tScheme Member Briefing - February 2004

Summary

As you will almost certainly have read in the public statement issued by the *tScheme* Board in January, last year was the most successful year ever for *tScheme* in terms of underpinning our financial position.

Looking ahead though, the prospects are just as challenging as they are every year. Our operating budget this year again aims for a break-even position; but this still depends on the success of our new service approvals and our new member recruitment activities.

All members are strongly encouraged to get involved in generating awareness of *tScheme* - with service providers and potential members alike - and of our important role in growing a healthy marketplace for all types of electronic trust service.

Meanwhile we are preparing for the thorough mutual review we need to undertake, assisted by our new *tScheme* President, with key contacts in the leading government departments and agencies - covering their emerging risk management requirements relating to electronic identity and authorisation security for e-government applications.

Apart from reinforcing our role as a key enabler for e-government strategic objectives, this review will ensure that *tScheme* continues to define its best-practice criteria in terms of genuine relying party requirements for service assurance. We also need to achieve far stronger recognition of our role through the introduction of direct requirements for *tScheme* service approvals in all relevant Government procurement activity. This of course will cover our traditional focus on digital certificate services, as well as our emerging role as the independent regulator for electronic identity services.

tScheme promotional event

Plans are now taking shape for a *tScheme* promotional event during the first half of 2004; together with a linked media plan to achieve full value through high target market recognition. The event will be attended by the DTI minister, who has already confirmed his plan to speak at the event.

Our key messages will include the success of *tScheme* in delivering all of its initial objectives in establishing a robust independent regulatory scheme; and will go on to promote *tScheme*'s emerging role as the independent regulator for all services in the new area of electronic identity provision and management.

We plan to use the event to reinforce *tScheme*'s traditional role as an ideal partner for Government, as issues of identity fraud and the challenges of e-government continue to demand a flexible and responsive regulatory approach.

Electronic Identity service approvals

Important progress is being made with the Government's project team, who are driving the roll-out of new Electronic Identity services from an initial group of potential service providers - including a consortium of Local Authorities and a major private sector employer. This project continues to position service approval by *tScheme* as the required standard for access to e-government applications - for which leading government departments are the initial relying parties for electronic identity services.

Membership news

Our budget shows a target of four new members joining during the current year - the first three of these before the end of March. Although we are close to confirming new membership with one of these, we appeal to all current members to spread the *tScheme* message: **"all those with an interest in a thriving networked economy, and in developing best practice to support secure electronic transactions, should now become members of tScheme and participate fully in best practice development."**

Approvals news

Two new Grants are pending early in 2004; and with the introduction of new Electronic Identity service approvals alongside our existing focus on Certificate-based service approvals, our budget currently shows a target of at least four new Grants by year end.

Our longer-term goal is still to grow approval and renewal fee income into the main source of revenue, reducing the level of our loyal members' annual contributions.

International markets

tScheme as a founder member of ViTAS - the 'Voluntary Trust service Approval Schemes' multilateral workshop group - is increasing the level of *tScheme* international recognition; with a view to establishing cross-border acceptability of our '*tScheme*-Approved Service' Marks. Along the way we are looking for the potential for IPR-licensing arrangements with other territories. A third ViTAS Workshop will be planned during 2004, to work further on the concept of a shared Code of Practice - leading to some form of international 'mutual recognition' between peer schemes as the initial step in cross-border activity.

Members' delegate meetings during February

Profiles & Processes Committee - 19th February

The Agenda for the next meeting will include a presentation on the Liberty Alliance by Nick Bone of Vodafone. In addition, we are hoping to be able to agree the latest version of the Identity Services Profile, with a view to recommending to the board the release of Issue 2.0.

NB: Full details of all tScheme committee and expert working group terms of reference and current contributors can be found in the members' area of the website.

Thank you for your continuing support for *tScheme*.