

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Minutes of meeting held at 13:00 on 18 April 2024

At the offices of Experian, 6th Floor, 80 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 5JL

And by video conference

Present

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Richard Hartland	Data8
Ian Paterson	Mail Competition Forum
Charles Neilson	Mail Competition Forum
Stuart Watt	GB Group
Paul Cresswell	Experian

In attendance

Ian Evans	AMU
Tom Foyle	AMU
John Batchelor	AMU

Attending by video link

Ron Wilkinson	Improvement Service, Scotland
Nick Chapallaz (item 1)	GeoPlace

Apologies

Tim Drye	Direct Marketing Association
Neil Haydock	Auctane
Rob Parker	CACI
Paul Brough	Mail Users' Association

Secretariat

Paul Roberts

1 Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN)

The Chairman welcomed Jon Saunders, Head of Data Insight at GeoPlace, who gave a presentation on the UPRN. He described how the UPRN is a key element in the National Address Gazetteer (NAG), which takes inputs from multiple sources (including PAF) and is a key facilitator enabling cohesive local authority address records across departments.

GeoPlace receives a daily feed from PAF to ensure that data element is current, and typically runs 350-1000 checks on UPRN notifications received. There are typically 60-80k changes to property details in the UPRN records per month.

The Board asked if there were any 'check digits' within the UPRN to help avoid errors in data matching. It was confirmed that there are no check digits, but that GeoPlace had not had issues with data matching.

In conclusion, the Chairman warmly thanked Jon for a stimulating presentation and drew attention to the scope for comparing address change volumes received in the management of the UPRN records against PAF changes proposed by RM Operations. It would also be potentially beneficial for continuing joint work between the AMU and GeoPlace focusing on the new-build stage of the property lifecycle.

2 Revised Inter-PAB Report

PAB members thanked the AMU and PAB Secretary for their work on the revised inter-PAB report and welcomed the new format. Members requested that in future versions of the report more detail be included in the description of forward actions.

3 Chairman's Update

a. PAB Website Domain Issue

The Chairman thanked Stuart Watt for his work in resolving a PAB website domain registration issue, which had also resulted in a welcome lengthening of the duration of the domain registration licence.

b. New RM Group CEO

The Chairman drew attention to reports that Emma Gilthorpe had been appointed as new RM Group CEO and would join the company on 1 May 2024. The Board agreed it was too early to understand any potential organisational changes that might occur as a result of the appointment, but agreed to keep a close watch on this, given the current AMU goal of establishing key relationships with RM Operations to drive PAF focus and quality improvement.

c. Data Protection and Digital Information Bill

The Board discussed progress of the Bill through the House of Lords. A first reading had been completed, with multiple amendments proposed. These were now passing through the Committee Stage. The Chairman understood that no timescale for completion of that stage had yet been given.

If adopted, an amendment to clause 142 of the bill would require the production of an open national address register based on data held by local authorities. Some media reports suggested, however, that the amendment may have been withdrawn.

4 Wholesale Access Group (WAG) Meeting with Royal Mail Group

The scheduled meeting of the WAG (including PAB members of the Mail Competition Forum (MCF)) and RMG, originally due in late February, had been deferred until May

The MCF representatives on the PAB would provide an update to the PAB, following the expected May meeting.

5 PAF Customer Demographics

The AMU confirmed they were still working on some of the data to support presentation of the customer demographics.

ACTION: The Board agreed to defer the requested presentation to the July 2024 meeting.

6 AMU & RM Ops SLA

The AMU reported on the current state of play. The existing SLA with RM Operations had been carried forward into 2024/25, but could be amended in-year as new methods of measuring and managing RM Operation's performance were implemented. The AMU also confirmed they were working to secure agreement on who in RM Operations would have overall responsibility for their side of the SLA.

The PAB SLA working Group had identified a suite of six measures the AMU could use to help measure Operation's performance relating to PAF, namely:

1. Walk validation
2. Changes reported
3. DQM completeness score
4. Costs and workload of manual sortation
5. Query turnaround time
6. Time to get from New Build to PAF

Three of the measures were already in place and are being used by the AMU to assess Operations performance at Delivery Office level, with the other three measures scheduled to be developed over the coming months.

Although structured monthly reviews of RM Operations performance had not yet resumed post-Covid and Ops reorganisation, the measures already developed were being used in discussions with some individuals and Delivery Office Managers, and shared regularly across RM Operations to drive action locally.

Early indications were that an increase in reported PAF changes from Delivery Offices (especially those highlighted as having some performance issues) was a positive indicator that the quality reporting and associated follow-up by the AMU was having a beneficial impact.

The Board welcomed the initiatives being taken by the AMU to drive Operation's performance on PAF quality, whilst also recognising the workload involved.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide a further update on progress at the July 2024 PAB meeting.

7 PAF costs for End Users

AMU presented analysis on the PAF Licence costs per organisation which showed that - because of the widespread use of Transactional based Licensing options from Solutions Providers - over three-quarters of End Users of PAF (c.42k organisations) pay <£100 in PAF Licence Fees per annum.

8 PAF Awareness Campaign

This item was deferred, pending feedback on the most recent awareness exercises in Operations.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide a further update by the end of June.

9 Progress Against Quality the Board's Improvement Initiative Letter of January 2023 (PAB(23)1)

The AMU confirmed that other suggested improvements in the letter had not been progressed because of other things that the AMU were developing in respect of the SLA engagement, but the AMU would review these again and provide a written response.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to provide a further written response to the letter, outlining progress since the previous response given in Autumn 2023.

10 Quarterly Data Quality Update

The AMU reported the Q33 DQM data quality audit results. They also outlined findings from a review of how the completeness and changes scores are compiled, prompted by the PAB in January. The AMU explained the effect that the treatment of historic Multiple Residence type addresses has had on the overall scores, and AMU and DQM are reviewing the historic scores as a result

The Board welcomed the potential improvement but, nevertheless, stressed the importance of progressing the improvement activities that the AMU had outlined at item 6 above.

11 RM Representation on the PAB

The Board expressed its continued desire to get a RM Operations Representative on the PAB to fill the spot vacated by Steve Goodsell following the RM reorganisation. Alongside the work the AMU is doing to get a senior level owner for the AMU & Ops SLA, they will be discussing potential suitable candidates for the PAB.

12 Licensing Procedures

Some Board members felt that, whilst it was helpful to have PAF audit activity reported each year on the adherence of organisations that are licensed to use PAF, it would also be valuable for the AMU to report (where possible) on the activities and investigations (and their findings) on misuse of PAF by Organisations and persons that are not licensed to use PAF. The AMU concurred and agreed to advise the Board accordingly in future reviews of licence audit activity.

13 Next Meeting

18 July 2024, 13:00 – 15:30. In-person venue to be confirmed.