

To Ian Beesley, Chairman, PAF Advisory Board

Business Address Matching Report – AMU Response

The AMU thanks the PAB for commissioning this piece of research on the current levels of Business Address quality available in PAF. We would also like to thank Tony Lamb for the thorough analysis and detailed report produced, and for the recommendations as to how we may be able to improve the Business Name data in the file.

The AMU prides itself on providing the UK's most up-to-date and accurate address file and is therefore always keen to take on board recommendations which can support and enhance the data held within PAF and its additional datasets – such as Alias.

We acknowledge that the report provides very useful insight into the areas where discrepancies in Business Names create problems for users of PAF data. We are pleased that it highlights the importance of the Business Name as part of the delivery address. The report also suggests helpful new ways for us to measure our accuracy levels in comparison to information held in other datasets and listings.

We are aware that our traditional sources for identifying and reporting change information are better at capturing changes to Business Addresses than to Business Names. As the report highlights, accurately recording changes to businesses in shared (multiple occupancy) buildings can be difficult for postmen and women. We have previously looked at alternative ways in which to gather better, more frequent, business change information including the use of other datasets.

In particular, the report highlights a shortfall in the volume of Business Names held on PAF when compared to specialist datasets such as Dun & Bradstreet. The level of discrepancy creates justification for the AMU to focus an investment in time and resource to improve the volume and quality of Business Name data held on the file.

However, we should also note that PAF is the definitive mail Delivery Point database and not a Business Listings Directory. We hold Business Names where they are a critical part of a Business Address for delivery purposes. We will therefore, look at Business Listings sources with the aim of identifying how they can improve accuracy in sortation and delivery, not simply to be an alternative source for information that other organisations already specialise in providing.

We will be using a combination of the Report's recommendations and the things that we are already actively working on within the AMU to help us build a sustainable process for growing and updating our Business Name and Address information.

As a result, based on several of the recommendations contained in the report, we initially intend to focus our efforts on the following:

- Identifying and securing alternative Business Names data from both internal and external channels – including targeting the specific use of data from internal automation systems (such as SCV) to drive greater volume of Business Name intelligence on a more consistent basis.

- Reviewing the best way to hold and publish Business Name information using a combination of PAF and our other addressing data – including scoping the use of Alias or even the creation of a dedicated Business Address file.
- Identifying better ways of monitoring and measuring the accuracy of our Business Name Data than we have employed in the past – including identifying appropriate accuracy measures in order to provide the PAB with regular KPIs specifically focussed on Business Names to allow the Board to track if the measures being taken are improving address matching rates

As we move ahead with these activities it is our intention to work closely with the PAB on our progress to ensure that the Board supports and endorses our response to the Report. Once again, we would like to thank the PAB and Tony Lamb for the commissioning and delivery of this informative report, and we are confident that it will help us to focus our efforts on improving the overall quality of Business Names data for the benefit of all users of PAF data.

Steve Rooney

Director AMU & S&C Operations