

Status: OFFICIAL

IS UPDATE

Purpose

1. To update the Board on current ICT Issues.

IS Update

End user systems

1. The new desktop/Laptop operating environment is currently being rolled out across the business. This includes: the Windows 7 desktop operating system; Office 2010; a new remote access solution; upgraded GIS software; the IE11 internet browser; and a number of other upgraded software components. We anticipate that 80% of the user population will be upgraded by the end of the current financial year. Feedback is that, after a couple of days familiarisation, the new environment is a big improvement.

Mobile computing

2. There is increasing demand for improved mobile computing facilities, from both operational staff needing access at forest sites and from office workers wanting access from home and whilst travelling.

3. IS and IFOS have been working closely with operational staff across the organisation (the Mobile Working Group) to clarify the business requirements and select a device that meets the needs of a wide range of users. The selected mobile device is a Windows 8.1 tablet that can be used as a laptop replacement and also be used in the forest environment with a ruggedized case. IS is currently developing a standard build for this device to ensure it that meets our security requirements and is compatible with the rest of our infrastructure. We intend to pilot of the new device with a range of potential users in the spring of 2015.

4. The Netilla VPN remote access product provided with both the Windows 7 laptop build and the Windows 8.1 tablet build now gives users a robust remote access solution from home and whilst on the road when combined with the Vodafone data dongle.

Telephony

5. Roll-out of the new telephony system continues. The major sites previously reliant on old and unreliable equipment have all been successfully upgraded and the programme to bring all the remaining sites onto the new system continues to progress with more than 850 staff now migrated to the new system. IS currently estimate that all current users of the Ericson phone service will be migrated to the Mitel system by the end of July 2015.

Infrastructure Risk Mitigation

6. The migration of key business systems from ageing hardware to our standardised Blade/SAN environment continues with the migration of: Assyst; GLOS; Drive; Forester Web; e-financials; APEX; Scotland CaseBook; Scotland Website and the GB Website. This work has further reduced the risk of systems failure and reduces the impact should a failure occur.

7. The Disaster Recovery facility at NRS is now fully operational, as a result IS is confident that in the event of a disaster (fire flood etc.) at Silvan House the business critical systems can be now restored within 5 working days.

Security & Compliance

8. IS continue to work with Central Government at both Westminster and Scotland to implement security controls as appropriate. Following the huge effort to gain PSN accreditation and transition from the GSI and PSN, IS continue to implement further necessary controls such as: Automated patch management; protective monitoring and a new DMZ to maintain our accreditation.

Business Systems Development

9. IS is currently developing a number of new business systems, notably: The new Plant & Seed system is awaiting implementation; The replacement Wildlife Management System is in user acceptance testing at Scottish lowlands; GLOS continues to be modified to facilitate the migration of grants to CAP-D; the consolidated Plant Health database has just started the detailed design phase.

NRW

10. IS continues to work with NRW to implement the secure Network Gateway between the two organisations, with anticipated completion before the end of 2014. The implementation of this gateway will allow us to further accelerate the withdrawal of FC infrastructure from Wales.

IS Strategy Development

11. The second round of discussions with business management to develop the 2015-2020 IS Strategy are currently underway with the intention of publishing the revised strategy document by end March 2015.

Resource Implications

12. All work is being delivered within the agreed resource constraints, resulting in some project delays and difficult decisions regarding project prioritisation.

Risk Assessment

13. The overall business risk to the FC resulting from systems failure or security breaches has reduced considerably over the past three years as a result of the systems improvement work undertaken.

Communications Issues

14. IS continues to work to improve communications with the business, but this can be a challenge.

Implementation & Evaluation proposals

15. None.

Recommendation

16. EB members to note the contents of the update and raise any issues of concern.

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