

Connecting Criminal Justice

A follow-up review of the exchange of
information by Criminal Justice Organisations
through the Causeway IT programme

February 2012





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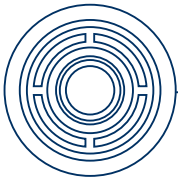
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List of abbreviations

CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CMS	Case Management System (in the PPS)
CRV	Criminal Record Viewer
DoJ	Department of Justice
DSM	Data Sharing Mechanism
FSNI	Forensic Science Northern Ireland
MIS	Management Information Standards
NiCHE	PSNI Records Management System
NICTS	Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service
NIPS	Northern Ireland Prison Service
OGC	Office of Government Commerce
PNC	Police National Computer
PPS	Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland





Chief Inspector's Foreword

This short report is an update to our two previous reports into the Causeway data sharing mechanism. We have examined how the Causeway system has progressed since the implementation of the second stage (DSM1) in November 2009. In doing so we evaluated progress with previous CJI recommendations and examined the most recent Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway 5 report into the Causeway system.

The Causeway mechanism has now been operating on a stable platform since November 2009 and organisations are beginning to report on benefits accruing to them. Participating agencies had been required to work together to develop their business processes in tandem with each other to make electronic integration work across the system. Collaborative working is beginning to deliver efficiencies and is helping to improve accuracy as cases progress from one Criminal Justice Organisation (CJO) to another through the system.

There has been progress with previous CJI recommendations. Two of the four recommendations made by CJI in 2007 have been achieved in full. Two are out of scope of the Causeway team although both are currently being progressed by other means. Other relevant references to Causeway made in CJI reports had also been resolved.

The OGC Gateway review concluded that successful delivery of the Causeway system was probable and Inspectors are reassured by the Gateway 5 findings. The Gateway 5 review has been published on the Department of Justice website and a link has been provided to it from the CJI website. Inspectors would encourage the participating organisations to continue to work to fully realise the Causeway benefits.

The Causeway system has become an integral part of the criminal justice system impacting on its effectiveness and efficiency. Inspectors will therefore continue to report on the Causeway system through thematic inspections of the criminal justice system and relevant organisational inspections.

Bill Priestley led this inspection for CJI and I would like to acknowledge the willing support and openness of all partner CJOs and the Causeway team.

Dr Michael Maguire

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland
February 2012

Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland
a better justice system for all





Follow-Up Review

CHAPTER 1:

Introduction



- 1.1 Criminal Justice Inspection (CJI) was due to undertake a review of the Causeway system as part of its commitment to provide external assurance that the system was delivering against expected benefits and was being operated effectively and efficiently.
- 1.2 The second phase of the Causeway Programme, Data Sharing Mechanism 1 (DSM1) went live on 30 November 2009 and has been operating ever since. Following a period of adjustments and fine tuning the system is regarded by stakeholders, administrators and operators as having been on a stable footing since June 2010.
- 1.3 An Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway 5 review of the system took place during December 2010. The main aim of the Gateway 5 review was to assess whether the anticipated benefits were being delivered and on-going contractual arrangements continued to meet the business need. To avoid duplication of effort and unnecessary intervention, whilst continuing to fulfill CJI's obligations to provide external assurance, Inspectors liaised with members of the Causeway programme and the Department of Justice (DoJ) to develop the most effective approach to undertaking this work.
- 1.4 Gateway reviews are undertaken to provide assurance to the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) and are not in normal circumstances made available to the public. However, following discussion with DoJ officials it was agreed that an appropriately redacted version of the Gateway 5 report would be published by the DoJ on their website. The Gateway 5 review was published on the DoJ website on 21/09/2011. CJI will refer to this publication on the news section of our own website and will provide a link to the document.
- 1.5 The Gateway 5 review gave the system an overall assessment of Amber Green which is defined as;

'Successful delivery appears probable however constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery'.

In addition CJI has confirmed the status of recommendations and comments made about Causeway in our previous inspection reports and progress with these is outlined below.

CHAPTER 2:

Status of CJI recommendations and comments



- 2.1 Four recommendations remained to be completed following the last of CJI's reports into the Causeway mechanism published in October 2007. The first recommendation was that:

“The Causeway team should introduce a system of case priority marking for requests transferred between the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and Forensic Science Northern Ireland (FSNI).”

Status: Achieved

Following discussions between the Causeway team and stakeholders it was not felt that the addition of a central case priority flag was the best solution. FSNI subsequently funded a change to enable the sharing of additional details from the PSNI to enable better case prioritisation. This was implemented in January 2011. Although the change has improved the situation FSNI are discussing further refinements with the PSNI. This work is in addition to the standard process operating with regard to priority requests which normally enable the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS) or the PSNI to obtain urgent scientific information within 48 hours.

- 2.2 The second recommendation was that:

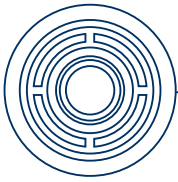
“Criminal Justice Organisations (CJO)s implementing projects that directly impact on the Causeway programme that are not already subject to independent validation, should seek guidance from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway Co-ordinator on engagement with the OGC Gateway process.”

Status: Achieved

It is now policy for all CJO projects to seek guidance from the DoJ Gateway Co-ordinator and to agree the approach to engage with the NI/OGC Gateway process. This policy has been approved and mandated by the DoJ Board and the Departmental Audit and Risk Committee (DARC).

- 2.3 The third recommendation stated that:

“The Causeway team should continue to work towards an appropriate direct link with the Police National Computer (PNC) to ensure that information held on the Criminal Record Viewer (CRV) is as comprehensive and accurate as possible.”



Status: Out of Causeway scope

Causeway is not now directly involved with the implementation of this recommendation although the Causeway team had become involved in facilitating the approach taken to deal with it by the PSNI and the Home Office. Stakeholders had met and agreed that the most appropriate way to make the link was directly between the PSNI and the PNC. The work has been costed and work on agreeing the funding arrangements required to implement it is at an advanced stage, involving the Home Office, the PSNI and the Department of Justice. Access NI has direct access to criminal records on the Causeway CRV and PNC so that current checks are as comprehensive as possible.

2.4 The fourth recommendation was that:

“The PSNI should implement the recommendations made in the CJI report ‘Avoidable Delay’ published in May 2006.”

Status: Out of Causeway scope

This recommendation was brought forward into the report on the Causeway programme from CJI’s earlier work on Avoidable Delay as a matter related to the Causeway programme. The work to implement recommendations from the Avoidable Delay report is being taken forward by the Governance and Accountability Group and will be reported on in a CJI publication during the reporting period 2011-2012.

CHAPTER 3:



Other Causeway references

- 3.1 Since the instigation of the Causeway programme some members of participating organisations had made various claims to CJI Inspectors regarding benefits expected to accrue to them and to the justice system as a whole.
- 3.2 The Causeway programme was originally scheduled to deliver benefits at staged intervals identified as DSM 0, 1, 2 and 3. Some of the benefits outlined to Inspectors by people in participating organisations were those expected to accrue during the implementation of DSM 2 and 3. Other benefits outlined to Inspectors referred to management information that would become available once Causeway was operational. However, the provision of such management information was not part of the programme specification and reflected a degree of misunderstanding by some members of participating organisations. A more recent development instigated by Causeway was the development of Management Information Standards (MIS) which may provide the basis for future development of management information.
- 3.3 A review of the Causeway programme meant that only DSM1 and the benefits attributed to that phase would be delivered. Further deployment of the programme to include functionality set

out in DSM2 and 3 may yet take place at a later date but only following a successful period of operation of DSM1 and development, agreement and authorisation of appropriate business cases. Participating organisations are now producing progress reports against agreed, expected benefits to provide a more accurate assessment of the realisation of improvements.

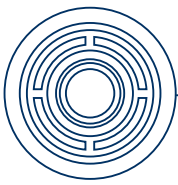
- 3.4 Further references to the Causeway system requiring action by inspected organisations were made in the following CJI reports;

Securing attendance at Court (June 2011):-

An issue over the transfer of civilian witness contact details through the Causeway hub was raised.

This issue was resolved in November 2010.

- 3.5 **Mistaken prisoner releases (Nov 2010):-** The discharge process should be reviewed in its entirety in conjunction with other agencies and Causeway officials to determine whether any proposed business changes can be incorporated into the integrated system. The review should not be limited to the issues raised in this enquiry and should also examine how individual agencies' competing business needs are met.



This recommendation was for the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) to take forward. A review of processes had been undertaken and the Causeway team had been involved together with the NIPS, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) and other relevant organisations in delivering improved business and system processes. The work had enabled the NIPS to amend some of the processes involved in effecting prisoner releases.

- 3.6 Sexual violence and abuse (July 2010):-** The PSNI should urgently seek to address the issue of files not being submitted expediently from NiCHE to the PPS CMS via the Causeway hub.

After an extensive programme of improvements the backlog which caused this issue was eliminated in August 2010.

- 3.7 Avoidable delay (June 2010):-** The anticipated benefits of Causeway to the PPS were expected to be:

- efficiency gains due to the automation of some current processes;
- a reduction in tasks for PPS administrative staff, offering redeployment opportunities;
- improvements in the timeliness of some processes; and
- more accurately recorded information following reductions in the need for each agency to key in the same data.


The PPS identified the following benefits in a PPS delivery report produced in April 2011 with a quantified total benefit of £459,695 for the year April 2010 to March 2011:

- improved administration of court lists;
- automatic receipt of bail details;
- automatic notification of appeals;
- reduced time in dealing with requests for further information (RFI)s;
- reduced time in issuing decisions (not fully realised);
- reduction in time to record case outcomes (not fully realised);
- reduction in time to record case results (not fully realised);
- reduction in time to record a summons service (not fully realised);
- automatic notice of diversion administration;
- production orders no longer required;
- issuing locate & trace instructions to police no longer required; and
- improved speed and accuracy of transmitted information.

- 3.8 Enforcement of fines (March 2010):-** The offender's fine payment history should be accessible to the Prosecution, to the Courts and to enforcement staff via the Causeway system.

There is scope for the Causeway IT system (the inter-agency criminal justice information system for Northern Ireland) to carry details of an offender's payment record, and it is hoped that a report on fine payment history will be available from January 2010.

These recommendations have been implemented by the NICTS. The Fine Payment Record produced from the NICTS Integrated Court Operations System (ICOS) became operational in April 2011. The report provides three years payment history for offenders.



The report is not shared through the Causeway system but the prosecution have access through the Causeway Criminal Record to previous fines imposed. Fine Collection staff in the NICTS also have access to the fine payment record. When a warrant is issued from ICOS for non-payment of a fine this information is shared with Causeway and other CJO's. Warrant execution is also shared with Causeway and the CJO's.

CHAPTER 4:

Summary



- 4.1 The Causeway Management Board continues to monitor the delivery of benefits against those agreed in the business case. In the first financial year around 84% of the target set was achieved although disbenefit figures from the Northern Ireland Prison Service were not available for inclusion in these results. The other participating organisations reported good realisation levels in the first year of operation of DSM1 (01 April 2010 to 31 March 2011):
- The PSNI had performed above target achieving 155% realisation;
 - The NICTS realised 84% of targeted benefits; and
 - The PPS reported realisation levels of 99.7%.
- 4.2 Two of the four recommendations made by CJI in the 2007 review of the Causeway system have been achieved in full. Two are out of scope of the Causeway team although both are currently being progressed by other means. Other relevant references to Causeway made in CJI reports had been resolved.
- 4.3 The Gateway 5 review has now been published in a redacted form on the DoJ website and a link has been provided to it from the CJI website. The Gateway review overall assessment was that successful delivery of the Causeway system was probable but required constant attention to prevent risks from jeopardising the desired outcome.
- 4.4 Inspectors are reassured by the Gateway 5 findings and are pleased to find that recommendations made in previous reports have mostly been achieved. Inspectors would encourage organisations to continue to work on those recommendations which remain to be fully implemented and to work to fully realise the Causeway benefits.
- 4.5 The Causeway system has become an integral part of the criminal justice system impacting on its effectiveness and efficiency. Inspectors will therefore continue to report on the Causeway system through thematic inspections of the criminal justice system and relevant organisational inspections.

Section



Appendices



Appendix 1: Terms of Reference and Methodology

An Inspection of Causeway

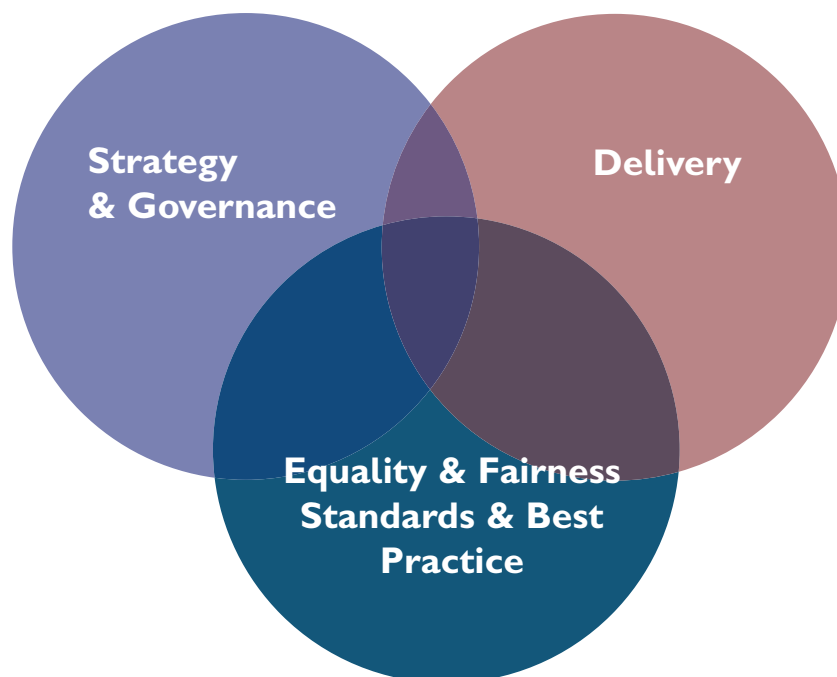
Terms of Reference

Introduction

Criminal Justice Inspection proposes to undertake an inspection of the Causeway mechanism. Causeway was first inspected by CJI in 2006 and reviewed in 2007. Subsequently it was decided that a further inspection of the Causeway system should take place during the reporting period 2010 to 2011.

The inspection will be based upon the CJI framework which is set out below.

Figure 1: CJI Inspection Framework





Context

CJI are aware that an Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway 5 review has recently been completed on the Causeway system and will use that review to inform the inspection. This will mean that many of the more technical aspects of the inspection will already have been examined by the Gateway 5 review. CJI will examine the findings of the review to inform the approach to inspection fieldwork and to establish the scope of any fieldwork required.

Aims of the Inspection

The broad aim of the Inspection is to provide external assurance that the Causeway system is delivering against expected benefits and is being operated effectively and efficiently.

The inspection objectives are to:

- assess whether the anticipated benefits were being delivered;
- whether on-going contractual arrangements continued to meet the business need;
- to establish what progress had been made with previous CJI recommendations; and
- to establish what progress had been made with regard to references made by CJOs to expected Causeway benefits.

Methodology

The following methodology is proposed.

Design and Planning

Documentation setting out the revised approach to benefits realisation and the benefits measured by participating organisations will be examined. Participating organisations will be contacted and asked to provide additional data and the Causeway lead in each organisation will provide Inspectors with an update.

Delivery


Fieldwork will be determined according to the analysis of information provided by participating organisations and the Gateway 5 review. It is anticipated that fieldwork will be limited to the Causeway leads for each organisation and members of the Causeway team. Fieldwork will take place in August and September 2011.

Publication and Closure

The final draft report will be forwarded to the Minister of Justice for permission to publish. A date of publication will be agreed between CJI, the Department and the Causeway team and a press release will be prepared and shared with the Department and with the PSNI.

Schedule

The work will take place between June 2010 and November 2011. Fieldwork will be completed during October 2011. The aim will be to publish the inspection report in early 2012.



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