



Met Office Board

Summary

28 Sept 2010

- The minutes of meeting held on 26th July 2010 were agreed to be an accurate record. Highlighted actions, along with longstanding actions, now considered business as usual, were reviewed and closed.
- The Board thoroughly reviewed the Board and sub-committee Governance, including reviewing the feedback received from the Governance Review carried out for the FY0910.
- It was agreed that the purpose and best use of the Met Office Board time was to help management in the development of strategy and to monitor progress against that strategy, holding management to account as necessary. The strategy day at Taunton was cited as a good example of this working well.
- The Board requested a regular report on issues covered and updates from the Corporate Responsibility Committee to maintain a connection with this sub-committee.
- The Audit Committee was considered to be operating well with suitable agreed roles and composition. Positive views of the Internal Audit team were expressed.
- Both longer standing and new members of the Board agreed that the way the Board, and its sub-committees ran, compared favourably with other organisations and experiences, getting the balance of strategy, debate, responsibility for delivery and progress monitoring right.
- The Board requested a review the Met Office reputation at a future meeting.
- Nick Jobling delivered the finance report, noting that commercial revenue was improving, but reliant of some significant outstanding opportunities to bridge the gap. NJ reported much of the increase in Commercial Revenue and Operating Profit increase is attributable to agreements reached regarding Volcanic Ash costs.
- NJ reported ROCE standing at 4.8%, exceeding current target by 1%.
- NJ informed the Board that slippage in CAPEX had been analysed and revealed a split between reasoned decisions to delay, effective delivery and



reduced cost and a general delay or drift of capital projects. JH emphasised that he and the Exec were focussing program managers on the need for delivery of expected and budgeted projects, unless specific reasons and decisions were made and explained to delay.

- Chief Executive delivered his report to the Board.
- RV reviewed the BPM for forecast accuracy, reporting that the Amber rating had caused concern and been reviewed in greater detail. The recommendations for improvements had been approved and it was now expected that an improvement should be seen over the next few months.
- Carbon Emissions target was discussed and RV reported reviewing this in the Corporate Responsibility Committee. It was considered to be more controlled now that directors were responsible for approving flights, as a consequence of the recent government restrictions. More discipline and more accurate forecasting were also being encouraged.
- JH reported that the internal review of the Volcanic Ash incident was near completion and would be available for the Board shortly.
- JS gave a summary of the effects of Space Weather, noting that the next solar maximum was expected in 2012/3. JS reported the progress being made with Space Weather Prediction Centre (NOAA) which was planned to lead to a MOU. MOD involvement in Space Weather was also discussed.
- JH informed the Board of a positive visit to Air Command.
- JH and JS informed the Board that Rodger Harrabin had launched a "forecast assessment" project, in associated with Royal Met Society.
- From his meeting with the Met Office owning Minister, JH reported that the minister was supportive of the concept of the Hazard Centre. He was also content with the view that the current business model was suitable and working and had agreed to come and visit.
- The Board heard how the Met Office had received Ministerial support by mention in a succession of speeches, from Caroline Spelman MP, Chris Huhne MP and Liam Fox MP.
- JS gave a summary of the review of science collaborations and their value, concluding that through the gearing of collaborative relationships a direct saving in the region of £15m a year could be attributed. The range of these collaborations served to demonstrate the significant reach across a breath of science.
- The Plan and performance Team presented the proposed Corporate Objectives alongside the framework and synthesis that was expected to form



the Corporate planning process. The flow of “caterpillar planning” was discussed. The “purpose” was understood as being the Met Office’s fundamental reason for being.

- The understanding of “The Best...” was discussed and agreed that it needed to be articulated clearly in terms of “enables higher levels of protection i.e. saves more lives, and increases prosperity i.e. saves more cost and delivers greater returns”.
- The level of future funding was discussed and the Board were informed of some scenario planning work that had been done.
- The Board were given a presentation on the next satellite programme - EUMETSAT Polar System Second Generation Mission. The presentation covered: Weather Satellites as part of the core infrastructure; Our collaborative approach; EPS-SG requirement and time-table; Financial issues including funding model and the next steps.
- In AOB - JH reported to the Board he had just seen in Civil Service World that the Met Office had been short-listed for the Sustainability Award in the Annual Civil Service Awards for its work on reducing the environmental impact of a weather and climate supercomputer.
- **Close of Meeting**