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## A DATA DRIVEN FSA

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### 1 SUMMARY

1.1 The Board is asked to:

**Discuss and agree the proposed approach as a way to move from an organisation that has some good examples of data use to an organisation that systematically makes best use of data.**

**Discuss and agree a mechanism to ensure the Board has oversight of progress.**

### 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Data and its translation into information, and synthesis into knowledge, is already critical to the achievement of the Agency's outcomes, but is becoming increasingly so. We, along with others in Government and across the private sector are looking to raise the importance of data, so it is treated as a valuable asset.

2.2 This paper aims to introduce the Board presentation that will outline: the progress to date, examples of the current initiatives, how we fit within a wider data ecosystem and the approach to the development of an information infrastructure.

### 3 STRATEGIC AIMS

3.1 A change in approach in how the Agency uses data is required to underpin delivery of all our strategic objectives and to maximise the exploitation of developments in data and technology in the wider world. This paper seeks input to the approach which aims to build the infrastructure to enable the Agency to use data to maximum effect.

### 4 EVIDENCE

4.1 There is much evidence for the value of data across all sectors, and many opportunities have been ascribed to the exploitation of new types of data, linking disparate datasets together, new analytical tools etc. Equally, more work is required to determine what data solutions will provide the greatest, measurable benefits.

- 4.2 Examples of the drivers for the sort of approach outlined for the FSA are in the attached letter<sup>1</sup> (Annex A) where the Open Data Institute (ODI) urges the Infrastructure Commission to consider data as infrastructure that is fundamental to the operation of a modern society and its economy.
- 4.3 The ODI Open Data Roadmap<sup>2</sup> provides a good overview of the evidence in support of open data. The Agency would similarly benefit by making more effective use of all data assets (internal and external) to support delivery of strategic objectives.
- 4.4 The Agency is already working with the Government Digital Service in the development of our approach<sup>3</sup>.

## 5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 The Agency already has many examples of effective use of data. The ambition of the Openness, Data and Digital team is to learn from these and make effective use of data systematic throughout the organisation. This requires investment in the data infrastructure, which will mean some technology and skills, but primarily a change in culture and attitude, in addition to working with others to develop standards and policies, and learn to value data in the way we would value any other asset.
- 5.2 This work is closely aligned to the FSA Science, Evidence and Information Strategy. The individual interdependencies will be identified and managed by the respective owners.
- 5.3 A further consideration is how the Board will wish to be kept informed as the work described is implemented. We propose a regular progress report to be included as part of the Performance Management pack considered by the Business Committee, with Board papers on specific items as the work programme develops.

## 6 IMPACT

- 6.1 We will measure the value of the data and the various data exploitation initiatives, working with colleagues at the ODI to ensure that this is grounded in good practice and has external scrutiny.

## 7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Fundamental to this initiative is the engagement with stakeholders. Again, we have many examples where we have worked with a range of interested

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[http://theodi.org/blog/an-open-letter-to-the-chair-of-the-new-infrastructure-commission?utm\\_content=bufferd9880&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://theodi.org/blog/an-open-letter-to-the-chair-of-the-new-infrastructure-commission?utm_content=bufferd9880&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

<sup>2</sup> <http://theodi.org/roadmap-uk-2015>

<sup>3</sup> <https://data.blog.gov.uk/2015/09/25/our-plan-for-data-2/>

groups and used various techniques. We will continue to do this and continue to learn to develop the best approaches.

- 7.2 Areas that are likely to have most need for consultation relate to the sensitivity of the data being used, whether from a personal (consumer) or commercial (FBO) point of view. We are very mindful of the criticality of getting this right, and we will work closely with the communities of interest, and will learn from others addressing equivalent issues in different sectors, and apply the most recent learning regarding the ethical use of data building on best practice from academia and the Cabinet Office.

## **8 LEGAL/RESOURCE/RISK/SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Information Management team already work closely with legal colleagues to ensure that the changes to the way that the Agency uses information are legally sound. The Agency established an Information Governance Board earlier in 2015 to have strategic oversight of these changes. The new arrangements are working effectively.
- 8.2 Developing our information infrastructure so that Agency data is effectively used does come at a cost. However, we are first looking to see where existing funding can be re-cycled and resources aligned differently. We are also looking to see where we can make use of and share resources of external parties and, for example, have been in discussion with other Government Department bodies, and others such as the AgriTech Programme. Any additional investment will be evaluated as part of the programme of work, but the costs are difficult to quantify at this stage.
- 8.3 The work will be managed at Director level by Julie Pierce, the new Director of Openness, Data and Digital.

## **9 DEVOLUTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 We will be working with all relevant devolved departments in Welsh and Northern Irish governments. Additionally, colleagues in Food Standards Scotland (FSS) are aware of the historical, and engaged with ongoing, initiatives, including co-funding some of the current innovation work. It is proposed that there is ongoing engagement at both strategic and tactical levels with FSS as the programme develops.

## **10 CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT**

- 10.1 There are many examples of consumer engagement initiatives that are underway relating to the ongoing work. This is a fundamental driver for future work and will continue to be central to delivery of the programme.

## 11 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 This is an ambitious programme to deliver a step-change in how the Agency uses data. The Board is invited to discuss and agree the proposed approach and mechanism for Board oversight of this work.