

# **Police National Database 1.5 Transformation Programme – Accounting Officer Assessment**

## **Objectives**

The Police National Database (PND) was established following the tragic murders in 2002 of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman. The subsequent Bichard Inquiry (2004) identified a number of critical points of failure. One of these was the inability of police and law enforcement partners to make fully informed decisions on threat, risk, and harm, as they lacked direct access to pertinent information that existed on source systems outside of their geographic jurisdiction. A recommendation was made for a national police intelligence system; this was launched in April 2011.

Since 2011 PND is the only intelligence database that shares information across all police forces, non-police law enforcement agencies and regulatory bodies, overcoming artificial geographical and jurisdictional boundaries. The system holds intelligence on people, Organised Crime Groups (OCGs), objects (vehicles and phones), locations and events. It presents a consolidated view of 53 data feeds from police force and non-police agencies. The PND plays a critical role in the risk and threat assessments carried out by police forces and agencies.

Whilst the PND has evolved its functionalities and capabilities, investment in the system was limited to 'keeping the lights on' since 2016, when the National Law Enforcement Data Programme (NLEDP) was established. Under the original scope for NLEDP, it was envisaged that the Police National Computer (PNC) would be combined with the PND creating a single system. However, between 2016 and 2020 NLEDP faced some significant challenges that impacted progression and delivery. Upon various reviews of NLEDP the decision was made for a complete reset of the programme, with PND being removed from the scope of work.

Following the reset of the NLEDP in November 2020 the PND programme was established in 2021 with the aim of assessing what was required for the PND to secure service and business continuity to the 5-10-year horizon.

## Background

In summary, PND Transformation will:

- Ensure Business Continuity of the PND Service as Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) to 5-10yr horizon
- Transition PND to cloud-native architecture and migrate hosting to the Law Enforcement Cloud Platform (LECP)
- Replace or update obsolescent technology components, specifically Oracle database & middleware, and Initiate names matching which is unsupported
- Improve the usability of the system, be intuitive and easy to navigate, with viewable and meaningful search results that can be exported and shared as required by operational policing
- Deliver PND APIs that enable export and analysis of PND data and expose APIs for federated searching across national police data sets
- Enable PND to continue to act as a national source of info for organised crime, organised crime groups, including county lines, modern slavery, and human trafficking until such time as it replaced by the future data strategy agreed by policing and PSG
- From a Commercial perspective the HO will need to align the migration to LECP and transition to a new contract for run, maintenance and support (the current contract with the incumbent supplier is due to expire end of March 2026)

## **Project Stage**

A Proof of Concept (PoC) to validate the code migration approach was conducted from February 2022 to March 2023 to de-risk the delivery of the transformation work. This was followed by a second phase, design, from April until September 2023 with 4 key deliverables culminating in an Integrated Implementation Plan (IIP). The programme is currently in its third phase, the implementation phase, consisting of 15 contracted/fixed priced milestones to transform the system. The fourth phase is decommissioning the current system in favour of the newly transformed system.

These phases have been defined within our Full Business Case and approved at the Home Office Investment Committee (InvestCo) on 18th January 2024. The business case for PND will be updated to reflect programme progress subject to another independent review and update to InvestCo in November 2024. The programme has already delivered the first three milestones on time.

There is ongoing engagement with HM Treasury regarding the business case and the programme will continue to share the latest versions. Now the programme has had InvestCo approval and has formally joined the Government Major Projects Portfolio (GMPP), this Accounting Officer Assessment has been produced.

## **Regularity**

The Programme's whole life cost is contained within the overall Home Office Delegated Expenditure Limit for police resource and capital expenditure, as approved by Investment Committee, January 2024. The Programme's expenditure is included within the funding arising from contributions to the Home Office for the provision of Police IT services and from the Department's own resource. The investment did not require business case approval from HM Treasury, as it was within the Home Office's Delegated Approval Limit, however, it has become a GMPP as it met the secondary criteria of being high risk, complex, CNI and repercussive.

However, it is being monitored and HM Treasury are kept informed of updates to the business case, through regular engagements to ensure compliance with Managing Public Money and procurement law. InvestCo provides oversight to programme expenditure by approval of a Full Business Case for each stage of development. There is sufficient budget to cover the programmes forecasted

expenditure, any variation will be provided in the business case updates, which are provided at least annually.

The PND transformation directly contributes to the Home Office's priority outcomes of cutting crime, protecting vulnerable people and communities, and reducing terrorism. The ability for police and non-police law enforcement agencies to be able to carry out the Home Office's priorities requires the PND to be transformed, as the current challenges with the service pose major risk to the operational use of the system.

The creation of the PND was mandated by the House of Commons following the Bichard Inquiry (2004). The Secretary of State has broad powers under the Police Act (1996) to provide, maintain or contribute to organisations, facilities and services considered necessary or expedient for promoting the efficiency or effectiveness of the police. PND is available for other agencies, including other police forces not covered by section 1 of the 1996 Act and law enforcement agencies within the United Kingdom that exchange information with the Police Service in England and Wales.

The operational control of the data in PND is maintained through the statutory regulation of Management of Police Information (MOPI) 2021 published by the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC). The personal data on PND is processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act (2018) and other relevant legislation.

## **Regularity Conclusion**

The use of information within PND is supported either by explicit legislation, statutory regulations or by common law duties and powers. The police also have common law powers to share information with other public bodies where it is in the public interest to do so in pursuit of the police's functions and functions of the body with whom the information is being shared. The PND has and will maintain a robust audit capability to enable compliance checks with operational and legislative requirements. The project does not require new or amended legislation to progress and therefore the programme conforms to the Regularity Accounting Officer standard.

## Propriety

The core aims of PND are to safeguard children and vulnerable people, support counter terrorism activity and to be proactive in crime prevention including serious and organised crime, aligning with Home Office's priorities. The Home Office, through the PND are providing policing and non-police law enforcement agencies with the core enabler to combating crime, intelligence. The PND remains the only national system that aggregates all police force data and an increasing number of non-police law enforcement data into a single national view. Collating information on custody, crime, county lines, police custody images, child protection, domestic violence, organised crime groups and modern slavery records.

Police forces and agencies are then able to use this information to inform safeguarding, prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution of criminal offences, the execution of criminal penalties and for wider policing purposes. The PND is one of the most important systems within national policing as it overcomes geographical restrictions that previously enabled criminal behaviour. PND is being transformed to better meet the needs of policing, to replace or upgrade obsolete technology and move to the cloud to alleviate the significant service challenges being experienced by users. The benefits of delivering this programme will contribute to ongoing public safety.

The majority of data held on PND mirrors data held on local police systems, with an additional layer of OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE information added by direct data entry for the purposes of the prevention of organised crime, counterterrorism, and modern slavery.

Whilst the information PND holds is classified as OFFICIAL or OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE in the source police systems that provide its data, the aggregation of this data and the additional data added by direct data entry results in upward pressure for the security posture governing data protection. The consequence is an approach to security that requires protection and handling measures in line with the deprecated OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE HIGH to mitigate the risks from cyber-attack, and infiltration and exfiltration of data.

Continuous improvements to the delivery capabilities are ongoing, resources to deliver the transformation are in place or are being recruited. The updated full business case will be scrutinised through the Home Office InvestCo process, the Programme board, HM Treasury and through stakeholder engagement. The programme is large and complex and going forward it will be assessed by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA). Recent

assurance reviews have highlighted that the transformation stands up to scrutiny, with positive feedback being received on deliverability. The senior stakeholders needed for successful outcomes are actively involved in the delivery of the transformation.

A Parliamentary Code of practice for PND has been in place since 2010 in partnership with the College of Policing to guide the behaviours whilst using, managing, and governing PND. This is in the pipeline to be reviewed, updated, and presented to Parliament.

## **Propriety Conclusion**

In summary, the proposal supports a significant proportion of the Department's Priority outcomes. The stakeholder involvement is significant, ensuring the capabilities are delivered to the required standard. Therefore, I consider the programme to align with the principles documented in Managing Public Money and to conform to the Propriety Accounting Officer standard.

## **Value for Money**

A rigorous cost-benefit model has been developed to support the PND business case. The analysis is undertaken in line with HMT Green Book best practice, looking at benefits, costs, risks, and uncertainty. It identified the preferred way forward in terms of value for money as approved by the Central Economic Unit (CEU).

The PND is critical national infrastructure that is reaching end of life. It will require replacing within the next 3-5 years due to end of service life technology. Therefore, a do-nothing baseline is not an option from analysis. A do minimum approach - only provides the lowest reasonable cost to keep PND running until 2026 when transformation investment would be required to deliver service continuity to the 10-year horizon. The do minimum option presented meets the minimum requirements of the service from an operational, but not from a security, perspective, and only ensures service continuity to 2026.

Options appraisal against critical success factors determined that the preferred option, transforming PND by exiting Oracle and moving to Cloud, represented the best fit for both success factors and value for money. The preferred option will deliver benefits of £639 million present value (PV) over 10 years, it has a positive Net Present Social Value (NPSV) £308 million and a

Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1.9. In comparison to our baseline do minimum option will deliver benefits of £277 million (PV), a negative NPSV of -£88 million and a lower BCR of 0.7. **The NPSV relative to the baseline is estimated to be £396.9 million** over 10 years.

Benefits from operational efficiencies, harms avoided, and wider public benefit have been identified and appraised over a 10-year appraisal period from FY23/24 to FY32/33. A benefits realisation plan has been established to monitor all the programme benefits. Key benefits that are/will be delivered by PND include:

- Reduced downtime - by replacing the legacy components it will improve the system stability and lead to less disruption to the users. This will give much needed stability and increase user confidence. The benefit of this time saving is estimated to be £29.6m.
- User Interface (UI) refresh - delivers a user-friendly interface, improved navigation, reduced search times, faster processing, and improved user experience. Leading to increased usage of the system, improved policing service and delivering £99m of benefits.
- Efficiency - bulk searching through the API allows very high volumes of searches to be conducted in very shortened timescales and have already demonstrated its benefit through police vetting checks. This benefit will further increase once the search capacity limit is removed, and the system is in the cloud. This has an estimated delivery benefit of £349.1m
- Harms avoided - firearms checks will lead to some offences being avoided, specifically homicide. The ability for PND to run quick and effective checks on firearms licence holders, will prevent harm and an estimated benefit of £158.1m.

Some of the benefits already delivered such as bulk searching could be greatly improved once the limitation of legacy systems and capacity constraints are removed.

The non-monetised benefits should also be considered, some non-monetised benefits are achieved by all options. Most of the non-monetised benefits will be realised with the completion of the transformation in March 2026. Alternatively, using the baseline option some of these benefits would not be delivered until 2032.

Optimism bias has been assessed in line with HMT Green Book guidance and applied to all options presented in the FBC. Sensitivity analysis has been conducted to evaluate key areas of uncertainty within the programme e.g., delays to the programme, benefits realisation lag and incorrect optimism bias rates.

## **Value for Money Conclusion**

The appraisal concludes that the preferred option will deliver strong value for money in terms of lowest cost, highest NPSV and benefits delivery. Value for money assessments will be conducted at each project level to satisfy approval requirements in line with Home Office governance arrangements.

Therefore, I consider the PND programme to be robust and will deliver value for money.

## **Feasibility**

The PND transformation is being delivered to address the technological debt in PND which is causing a failing service. However, there is a commercial driver: the PND contract was initially placed following a competitive process in 2009 to CGI IT UK Limited, who are the current incumbent. As CGI has retained the system since inception they are the most qualified to execute the transformation to PND1.5. Thus, we are leveraging the current contract with the incumbent to deliver this work, increasing the likelihood of successful transformation due to their expert knowledge.

The PND transformation team is adequately resourced and has established delivery controls, including a detailed delivery plan which is monitored, a robust risk management process and an underpinning governance structure of appropriate assurance boards underneath an overarching Programme Board. The transformation is being delivered under a fixed price contract by the incumbent supplier. This commercial vehicle was complimented by the Gateway Review team due to effort put in to secure a fixed price, it provides an incentive to the supplier to deliver on time, as failure to do so reduces their profits. There is a current risk to the delivery dates, however, this is being monitored by the programme team.

Lastly, quality and assurance is closely monitored by the programme's Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), National Police Chiefs Council (NPPC) representatives embedded in the team and Digital Data and Technology (DDaT) colleagues. The role of DDaT is to design, build and develop products



and services that help people apply for visas or passports; support policing and counter-terrorism operations and protect our borders.

The programme is following good practice and undertaking all relevant Home Office internal review and approval processes. Actions and recommendations arising from internal assurance and independent IPA Gate Reviews are all being/been addressed, with the most recent Gateway 3 Review providing a positive assessment for the programme delivery. The programme will continue to be subject to external (Infrastructure Projects Authority) reviews going forward.

Therefore, I considered the feasibility standards to be satisfied.

## **Conclusion**

As the Accounting Officer for the Home Office, I considered this assessment of PND 1.5 Transformation and approved it on [date of approval].

I have prepared this summary to set out the key points which informed my decision. If any of these factors change materially during the lifetime of this project, I undertake to prepare a revised summary, setting out my assessment of them.

This summary will be published on the government's website (GOV.UK). Copies will be deposited in the Library of the House of Commons, and sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General, Treasury Officer of Accounts and Chair of the Public Accounts Committee.



**Sir Matthew Rycroft KCMG CBE**

5 November 2024