

Minutes of PWSCG (32) Meeting
10:00 – 16:00 Wednesday 21st January 2015
 Conference Centre, BIS, 1 Victoria Street, London

In Attendance:

Wyn Williams (WW)	PWSCG Chair
Denise Harker (DH)	PWSCG Independent Member
Mike Gray (MG)	PWSCG Secretariat
Keith Hodgkinson (KH)	Innovation Policy Team, BIS
Steve Barnes (SB)	Civil Contingencies Secretariat
Colin Hord (CH)	Civil Aviation Authority
Richard Jackson (RJ)	Maritime & Coastguard Agency
Liz Howell (LH)	BBC
Gregor Birse (GB)	MoD
Martin Jones (MJ)	MoD
Dane Marsh (DM)	Welsh Government
Craig Woolhouse (CW)	Environment Agency
Paul Furlong (PF)	Highways Agency
Ian Houlton (IH)	Local Government Association
Patricia Abbott (PA)	CLG
Nathan Travis (NT)	Chief Fire Officers Association
Phil Evans (PE)	Met Office
Derrick Ryall (DR)	Met Office
Richard Orrell (RO)	Met Office
Mel Harrowsmith (MH)	Met Office
Alison Wood (AW)	Met Office
Clare Hubbard (CHu)	Met Office
Tom McIlwaine (TM)	Met Office
Katrina Lidbetter (KL)	Shareholder Executive, BIS
Elizabeth Perelman (EP)	Shareholder Executive, BIS
Sophie Purdey (SP)	Met Office

Apologies:

Charlie Hall	Association of Chief Police Officers
Alessia Morris	Scottish Government
John Irvine	Northern Ireland Executive

Agenda Item	Discussion, Decisions and Actions
1	Welcome & Introductions
	WW opened the meeting, and welcomed two new faces to the PWSCG (PF and PA).
2	Governance Discussion
	<p>The PWSCG held a discussion on Governance facilitated by the Shareholder Executive in BIS. The PWSCG considered five questions as part of its deliberations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Should Government have a unified, integrated view of its requirements on weather and climate? 2. What should Government's vision and priorities be over the next ten years?

	<p>3. What are the key factors for successful governance? 4. What are the pros and cons of the current model? 5. What are the pros and cons of a single integrated governance structure?</p> <p>Overall, the PWSCG felt there would be some benefit from Government having a unified requirement for weather and climate. The priorities in such a requirement should include the priorities of the PWSCG such as the protection of life and property from the impacts of severe weather, the importance of having a sovereign capability, and continual improvements in forecast accuracy.</p> <p>The PWSCG noted its strengths of involving engaged users, providing clear direction, having SMART performance indicators which drive improvements and providing challenge as key factors for successful governance. A single integrated governance structure for weather and climate could have benefits of improving cross-government ownership and help define the common weather and climate national capability, but it was felt that it was critical that the user focus of the PWSCG was not lost.</p> <p>WW asked the Shareholder Executive to attend a future PWSCG to have a further discussion.</p> <p>Action: MG to invite the Shareholder Executive to the July meeting of the PWSCG.</p>
3	Minutes
	The PWSCG noted that all actions had been completed and approved the minutes of the October meeting.
4	PWSCG Chair's Update
	<p>WW gave an update on recent activity which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PWSCG Northern Ireland on 11 November. This was well attended from Northern Ireland responders and stakeholders and there was a lot of useful discussion. Topics included a review of significant weather events over the past year and responder feedback, an update on PWS issues, and changes to the resilience structures in Northern Ireland. WW thanked John Irvine for his organisation of the meeting. - Stakeholder interview for the Met Office General Review - Attending a de-brief of the results of the Public Perception Survey at the Met Office. - Meeting Ian Lisk, the Met Office Head of the Natural Hazard Partnership (NHP). <p>WW shared with the PWSCG some of his personal thoughts regarding the NHP. There is a commonality in membership between the PWSCG and NHP, and NHP seems to cover some of the gaps in the PWS offering regarding weather-related hazards. However, the NHP suffers from having no mandate and no funding. The PWSCG and NHP should work together more closely. This is likely to come up at future meetings, and possibly come out of the Met Office General Review.</p>

5	PWS Value
	<p>MG updated the PWSCG on progress with the Value for Money review. The report has been subjected to review by BIS economists, and external economists working on the General Review. MG will make a few changes as a result of feedback before finalising. The PWSCG requested that the final version be published in full on the website.</p> <p>Action: MG to circulate final version of the Value for Money review to the PWSCG and publish the full report on the website.</p>
6	PWS Performance
	<p>DR updated the PWSCG on PWS performance over the last three months and significant meteorological events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2014 was the warmest year in UK records, and was likely to be confirmed as the warmest year globally. It was also wet. - So far winter 2014/15 had been fairly typical, and with far fewer warnings than last winter. - Impacts of lightning have been significant, and there have been comms challenges around wave heights and coastal impacts, and the term “weather bomb”. - Recent surveys have maintained high level of reach for warnings, suggesting the low level seen in the summer was an outlier and not the start of a trend. - Warnings reach through social media has been impressive. - Met Office surveys show that the levels of trust in the Met Office are increasing. - There are a number of risks to in-year delivery, including challenging weather for warnings, accessing sufficient resources to deliver milestones, and a high demand on the web and IT resilience. <p>SB asked if the Met Office was prepared for high levels of interest likely to arise from 2014 being the warmest year on record. PE reported that the Met Office were working with DECC on a joined-up communications plan.</p> <p>LH noted that the phrase “weather bomb” – which was a meteorological term - made for great media story. The media highlighting these events in the news helps extend reach and save lives.</p> <p>There was some discussion over a missed heavy rain warning in south-west Wales during November, and what were the contributing factors. The PWSCG encouraged the Met Office to undertake a review of the event to help understand the problems and focus future resources.</p> <p>DH raised the forecast accuracy performance around wind speed and low visibility. RO reported that the Met Office will be introducing some science changes to the forecast model which will improve these scores.</p>
7	PWS Milestones FY13/14
7.1	Milestone 2 – PWS Reach Strategy
	AW presented the proposed Reach Strategy. In setting the context of

the Strategy AW gave a summary of results from the recent Public Perception Survey. TV is still the largest channel for accessing weather forecasts, but this is declining whilst digital is growing. This prompted a discussion around how and whether people are changing the way they access information. This was seen to be very important as it would drive the strategy for the future.

The four strands of the Strategy were presented in turn:

1. Create a free-to-use service for radio and television broadcasters to make sure that all providers can access key PWS information, irrespective of commercial contracts

SB asked if this service would include warnings and if so, how would the Met Office ensure that the warnings would be presented in the right way. CHu confirmed that the service would be licensed and there would be terms and conditions around warnings that would have to be adhered to in order to receive the service.

2. Build closer relationships with media partners and ensure that they are provided with useful additional information in a timely manner

WW was assured that consistency of message would remain under this proposal.

3. Outsource some aspects of digital reach so that, as the digital market changes and diversifies, PWS content is available in all the places people want to access it
 - a. Create a content-based offering that digital providers can syndicate. Actively promote this offering to key targeted digital providers
 - b. Actively promote Met Office open data to potential reach partners and use the Met Office brand as a 'kitemark' of quality
4. Continue medium-term (one- to three-year) investment in successful Met Office digital channels to build the Met Office's direct-to-consumer brand

DH noted that there is a lot of competition in the mobile market and asked if the strategy addressed that threat. LH noted that Apps was also a major market and the Met Office needed a clear strategy. DR responded that Met Office Apps development was a medium-term strategy to maintain reach and the Met Office is open to securing additional reach via mobile apps in partnership. In the longer-term it may prove better to do this with a partner and to have a dual-branded App or an app displaying a kite mark.

There was a discussion as to what would be the costs of delivering the strategy, including the opportunity cost of losing reach if the strategy were not delivered.

Overall, the **PWSCG agreed that Milestone 2 had been delivered,**

	noting that delivery of individual elements of the strategy would be subject to affordability.
7.2	Milestone 4 – The National Archive
	<p>CHu presented the plans to create a Met Office national electronic archive for weather information in line with the legal requirements of being a Place of Paper Deposit. The proposal would be undertaken in three phases, with the most requested data (single site) first. This first stage would be delivered in September 2016, and all three phases between August 2018 and September 2019. The development cost would be £1.08m for the first phase, and between £2.5m and £3.5m for all three phases.</p> <p>Whilst noting the legal requirement, the PWSCG expressed its view that historical weather observations was not a priority for the PWS and the cost was much greater than original estimates. CHu responded that original estimates were only for the first phase of the project. GB asked whether there were any prospects for cost sharing, and CH asked whether just some data needed to be archived (that under WMO Resolution 40). The Met Office responded that attempts to get funding from Cabinet Office and BIS had failed, and that all data needed to be stored.</p> <p>The PWSCG felt it needed more information to understand the legal requirements, and whether the cost could be reduced or pace of delivery slowed. In the context of a forthcoming spending review, the PWSCG were unhappy at committing to what it considered was a low priority project without knowing future years budgets.</p> <p>WW proposed that there was no need for the paper to be re-delivered to the PWSCG, but that the Met Office should return to the next PWSCG with a broader picture of its PWS development work, including relative resource requirements, so that the PWSCG could take informed decisions on prioritisation for future years' work.</p> <p>Noting its reservations regarding affordability, the PWSCG agreed that the Met Office had delivered Milestone 4.</p>
7.3	Milestone 6 – Access to Information
	<p>TM updated the PWSCG on progress in making datasets available for re-use through wholesale. European, UK and global model datasets were now available, although global data was on non-operational terms until April 2015. Great interest was shown in accessing Met Office global model data at the recent American Met Society meeting. Future difficulties will arise as model resolution increases and data volumes become larger. However, because of wholesale charges the service does not present a net cost to the PWS.</p> <p>The PWSCG requested that the final report on Milestone 6 be tabled at their April meeting.</p>
8	PWS FY2015/16 and beyond: Vision, Strategy and Future Plans
8.1	Approach to CSA and Performance Measures

	<p>MG presented a proposed approach to the CSA and Performance Measures for future years. This was part of a process of continuous improvement to the CSA to improve clarity. Building on the six themes introduced in the 14/15 CSA (Warnings, Public, Civil Contingencies, Data, International and National Capability) it was proposed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the CSA structure is further simplified by taking some of the detailed documentation outside of the CSA; - a longer-term PWS Vision and Strategy are introduced; and - a multi-year approach is taken to the CSA. <p>The PWSCG agreed to the proposals regarding the CSA.</p> <p>MG presented a simplified approach to the PWS Performance Measures (PPMs) by which there would be single PPM for each theme, which would be of a business critical nature for the service themes, as well as PPMs for Milestone delivery and Forecast Accuracy. These PPMs would be supported by a broad range of indicators (not targets) for each theme. In addition, the Chairman would provide a qualitative report at the end of the year on behalf of the PWSCG, drawing on the indicators, and the findings of the PWSCG and the PWS Assurance Group to provide an overall assessment of the Met Office's PWS delivery. The PWSCG were asked the question of whether Met Office success in delivering the PWS should be based on achieving a set number of the PPMs as now, or through the Chairman's qualitative assessment?</p> <p>A discussion was had about what the consequences were of the Met Office failing a CSA, or target within. There were consequences to the Met Office reputation and for its own corporate targets. However, as the PWSCG is the Met Office's most important customer delivering PWS targets and milestones carries significant weight within the organisation. Given this, the PWSCG wished to ensure that the proposed PPMs were sufficiently challenging for the Met Office.</p>
8.2	A PWS Vision
	MG circulated a draft Vision to the PWSCG for their consideration outside of the meeting.
8.3	Draft Performance Measures and Milestones for 15/16
	<p>MG presented the eight proposed PPMs for 15/16. DR presented the draft proposed Milestones for 15/16.</p> <p>On draft Milestone 1 – Expanded Warnings Service, the PWSCG felt it better to talk of a next generation warnings service. The PWSCG were very supportive of draft Milestone 5 – Weather Observations from Schools. CW asked if such observations would be used operationally, and noted the potential efficiencies that could result if they were.</p> <p>On draft Milestone 9 – Forecast Accuracy, MG informed the PWSCG that establishing a new forecast accuracy basket that measured the parameters of importance to the PWSCG in a way that was scientifically robust would be a major piece of work next year. This would be included in the agenda for the April meeting.</p>

	<p>Action: PWSCG members to review the draft Vision, PPMs and Milestones and pass comments back to the Secretariat (MG).</p> <p>Action: DR and MG to prepare a final draft of the Vision, PPMs and Milestones to be circulated to the PWSCG well ahead of the next meeting (before Easter).</p> <p>Action: DR to present Milestones to the next meeting in the context of their relative resource requirements, so that the PWSCG can make informed decisions on priorities.</p>
9	AOB
	<p>There was no other business. The meeting closed at 16:00.</p>

Summary of Decisions of PWSCG32:

7.1 The PWSCG agreed that Milestone 2 had been delivered

7.2 The PWSCG agreed that the Met Office had delivered Milestone 4.

7.3 The PWSCG requested that the final report on Milestone 6 be tabled at their April meeting.

8.1 The PWSCG agreed to the proposals regarding the CSA.

Summary of Actions arising from PWSCG32:

2. Action: MG to invite the Shareholder Executive to the July meeting of the PWSCG.

5. Action: MG to circulate final version of the Value for Money review to the PWSCG and publish the full report on the website.

8.3 Action: PWSCG members to review the draft Vision, PPMs and Milestones and pass comments back to the Secretariat (MG).

8.3 Action: DR and MG to prepare a final draft of the Vision, PPMs and Milestones to be circulated to the PWSCG well ahead of the next meeting (before Easter).

8.3 Action: DR to present Milestones to the next meeting in the context of their relative resource requirements, so that the PWSCG can make informed decisions on priorities.

Dates of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 22nd April 2015, BIS, London

Future Meetings:

Wednesday 15th July 2015, BIS, London

Wednesday 21st October 2015, BIS, London

Other Meetings:

Thursday 26th March 2015, PAG, Exeter (IH & CH to attend)

Tuesday 12th May 2015, PWSCG Wales

Wednesday 17th June 2015, PWSCG Scotland

Wednesday 11th November 2015, PWSCG Northern Ireland

