop an option for customers to respond to the request electronically. The AMU confirmed that they had included an email address in the body of the mailing letter to enable businesses to do so.
- To add messages to the AMU website, linked to the mailings, to encourage businesses to report changes to address details. The AMU reported this was currently being developed.

The AMU advised that of 495k cards issued in the latest business address mailing, 75k had been returned to date with 33k requiring a change in PAF. The AMU also advised that a new regional mailing had been issued in June, with a substantial set of results likely to be available to provide an update at the September 2018 PAB meeting.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to share results from the latest mailing at the September 2017 PAB meeting

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to consider adding a sentence to the mailing and card 'only return where the address is wrong', to attempt to cut back the volume of cards returned that are unnecessarily assured at present.

8. Customer Contact Data

AMU

The AMU presented details of customer contact data for 2016/17, which was the first 12 months of reliable data. The headlines were:

- 1.6m contacts had been processed
- 56% of the 1.6m contacts had been captured within the Royal Mail customer relationship management (CRM) system. The AMU were expecting to increase this percentage in the coming year by, for example, including business mailing returns.
- Of the contacts captured on the CRM system, 82% were made by email, 17% by phone and 1% by post
- 32% came from local authorities, 59% by customers and 8% by other parties. The local authority contacts generated more work per contact for the AMU.
- The overall largest category of enquiry concerned moving addresses to PAF from the NYB dataset.

Usage of the CRM product was still work in progress and the AMU advised they would welcome PAB support on opportunities to maximise the usefulness of the customer contact data. The Board asked whether there was an opportunity to add contact from other stakeholders, e.g. utility companies. The AMU reported that, in other contexts, incorporation of datasets from others had usually resulted in the AMU having to cleanse the dataset. Hence, such a move could not be undertaken lightly. The Board also asked what percentage of the redirections information flowed through to the NYB or PAF files.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to report back on the information from the redirections file flowing through to the NYB or PAF data.

9. Taking the Pulse of PAF

AMU

The Board welcomed the addition of a summary headlines page to the Pulse report.

The AMU reported that the PAF passed the threshold of listing 30m UK addresses on 16th June 2017.

10. Freedom of Information Requests

Iain McKay reported an instance of a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to local authorities asking for multiple addressing-related datasets. The Board noted that in some circumstances this initiative might provide addressing data that could be used by third parties to by-pass legitimate PAF licensing requirements and required further investigation.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to investigate the initiative and update the Board.

11. Updating PAF records for the Channel Islands and Isle of Man

The Board asked how addresses in the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man were updated. The AMU reported that the relevant local authorities updated their own addresses on PAF and that their ability to change the file was limited to those postcodes in their own geographical areas.

12. November PAB meeting

It was confirmed that hosting for the November 2017 PAB meeting had not yet been confirmed.

ACTION: The Chairman to progress via the AMU.

13. Next meeting

13:00 to 16:30 on 21st of September 2017 at the offices of CACI, Kensington Village, Avonmore Road, London, W14 8TS