

 **The National Archives**

The image shows the exterior of The National Archives building. A prominent curved sign above a glass-enclosed walkway reads "The National Archives". The building features large white columns and a modern architectural style. The sky is clear and blue.

The National Archives

Webb Report

OPSI Response

John Williams

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Webb Report – Published March 2011

- Looked at OPSI, part of The National Archives, and its processing of complaints under the PSI Regulations
- Phillip Webb, Expert Member of APPSI, evaluated our business process, analysing our complaints log and scrutinising sample paperwork from a variety of cases
- Reviewed the period from July 2005 to November 2010
- Found that our process was broadly fit for purpose, but made 7 recommendations and 1 observation
- Report published on APPSI website

OPSI Response

- We welcome the recommendations which will be implemented within six months of publication in line with the terms of reference
- We found the audit process instructive – helping us to gain assurance on those aspects that are functioning well and setting out constructive suggestions for improvement
- The report is timely and relevant to work in government on the regulatory aspects of information trading generally and specifically in the context of PDC plans
- We are developing a detailed implementation plan, but these are our initial responses

Recommendations and Responses

- *Recommendation 1: Establish a stronger formal reporting process involving the public sector body's Accounting Officer requiring an action plan and timetable for implementation of OPSI recommendations.*

Response: In practice, the Accounting Officer of the respondent organisation is made aware of and involved in compiling a reply to the complaint, but this recommendation will ensure that this is made explicit and increase accountability.

- *Recommendation 2: Establish a complainant satisfaction feedback process to enable performance and customer satisfaction to be better assessed and monitored.*

Response: This recommendation will help us to capture data on the complainant's experience, creating a structured feedback loop. We will be taking advice from other complaint-handling bodies on methodology.

Recommendations and Responses

- *Recommendation 3: Provide a clear statement linked to ‘OPSI’ clearly establishing its relationship with the National Archives and the Regulations, and any other relevant legislation on The National Archives website.*

Response: This recommendation is being addressed linked to a parallel piece of work to evaluate the information that has been migrated from the OPSI to the TNA website. OPSI’s role as part of The National Archives will be delineated.

- *Recommendation 4: Review and redraft the procedures for considering complaints under r. 18(1) of the Regulations to reflect the change in the status of OPSI and any other changes considered necessary as a result of this report.*

Response: This is a good opportunity to refresh our procedural documents which were last reviewed in the summer of 2007.

Recommendations and Responses

- *Recommendation 5: Agree and introduce a set of simple performance measures for the Stage Two OPSI complaints consideration process.*
Response: The first version of our process was adjusted in recognition of the length of time it takes to process complex complaints. However, the current version is perhaps too open ended. Setting a more precise target timetable and monitoring performance against it will be beneficial.
- *Recommendation 6: To increase awareness of the type and nature of complaints OPSI should publish and maintain a table of past complaints, identifying the type of public sector body, nature of the complaint and the outcome.*
Response: We plan to publish a detailed digest of complaint activity balanced against the requirement to respect confidentiality.

Recommendations and Responses

- *Recommendation 7: To increase awareness of the licensing and complaints process OPSI should compile and maintain a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on The National Archives website.*

Response: We will be compiling a list of FAQs in line with the outputs from the other recommendations.

- *Observation: OPSI must remain vigilant in the development of its wider role and not compromise its position of impartiality, integrity and independence when considering complaints under r.18 (1) of the Regulations.*

Response: Early intervention in prospective complaints can yield results and we have protocols in place for handling mediations which subsequently become formal complaints. However, we will carefully examine the issues in this area.

Any Questions?

- Please send any questions or comments on the implementation of the Webb Report to:
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