

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Minutes of meeting held at 13:00 on 17 July 2025

At the offices of Royal Mail, 185 Farringdon Road, London EC1A 1AA

And by video conference

Present

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Richard Hartland	Data8
Paul Cresswell	Experian
Stuart Watt	GB Group
Vicky Groombridge	Sagacity

In attendance (items 2-9)

Ian Evans	AMU
Katherine Horniman	AMU

Guest (item 2)

Barry Parkins	Head of Royal Mail Operations Nerve Centre
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Attending by video link

Nick Chapallaz	GeoPlace
Ron Wilkinson	Improvement Service, Scotland
Neil Haydock	Independent Consultant

Apologies

Rob Parker	CACI
Ian Paterson	Mail Competition Forum
Paul Brough	Mail Users' Association

Secretariat

Paul Roberts (items 1-4.1)

1. PAB members' internal meeting

1.1 Licence Compliance Audit (PAB(25)15)

ACTION: THE CHAIRMAN to follow up with the AMU to clarify the audit classifications, and request trend data.

1.2 PAF Change Reporting Process (PAB(25)16)

ACTION: THE CHAIRMAN to request further data from the AMU on the trends for reporting changes to PAF, distinguishing between those emanating from Royal Mail sources and those reported by members of the public

1.3 Potential AI Impact on PAF

ACTION: The Board to invite the AMU to present an assessment of the potential AI impact on PAF at the October 2025 PAB meeting.

1.4 Chairman's Update

ACTION: THE CHAIRMAN reported on a constructive meeting with OFCOM representatives, which had re-emphasised the importance of maintaining PAF as a pre-eminent postal address file.

2. Royal Mail Operations Nerve Centre

Barry Parkins, Head of the RM Operations Nerve Centre, gave an overview of the role of the Centre, including the importance of PAF to Royal Mail efficiency

ACTION: THE CHAIRMAN to discuss with the AMU an opportunity for PAB to be given a view of the 'journey of a postal item', and the causes of manual sortation.

3 Market Developments

3.1 Pricing Proposals & Timetable for Involving PAB

The PAB discussed the PAF price changes announced at the end of June. The consensus was that the increases were broadly in line with PAB member expectations; however, members stressed a need to contain costs to avoid increases above inflation. So far, SPs had received little comment from end user about the price changes; however, that feedback was more likely to come once the new prices were effective in October.

The BOARD agreed that it should discuss the market position of PAF in April each year, to be able to offer the AMU advice on pricing prior to the internal RM PAF pricing process.

3.2 PAF Licensing Trends 2024/25

The AMU provided a brief presentation on licensing trends up to the end of 2024/25.

Key points were:

- Standard PAF licensing is still the predominant source of PAF licensed revenue .
- The shift from licensing on a User basis to Transactional basis, that had been a trend since the Licence Review in 2015 appears to have stopped with the former at c.20% Revenue for the last three years.
- The proportion of users taking PAF on a full PAF basis (circa 97%) had not changed.
- Circa 90% of PAF revenue came from SPs.
- The reasons for End-user cancellation continued to be analysed by the AMU, with the aim of capturing further data in the coming months.

ACTION: PAB members were invited to submit any questions on the licensing trends data to the Secretary.

4 **AMU Engagement with RM Operations**

4.1 Impact of Delivery Lockers

THE AMU reported that banks of delivery lockers were not part of a delivery route that has to be maintained under the current USO obligations, and were not captured on PAF as separate addresses. The broad location of a bank of lockers usually had a recognizable address and postcode (for example, located next to a supermarket or in a rail station car park), but a specific bank of lockers did not carry its own address in PAF.

ACTION: The Board to return to the discussion at the October 2025 meeting.

4.2 USO trial

The AMU reported that, so far, the USO trial had not resulted in a decline in PAF address updates received from the Delivery Offices involved in the trial. The Board asked that the AMU provide regular and frequent updates as the trial continues and as the revised USO standards are rolled out.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to report regularly on the roll-out of the new USO.

4.3 Communications campaign

The AMU shared a presentation on the current PAF awareness campaigns directed at front line Royal Mail staff. In discussion, it was identified that a key to keeping the need for manual sortation of mail and parcels under control was active Route Manager action to implement changes reported by front line staff.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to use contacts with Regional Operations Directors to emphasise the importance of prompt Route Manager action on reported changes.

5 RM/ AMU SLA

5.1 AMU/Operations SLA

It had been confirmed that the UK Operations Director would be the senior RM Operations signatory and owner of a revised SLA. Negotiations between the AMU and Royal Mail Operations about an updated SLA were expected to run through the Summer. Meanwhile, the appointment of a Royal Mail Ops representative for PAB was expected shortly.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to pursue the formal nomination of a PAB member representing Royal Mail Ops.

6 Audit and investigation

6.1 DQM GRC weighting for PAF Quality Assessments

Vicky Groombridge had started an examination of the scaling-up factors and had recently received further information from DQM (now trading as a GRC solutions company). It was stressed that explanation in plain English, comprehensible to non-statisticians, would be valuable.

ACTION: The Board invited Vicky Groombridge to report at the October meeting

6.2 Timetable for Quality Assessment reports

AMU will be receiving the DQM GRC Reports for the latest two quarters in the coming weeks. The information from those reports would be reported in the August Inter-PAB report.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to include the results in the August Inter-PAB report.

6.3 Annual report on licence compliance

The Board discussed the latest information (PAB(25)20). The AMU reported that most breaches appeared to be around smaller SPs failing to insert the End-User Licence terms in their own licences with customers. In discussion, it was noted that the current PAF Licence was finalised ten years ago and that it could be helpful for the Board to review its terms and formulation.

The Board requested data about the amount of revenue lost and recovered, as identified by the compliance checks.

ACTIONS:

- The Board invited the AMU to provide the additional information requested.
- The CHAIRMAN to consider the case for a licence review.

7 Salesforce implementation in Doxford

The AMU reported that teething troubles with the replacement CRM system had been resolved, and Doxford staff were now clearing the backlog.

Geoplace informed the Board that in the interim new entries on the National Address Gazetteer had either been made without a postcode or with an assumed postcode. In the latter case the AMU would seek verification as soon as possible.

ACTION: The Board invited the AMU to liaise with GeoPlace to identify addresses in the National Address Gazetteer with an assumed postcode.

8 Next Meeting

16 October 2025, time and venue to be confirmed.