

Meeting Note

Client:	IRM Special Interest Group - Public Sector	Meeting Date:	30 January 2007
Subject:	Inaugural Meeting of the IRM Special Interest Group - Public Sector	Location:	OGC Offices - London
Author:	Fergus Dolan	Chair:	Fergus Dolan, Marsh
Attendees:	Helen Laing, Business Planning (Tourism), Welsh Assembly Government Anne-Marie Byrne, Management of Risk Guidance, Office of Government Commerce Andrew Bowen, Office of Government Commerce Tim Haywood, Treasury Solicitors Martin Veale, Welsh Assembly Government Rachel Harrison, Risk Officer, House of Commons Margaret Davies, Risk manager, Communities & Local Government Maggie Taylor, The British Library Anna Buelow, Head of Preservation, The National Archives Tracey Hill, Companies House Anne Stenning, Risk Manager, Environment Agency Steve Fowler, CEO, IRM	Distribution:	

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The chair welcomed members of the group to the inaugural meeting of the Institute of Risk Management Central Government Special Interest Group.

The chair thanked Anne Marie Byrne Of the Office of Government Commerce for hosting the first meeting in providing the first Speaker.

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The purpose of the group was outlined as being a discussion forum to consider risk management issues common to those managing risks across central government bodies. Outputs from the group may include benchmarking, specialist subject speakers and focus group discussion papers.

Key Presentation

The initial presentation to the group was from Mr Andrew Bowen, of the Office of Government Commerce who has responsibility for the Office of Government Commerce efficiency board including the Gershon project. Currently he is undertaking risk management as part of the OGC review project and is also a member of the Treasury Risk Improvement (RIM) network.

OGC's risk management is endorsed the board and its aim is to seek embedding into the offices of government commerce risk management in the process and the ownership of risks at the appropriate level using the structured process. The OGC Board discusses risk as a Risk Committee on quarterly basis chaired by a non-executives who is also chair of the audit committee.

The OGC has an agreed statement of risk appetite for example, OGC is positively keen to take considered risks in Policy/Guidance as a means of encouraging innovations and providing the opportunity to achieve value for money but has a very low risk appetite for failing to meet central requirements on regularity, propriety and accountability.

The format employed by the OGC for risk-reporting to the Board is a top level risk register. The top level risk register is scrutinised by the Board, a recent example was consideration of the risk associated with OGC's advice to

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Olympic Games and other mission-critical projects that now have a dedicated risk register.

The OGC risk management team consists of a risk improvement manager and a colleague who work with the risk owners on controls and consistency of approach. One of the key challenges facing the OGC over the last few years has been changes in staffing this team.

Typically, the board members own the key strategic risks. The board review key risks at board meetings. The operations committee meeting monthly is provided with a one-page reports updating them on performance including an operational risksection signed off by each director.

Each major project has its own risk register. The OGC is also seeking to adapt recent best practice published by the Treasury to suit its own organisation, for example working to quantify the value of risks faced by the organisation.

OGC conducted regular reviews of Risk Management to identify areas for improvement.

Andrew sits within the Planning and Finance team and reports to the Finance Director and briefs the deputy chief executive. Access at Board provides him with authority to achieve changes or improvements to the risk profile and to influence resource allocation.

Determining the ownership of supporting risks (non corporate) is more challenging as is quantifying risks.

The current Office of Government Commerce review

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clearly carries its own risks that are managed by at the Programme level and escalated as appropriate.

The OGC has an intranet page providing risk advice aligned with the Orange book and management of risk (MOR). OGC has provided a range of different levels of risk management training and skills.

Looking forward, the corporate risk register currently takes about two months to refresh. The next stage for the Office of Government Commerce risk management strategy is to seek more performance management key performance indicators to help it assess its performance on risk management.

The chair and the delegates thanked Mr Bowen for his excellent presentation.

Subjects for future discussion by the SIG

The members of the special interest group then discussed forthcoming subjects the group should seek to focus on;

- Practical ways of managing individual risks
- practical ways to make risk management live and manageable
- understanding the level of skills required when designing training for risk managers/risk practitioners
- partnership risks
- gain buy in from colleagues
- managing reputational risk
- understanding performance and delivery of risk management
- how do other government departments deliver risk management

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- how do we fully embed risk management across the department
- understanding performance management of risk
- getting colleagues to use risk management in their policy development
- how to incentivise people to employ risk management techniques
- getting risk management integrated into planning
- how to identify correctly bottom up risks and making sure these are not lost
- making service delivery risks are considered
- integration and reporting to the board
- embedding risk management
- making risk management useful
- achieving resources on risk management
- getting a corporate approach to risk management
- obtaining consensus on risk management promotion
- reporting on risk to directors
- ensuring all elements of risk are considered
- collation of case studies and lessons learnt
- risk management training
- use of risk registers
- best practice and risk models

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The chair concluded the meeting by thanking the Office of Government Commerce for providing both the facilities and the Speaker for the meeting.

Anne Marie Byrne of the OGC advised that copies of the new Management Of Risk (MOR) publication will be available for delegates at the next special interest group meeting if requested.

The next meeting will take place at the National archives, Kew Gardens, London on the 22nd of March 2007 commencing at 10 a.m.

