tScheme Member Briefing - June 2004

Press coverage

Press coverage in the weeks following the 21st April event continues to be very supportive, with all of our key messages included. Publications carrying the story have included the following:

Silicon.com (22nd April); The Register (22nd April); New Media Age (22nd April); VNU Newswire (26th April); IT Week (26th April); Computing (27th April); Computer Weekly (27th April); Supply Management (29th April); *VNUNet (29thApril); IT Week (3rd May);* and also in the '*Mid Devon Advertiser Series' (30th April)*.

Online coverage has now appeared at:
http://www.silicon.com/management/government/0,39024677,39120185,00.htm
http://www.theregister.co.uk/2004/04/22/pki_self_regulation/
http://www.vnunet.com/News/1154832
http://www.computerweekly.com/articles/article.asp?liArticleID=130147&ArticleTy

A *tScheme* 'Anniversary News Release' was issued on 26th May to mark the fourth anniversary of the Electronic Communications Act (2000): Part I of which contains the 5-year 'sunset' clause under which legislation continues to be held in abeyance, in favour of *tScheme*'s independent regulation of the electronic trust services market.

However, the release sounds a timely note of caution, to eBusiness and eGovernment supporters alike as we embark upon this fifth year, that they need to ensure they fully 'opt-in' to *tScheme*: both to contribute to its ongoing development as all parties' preferred approach, and to make certain that *tScheme* can continue to deliver its unique brand of trust service assurance. The full text appears at the end of this briefing.

A number of longer feature articles are in preparation, and interviews with press contacts planned, for publications during June and July onwards including: Security Voice, Security Management Today, MOD Contracts Bulletin, PSCA Public Service Review, Public Sector & Local Government, "The Business", eGov Monitor, and Government Computing.

Electronic Identity Services

Following a series of review meetings, the Profiles & Processes Committee is now poised to sign off edits to the new Approval Profile, tSd0108 for Identity Services, which will then be released as Issue 2.0.

This new Profile is expected to be in high demand later this year, as 'intermediary' organisations begin to plan their involvement in the delivery of eGovernment services under the ODPM/LGA National Projects programme.

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Forthcoming Members' delegate meetings

*Profiles & Processes Committee - 19th or 26th August (to be confirmed)

The target for the next meeting will be to review all outstanding markers on current issued documents

In addition, detailed work will have commenced on the proposed "Assessor Standard" documentation for two separate Government service 'Community' (CUG) approval programmes. The first relates to Certificate Services to be provided by departmental Root Subscribing Certificate Authorities (RSCAs), chaining to the HMG Root operated by CESG. The second relates to electronic Identity Services, to be approved against Issue 2.0 of tSd0108 (see above), to be operated by 'intermediaries' providing credentials permitting access to certain local eGovernment 'National Project' services.

**NB: Full details of all tScheme committee and expert working group terms of reference, including current member participation, can be found in the members' area of the website.*
For a copy of this document, please click here.

Thank you for your continuing support for *tScheme*.

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tScheme NEWS RELEASE

26th May 2004

ONLINE IDENTITY SECURITY REACHES A CROSSROADS

The Electronic Communications Act reached its fourth anniversary this week (25 May). In 2000, this was the first Act of the new Millennium, and the first to be steered through Parliament by the Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt MP, now Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. The intention then was that this new Act would transform the future of business and information transactions around the world.

The Government opted for industry self-regulation for the secure electronic transactions market, and *tScheme* was created as the independent regulator for electronic trust services. During the first four years, *tScheme* has seen steady growth in the use of electronic signatures and digital certificates, particularly by the financial services industry, exporters and Government Departments. Currently a new range of online identity security services is evolving, creating new opportunities both for e-Business and for e-Government, and opening the door to significant economic growth based on *tScheme*'s flexible regulatory approach.

A condition for the British Government in opting for self-regulation was the inclusion of a 'sunset' clause in the Act. If industry is not properly regulating itself by opting-in to *tScheme*, independent regulation can be replaced by direct legislation under Part I of the Act before its fifth anniversary, ie 25 May 2005. If this deadline is missed, the Government will have to consider new legislation to impose direct regulation on online identity across this fast-growing industry.

DTI Minister for E-Commerce and Competitiveness Stephen Timms MP, who took over this role from Patricia Hewitt MP, has complimented *tScheme* on its "flexibility and adaptability to changing circumstances which is almost impossible to achieve through a traditional regulatory model." He has made it clear that he does not wish to see the sunset clause being invoked during its final year.

Stephen Upton, the chief executive of tScheme Ltd., said: "We have reached an important stage in the evolution of *tScheme*. After four years of steady and successful growth in the establishment of secure electronic transaction service approvals, both in the public and private sector, we are moving up a gear to help the wider market meet the issues of Internet security and identity authentication. All those with an interest in secure online identity, and in the growth of e-Business and e-Government transactions, should join *tScheme* and contribute to its ongoing development."

"By May 2005, both the private and public sectors have to demonstrate that both have opted-in to self regulation. If it is perceived that there is not sufficient industry adoption then the Government will have to make hard choices."

"Among those choices will be to impose direct regulation across all industry sectors, effectively putting a straightjacket onto a fast moving industry, which will only hinder its development at a time when it should become a world-leader for UK plc."

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