



GC Communicate

Introduction

Welcome to the first issue of the Government Connect newsletter which I hope you will find very informative as you work towards going live with your GCSx connection over the next few months, particularly as so many authority's GCSx implementation activities are now at a critical stage.

Local government has responded positively to the challenge set by DWP's revised data handling policy. All 410 local authorities have signed-up to Government Connect and all circuits will be technically provisioned early in 2009. By April three quarters of all local authorities are anticipating they will have achieved compliance with the Code of Connection and by October 2009, all the remaining authorities have stated they will be compliant.

This remarkable turnaround shows the adaptability and flexibility of local government to accept the requests placed upon it. We look forward to working with you on achieving compliance with the CoCo.

If your authority would like to feature in this newsletter to highlight how you have dealt with your CoCo compliance or have gone 'Live' please contact our communications team.



*Philip Littleavon,
Programme Director,
Government Connect*

Restructure of the GC team for 2009

From January 2009 the GC Implementation Team will restructure to give maximum support to Local Authorities (LAs) in their CoCo assessments and technical implementation processes.

As over 90% of LAs in England and Wales have now submitted a Code of Connection (CoCo) for formal assessment, the day to day support will now be centralised - with just one point of contact - to ensure more specific clarification of actions and comments from the central assessment team. This will enable a quicker assessment turnaround and reduce the amount of time taken for LAs to become CoCo compliant.

Benefits

A smaller team of Roaming Advisory Managers (RAMs) will continue to be assigned (but centrally allocated, on demand) to those LAs that have particular local issues and would benefit from further one-to-one support and advice. A dedicated Central CoCo Advisory Team (CCAT) is now in post to follow up assessment comments with every LA to provide further clarity on outstanding actions. To support this, the Assessment Team has been also expanded to focus on returning assessed CoCos to LAs more quickly.

In addition, the Implementation Team will continue to coordinate the delivery of the GCSx infrastructure by C&W, and offer the day's technical configuration support to each LA so that they can initiate business services over GCSx as soon as they are compliant with the CoCo.

Other resources continue to be available, on request, to support LAs' engagement or business clarification.



Contacts

General implementation queries should be marked **FAO Anna Smith** and sent to: gctech.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or telephone: 08458382945

All CoCo questions and submissions/security enquiries should be directed to gctech.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or telephone: 08458382945

Implementation Days are currently being scheduled by the Implementation team: please contact gctech.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk as soon as possible to book a day's support.

Watch the short Government Connect film



*request by email at:
gc.info@dwp.gsi.gov.uk*

The Government Connect (GC) Benefit Realisation Fund

To encourage local government to embrace the business advantages of using GCSx, Government Connect has created a £1.5m benefits realisation fund to be managed by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). Local authorities may apply for awards in the order of £25k where their implementation of Government Connect is creating new best practise that can be shared with others.

The scope of qualifying initiatives is virtually unlimited and includes both technical and business process projects. Qualifying business process projects might include reforming council services such as; Youth Offending Teams, Trading Standards, Registrar

Services, Parking and Benefits. Examples of technical projects might include running shared services over GCSx, e-mail migration and file sharing.

14th January 2009 was the closing date for applications for the first tranche.

However, if you are still interested in applying for a bid you may still be eligible for evaluation against set criteria and monies distributed accordingly should funds still be available.

For more information contact Steve Locker at steven.locker@idea.gov.uk



What is the e-transfer?

GC is working with the Housing Benefits Information Flows team to develop a system to electronically transfer files from Pensions and Job Centre plus



offices - LAIDs and LACIs. Initially the files to be transferred will be PDF versions for manual re-entry into housing benefits systems but this will be supplemented later in 2009 by XML versions.

Agreement with the main system suppliers to produce a common XML format, led by LeGSBY, will enable direct system input. The file transfer system will operate across GCSx and will interface with the DWP's Generic File Transfer System.

Further details will be available in later versions of the newsletter. Or for more information please refer to: <http://www.govconnect.gov.uk/filetransfer>

LA Connectivity Progress:

1	Submit GCSx Proforma, obtain connection	complete
2	CoCo Review & Consultancy	40
3	CoCo Assessments	406
4	Submit Contracts, CoCo approval & circuit application	4
5	Complete local configurations	4
LIVE	Business Live over GCSx connection	18

What does your LA need to do next?

- Submit CoCo for assessment with the central support team.
- Read the fortnightly newsletter for regular updates.
- Keep in touch with the support team: gctech.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
- Refer to the Government Connect website for updated information
- Schedule an implementation day

If you were granted an exemption, keep working towards going live on the agreed date. This includes meeting the agreed actions, staying in contact with Government Connect if you have any questions and submitting your Code of Connection in time to meet your Go Live date.

Contact Government Connect:

CoCo Support: 0845 838 2945 gctech.team@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Communications: geeta.vara@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

General enquiries: gc.info@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

