

THE POSTCODE ADDRESS FILE ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

Minutes of meeting held at 11:00 on 15 January 2026

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

And by video conference

Present

Ian Beesley	Chairman
Paul Cresswell	Experian
Stuart Watt	GB Group
Nick Chapallaz	GeoPlace
Ian Paterson	Mail Competition Forum
Paul Brough (items 3-10)	Mail Users' Association
Vicky Groombridge	Sagacity

In attendance

Ian Evans (items 3-10)	AMU
Alastair MacHardy (items 3-10)	AMU
Tim Cable (item 3)	Royal Mail Group

Attending by video link

Rob Parker	CACI
Ron Wilkinson	Improvement Service, Scotland
Neil Haydock	Independent Consultant

Apologies

Richard Hartland	Data8
Mike Waldon	Hopewiser

Secretariat

Paul Roberts

1. New PAB Member

The Chairman reported on the appointment of Mike Waldon, MD of Hopewiser. The appointment would bring additional Solutions Provider expertise, including experience with the integration of other data sets with the Postcode Address File.

2. PAB members' internal meeting

2.1 PAF pricing (PAB(26)04)

The Board reviewed a paper for submission to the regular Royal Mail price setting process for PAF. The final text will be delivered to the AMU shortly.

2.2 Review of PAB activity in 2025, and areas of focus for 2026 (PAB(26)03)

The Board confirmed progress made by the PAB and AMU during 2025 and discussed the main areas of PAB focus for 2026. Six areas of priority were agreed, and these would be shared with the AMU.

2.3 Following the internal meeting, the Board welcomed, as an observer, Tim Cable, RM Retail Letters Director, to whom the AMU would report henceforth.

3 Market Developments

3.1 Locker Banks

The PAB had written to the AMU in early December 2025 recommending the inclusion of locker banks in PAF given their rapid (and continuing) growth across the UK. Since then, it had noted the Royal Mail announcement on 13 January that it would partner with the Post Office to introduce parcel lockers at Post Office branches, in a six-month trial allowing customers access at their convenience, including outside normal branch opening hours.

The AMU proposed creating a small working group with Members of the PAB and the AMU (with input from the team managing the Development of Lockers within RM), to discuss the way forward. The Board agreed to participate and would nominate representatives. The first meeting was planned for early February.

ACTION: The AMU would convene a first meeting of a working group on parcel lockers and PAF, focussing initially on the main 'pros and cons' for inclusion of locker bank addresses in the dataset.

The Board extended an invitation to the RM Out of Home Director leading its initiatives on lockers to attend the April meeting.

3.2 PAF Licence Renewals

The AMU advised they were developing their data analysis of SP licence returns. Reporting against existing data was expected in the coming three months, with enhanced reporting targeted within six months.

The Board welcomed the intention to improve the available data and outlined that this would provide a useful input to a review planned by the PAB for 2026 of whether the existing PAF licensing structure should be revised given the breadth of market changes since the last review in 2015. As such, the Board requested that further data on licensing behaviour be reported for the April 2026 meeting.

3.3 Salesforce

The AMU explained that, due to a much higher volume of enquiries than expected during the first three weeks in December, the wait time for response to customer enquiries had remained level during recent weeks. Lower levels of enquiries over Christmas and New Year were expected to support improvements in wait times in the coming weeks.

The Board requested a further update on progress in the next inter-PAB report.

4 AMU Engagement with RM Operations

4.1 Delivery Office (DO) Performance

The AMU reported that more than half of DOs had submitted changes to PAF in December, much higher than is usually the case in December.

Over the first three quarters of the RM financial year, the number of DOs in the 'Platinum' audit & reporting category had tripled, and the number in the 'Red' category had halved from the full year results in 2024/25.

These results were viewed as good indicators of the work the AMU Team were continuing to do with the RM DO, ROD & FOD Teams, and the central RM Operations Nerve Centre.

The AMU also advised that Walk Validation was being added to the 'vital few' performance measures for DOs for 2026/27, further increasing the focus in this area.

The Board congratulated the AMU on the marked improvement in reporting performance and requested that these efforts to improve PAF quality continue. It welcomed the elevation of the importance of Walk Validation in DO performance indicators. Additionally, it is recommended that a measure of the number of changes to PAF reported by DOs versus those to be expected, be highlighted in the vital few measures for DOs as soon as practical.

4.2 Sources of PAF Changes

The AMU reported that, due to the ongoing drive and increased workload to reduce delays in answering customer enquiries, work on further development to track the sources of PAF changes had been paused. This was expected to restart shortly.

The Board expressed some frustration with the time taken to generate this information and requested this be given focussed effort.

5 RM/ AMU SLA

5.1 SLA Timetable

The AMU reported that it had reviewed the draft SLA submitted by the PAB, working with the RM Operations Nerve Centre. It was expected that a proposed new SLA would be complete by the end of February for review by senior RM Operational stakeholders. The AMU was hopeful that a new SLA could be in place by June.

Board members asked if the rollout of the revised USO would be likely to impact the timetable for deployment of a new SLA. The AMU replied that, at this stage, they did not expect that to be the case.

The Board welcomed the news of progress with a revised SLA and requested sight of the proposed text and feedback on its own suggestions as soon as possible.

6 Audit and investigation

6.1 GRC-DQM statistical model and weightings

Vicky Groombridge reported that she had now been able to work through the logic of the measurements and weightings applied by GRC to their field audits. Whilst there appeared to be some complexity in some of the weighting criteria (and an associated slight underestimation of actual PAF accuracy), the overall measurements and weightings provided a good, consistent, framework.

Board members suggested that, despite the infrequency with which individual DOs feature in the GRC-DQM work, it would be useful to analyse DO performance against the external quality audit information gathered by GRC-DQM.

The Board invited the AMU to consider how the suggested comparison with DO performance in reporting PAF changes might work.

6.2 Timetable for Quality Assessment reports

The AMU advised that they receive two PAF quality audit reports from GRC simultaneously covering six postcode areas. The next two reports were expected to be ready in the time for the April PAB meeting.

6.3 Business Name Changes

The AMU reported that they were concentrating effort on business name mailings, with enhanced targeting to drive response. These mailings produce the vast majority of business name changes applied in PAF, which had amounted to 106,000 changes in total in 2024/25. In 2025/26 to date, 110,000 changes had been made arising from business mailing campaigns.

The Board invited the AMU to provide monthly reports of the number of business name changes.

7 AMU Risk Register & Product Development

The Board repeated a request to view the current AMU risk register and product development plans.

8 PAF intellectual property

The AMU updated the Board on progress following the Court ruling that certain defendants had infringed RMG's database rights and copyright in the PAF.

9 PAB Member Retirement

Ian Paterson advised that he would be retiring from the Board before the next meeting and would work with the Chairman to identify a potential replacement member. He was the last remaining member who had served since its inception in 2007. Both the Board and the AMU warmly thanked Ian for his contributions through his many years of membership and wished him well for all his future pursuits.

10 Next Meeting

13:00 – 15:30, 16 April 2026. Venue: Experian, Cardinal Place, 6th Floor, 80 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 5JL.