

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Minutes of meeting held at 13:00 on 22nd July 2021

By video conference

PRESENT

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Dan Cooper	Allies Computing
Rob Parker	CACI
Paul Cresswell	Experian Data Services
Nick Chapallaz	GeoPlace
Iain McKay	Improvement Service, Scotland
Ian Paterson	Mail Competition Forum
Charles Neilson	Mail Competition Forum
Steve Goodsell	Royal Mail Group
Judith Donovan	Strategic Mailing Partnership
Tim Drye	Direct Marketing Association
Neil Haydock	Metapack
Paul Roberts	Secretary

In attendance

Rowena Humby	Star Count (item 1)
Ian Evans	AMU
Tom Foyle	AMU

Apologies

David Green	GB Group
Paul Brough	Mail Users' Association

The Chairman welcomed Neil Haydock (Metapack, part of Stamps.com) to membership of the PAF Advisory Board and Rowena Humby (STARCOUNT) as a guest.

1 STARCOUNT

Rowena Humby from STARCOUNT presented a data tool that mixes traditional transactional and geo-demographic data with data on support for causes, strong interests, and lifestyle to help establish stronger emotional connections with prospective and existing customers.

All data was anonymised but grouped at a granular enough level that organisations could target customer groups effectively.

A copy of the presentation can be found on the PAB website.

The Board thanked Rowena warmly for an interesting and stimulating session and noted that the discussion had pointed to a possible reason to make more publicity about the small charity PAF licence. It was also felt that the recent scandal over Post Office IT failures could have a damaging effect on the Royal Mail brand since few of the general public were likely to be aware that the two are now separate organisations.

2 Chairman's Update

- a) AMU Inter-PAB report. The Chairman asked for feedback on the first inter-PAB report that had been produced by the AMU. The report was welcomed by PAB members as a good initiative, given that PAB meetings were now quarterly. Some PAB members requested that the report should contain content on progress since the previous PAB meeting, outcomes so far and what would be done before the next PAB meeting.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to review the feedback and adapt the report in time for the next version, due to be shared in September.

- b) PostTag. The Chairman's attention had been drawn to an organisation called PostTag which appeared to be offering an addressing-based tool that was at a more detailed level than PAF. In a brief discussion, PAB members indicated that the organisation was not yet well understood.

ACTION: The Chairman to liaise with PostTag to gain understanding of the organisation and its products.

- c) Parliamentary debate on postal matters. During a wide debate on postal matters, the Minister for Postal Services had responded to a question from the Opposition Shadow Postal Minister Chi Onwurah regarding Royal Mail charging for access to PAF. The Minister's response indicated a possible development in government thinking when he said that "...we have to make sure that open data is available, without one company seeking to profit from intellectual property that has been developed

over a period of time.” The Board took note and agreed that the situation merited watching.

3 PAB website

The Secretary reported the results of a PAB member survey regarding the PAB website. Overall, responses indicated the structure, layout and navigation of the site was of high quality, but the news section would benefit from timelier and PAB-specific content.

ACTION: The Chairman and Secretary to progress the suggestion about news.

4 Business Names on PAF

The AMU advised that they were rolling out use of Companies House data as a potential source of additional business name intelligence. They have identified particular cases that offer a better information in respect of PAF and are currently focusing on trading estate addresses.

Business Address mailing activity by the AMU, which had been paused during the Covid pandemic, would be restarted once the supporting systems were able to process responses automatically.

Board members input the following:

- It may be useful to review whether extra fields could be added to PAF to help increase business name alignment to addresses,
- the AMU may look to increase messaging to new and existing businesses, specific to helping those businesses get more accurate information on PAF (e.g. name vs location)
- RM Ops staff could gather information for addresses that, prior to Covid, may not have had business names associated with them (e.g. residential addresses with business names)

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to update further on progress at the next PAB meeting.

5 Addresses Being Taken Off PAF

Following recommendations arising from the Scottish Census Trial. The AMU reported that they had made progress in improving the sign-off sticker for addresses for which delivery had not been possible.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide a further activity update in the next inter-PAB report or at the next PAB meeting.

6 Postcode Exhaustion

Further to discussion at the April 2021 PAB meeting. The AMU had met with several stakeholder groups and received feedback that the developed method for expanding postcode capacity without the need for large scale recoding was satisfactory, but the AMU confirmed they were continuing to work with relevant stakeholders on how to inform them prior to changes being made.

7 AMU Account Management 2020/21

The AMU presented how account management of customer groups had been delivered in 2020/21. This had predominantly been on an online and telephone basis throughout the year due to the Covid pandemic. A hybrid approach of online and face to face meetings was likely to continue on an ongoing basis

PAB members recommended that it would enable wider customer management if the AMU continued to deliver technology-based meetings, as more customers and issues could be covered versus face-to-face visits

The number of Solutions Providers (SPs) had seen a net increase during 2020/21, whilst Direct End Users (DEUs) had seen a net reduction. Some of the reduction in DEUs had been due to cessation of trading or long-term business interruption.

Over 100 audits had been completed online by the AMU, with strong compliance found in most cases.

ACTION: The Board stressed the importance of reflecting on the underlying reasons for the changes and invited the AMU to share an analysis of new customer profiles and reasons why customers had terminated their agreements.

8 AMU/RM Ops SLA (PAB (21)3)

Further to recommendations arising from the PAB working group. The AMU explained that key recommendations from the PAB working group had been factored into a quarterly plan of action for 2021/22, which would enable a new SLA to be agreed in February/ March 2022.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide regular progress updates via inter-PAB reports and at PAB meetings during the remainder of 2021/22, and that the PAB working group be consulted for input at key stages, as necessary.

9 NYB/PAF Actions

The AMU reported progress against several actions recommended in the NYB/PAF report from 2019:

- Record keeping processes had been revised to enable easier access to and recognition of key information
- Data flows across RM had been improved to ensure the AMU received more timely information
- Training sessions were delivered across AMU Operations to highlight information to look for
- It had been made easier for customers and developers to let the AMU know when a property should be on PAF (simpler forms and easier web notifications)
- Campaigns to developers and estate agents, to highlight the importance of notifying the AMU when a property should be on PAF, had experienced a mixed take-up
- Improved data flows between Local Authorities and the AMU had been noted, but there was more work to do in this area
- The quality of information in the NYB file was being monitored to ensure it was as accurate as possible.

One of the KPIs chosen to measure improvements in this area was the average difference between the Local Authority (LA) 'Build Complete' date and the NYB to PAF date, in those cases where the LA Build date was earlier. The impact of the action to date had been to reduce this 'lag' by a third. AMU confirmed that they were continuing to make improvements in this area and looking to reduce the lag further.

PAB members questioned what a 'good' target may be and what other measures could be used to demonstrate improvement in this area.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to update the PAB in 6 months, covering actions and outcomes.

10 Data Quality

Due to a short delay, the Q22 data quality report would not be available to the AMU until the week following the PAB meeting.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to share the latest quarterly report once available and cover the main points in conjunction with the Q23 data at the next PAB meeting.

11 AOB - AMU Satisfaction Survey (Local Authorities)

The AMU advised that in the most recent survey they had carried out with Local Authorities' Street Naming and Numbering contacts, 100% had reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their relationship with the AMU Address Development Team in Doxford (up from 95% in the previous survey a year before). There had been especially strong positive feedback on operating methods within the AMU during the Covid pandemic, reflecting good working relationships between the AMU and the Local Authorities. The Board congratulated the AMU on the result.

12 AOB - Royal Mail Saturday Delivery

Judith Donovan reported that the *Daily Mail* had run a story on 22nd July outlining that Royal Mail was considering removing Saturday mail deliveries. It seemed likely that the press story was kite-flying and the Board agreed to monitor the situation on an ongoing basis, in the event of any possible impacts to PAF.

13 Next meeting

13:00 on 21st October 2021. Venue and delivery method to be confirmed; details to be advised.

The Board consensus was to try and aim for a hybrid meeting, enabling both physical and on-line presence.

ACTION: The Chairman invited PAB members to input any suggestions for agenda items to the Chairman and Secretary by the end of September.

ACTION: The Chairman invited PAB members to submit any suggestions for possible venues to the Secretary by 6th August.