



HM Prison & Probation Service

Amy Rees
Chief Executive Officer
Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service

102 Petty France
London SW1A 9AJ

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair of Public Accounts Committee
Houses of Parliament
SW1A 0AA

E: DGCEOHMPPS@justice.gov.uk

By email

30 March 2023

Dear Chair,

TRANSFORMING ELECTRONIC MONITORING SERVICES

Further to the Committee's third recommendation in the 21st Report of Session 2022-23, 'Transforming Electronic Monitoring Services', I am writing to update on two of the Committee's recommendations.

PAC recommendation 2: To provide assurance that the risk of system failure will not materialise

We have made good progress on the planned remediation work on the legacy Electronic Monitoring (EM) systems but delivery of some of the elements of the work has moved beyond the target implementation date of March 2023.

We have delivered upgrades to field officer applications, upgraded the document storage solution and upgraded the bandwidth connection with the Field Monitoring Supplier to make stable their service. We are in the advanced stages of delivering a new field team tasking solution and a replacement stock management system, both of which are due to complete in April 2023.

Most of the required work to move the existing case management system to the cloud will be completed by the end of April 2023. The overall timeline to complete this work has been extended due to completing the migration in two stages, applications and then data. This approach is being taken to mitigate any risk to the service during the migration windows. The final stage, which represents a relatively small amount of work, will be patching the underlying system components of the current case management system. This will complete in June 2023.

Delivery of the new telephony system has also moved beyond March and will now complete in mid-July 2023. Again, we are adopting a phased approach to rolling out the new system to mitigate risk and maintain system performance. The new telephone tranches will be rolled out in priority order to ensure knowledge and confidence is built with suppliers ahead of migrating over to higher risk operational groups.

The cost of this work as reported in the Committee's report (£9.8m) will increase and we will report the final amount to the Committee on the conclusion of current commercial discussions which are

subject to regular governance. As the current system is required to run through to late 2024 and will need to support the transition to the new future service contracts, we remain confident that this is the correct course of action.

The delay to completing the planned remediation work has affected suppliers' ability to remediate the technical issues with the location monitoring system reported to the PAC in December. However further technical and process changes have been implemented to ensure the system can cope with increasing volumes.

PAC recommendation 3: Before starting future contracts in January 2024, HMPPS should explore how it can provide police forces and other law enforcement agencies with real-time access to location monitoring data across all GPS tagging cohorts — taking account of data protection considerations—and update us on its plans.

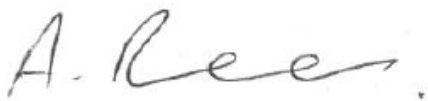
To address this multi-part recommendation, we launched a new External Agency Request (EAR) process on 27 February. This has been received positively by policing colleagues. The main improvement is a dedicated 24/7 phone line for urgent police data requests, ensuring the police receive the requested real time location data from suppliers within 15 minutes. A new dedicated email address and inbox has also been established for lower priority queries. In response to feedback from policing colleagues, we have also expanded the scope of EARs so that police colleagues are able to make requests for location monitoring data related to an investigation, giving them increased access to location data where necessary and proportionate.

To ensure these changes are successfully embedded in the supplier organisation, Electronic Monitoring Services (EMS), we conducted in person training and provided updated guidance prior to the launch of the process. Communication highlighting the new process and its benefits was also issued to all police forces across England and Wales on Friday 24 February, encouraging them to make use of the service where appropriate.

The secondment of a Police Superintendent to the HMPPS EM Programme in the role as EM Police Liaison officer and supporting the National Police Chiefs' Council EM portfolio lead ensures we continue to gather feedback on policing needs for EM, and we will use this to make any further changes to the new process where needed.

We are also working with suppliers to improve probation practitioners' access to location monitoring data. To do so, we have proposed that probation is notified of licence non-compliance events more quickly - by 10am the next working day - and that the supplier responds to email queries from Probation within 24 hours of receiving of them in line with HM Inspectorate of Probation recommendations. This change will be implemented by the end of September 2023. In the interim, probation practitioners continue to have ready access to location monitoring data through a portal for those people on probation wearing a GPS tag as part of the acquisitive crime pilot.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Rees'.

AMY REES

Chief Executive, HM Prison and Probation Service