



Home Office

2008 Capability Review

Our Response

Where we are now

The 2008 Capability Review demonstrated a very significant, measurable improvement in our capability to deliver our objectives.

“The Home Office has made very substantial progress since its original Capability Review in 2006. It has developed a strong leadership team and clear strategic direction, and it has met its delivery targets. It has also put right many of the former weaknesses in systems, processes and capabilities. There is more for the Home Office to do, in order to sustain and embed these changes, build confidence among its staff and stakeholders and develop its skills and workforce strategy.”

Home Office Capability Review, 2008

Seven of our capability scores have improved since 2006, three have moved up by more than one place on the assessment scale.

Leadership

L1	Set direction		Well placed
L2	Ignite passion, pace and drive		Development area
L3	Take responsibility for leading delivery and change		Well placed
L4	Build capability		Development area

Strategy

S1	Focus on outcomes		Strong
S2	Base choices on evidence		Development area
S3	Build common purpose		Development area

Delivery

D1	Plan, resource and prioritise		Development area
D2	Develop clear roles, responsibilities and delivery model(s)		Development area
D3	Manage performance		Well placed

Ambition

Our ambition is to create a Home Office which is trusted to protect the public and where people are proud to work.

To achieve this we are focusing on:

Listening to and engaging with the public, addressing the issues and arguments which are at the heart of the public debate. We are increasingly considering the impact of our work and how we can deliver it in a way that builds public trust and confidence. We are determined to spend more time at the front-line and in communities, seeing and experiencing the services for which we are responsible.

Working together across the Home Office and in collaboration with our partners.

The quality of our partnership relationships inside and outside the department is critical to our success, because so often our partners interact with, and deliver for, the public on our behalf. Our aim is to be a leading government department in the way we work with our partners.

Raising the levels of excellence in the Department. We will make greater use of coaching skills, challenging and supporting each other to achieve higher performance and productivity. We will step in every time to ensure that the work of the Home Office is always as good as it can be, both within our teams and across the whole department.

Next steps

This rest of this action plan sets out how we will continue to build on the improvements made over the last two years and specifically address areas identified by the capability reviewers in July 2008.

Any member of Home Office staff can ask for clarification or comment on this plan by talking to their line manager, head of unit or emailing myview@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Leadership

“The Home Office Board has taken the recommendations of the original Capability Review very seriously, and has used them as a platform to build visible, strong and collective leadership and a clearer direction for the Department. The Board now needs to build on this good work, maintaining pace and capitalising on the enthusiasm for change that now exists.”

Home Office Capability Review, 2008

We are igniting **passion, pace and drive** by encouraging more staff to take responsibility for the leadership of the department and continuing to strive to respond to and act on what staff are saying.

The Capability Review recognises that our leadership programme “has been successful in developing and inspiring a strong leadership group”. We are refreshing our leadership strategy to ensure all our leaders have the right support to achieve our ambition. We are using the Cabinet Office [leadership framework](#) to describe the leadership behaviours we want and the support that we will provide.

The visibility of Home Office Board members to our Senior Civil Service (SCS) has risen from 28 percent in 2007 to 71 percent in 2008. We recognise that there is much more to do, both in increasing the visibility of Board members more widely across the organisation and in turning that visibility into confidence in the Board’s leadership. We have developed a programme of events for senior managers (grade 6 and 7s) on our strategic priorities, led by Board members. Last year over 1,000 people attended these events. And between January and March 2009 we held 20 further events covering a similar number of staff, with further events planned for later in 2009. Over 80 percent of staff who went to these events felt the Board had been good or very good at communicating the Home Office’s priorities. 80 percent also felt that they now had a clear understanding of the purpose and objectives of the Home Office.

These events are part of a broader programme of Board visibility including periodic Board meetings away from London, focusing on our regional operations. While the key measures of our success will be through annual staff surveys, we will also develop an assessment framework to give us more interim data and try to understand better the impact of each interaction.

Our staff have said there isn’t enough recognition for the hard work they put into making their jobs a success. We are making the recognition, reward and celebration of our people’s success more visible. For the first time we have set out clear advice on rewarding our people at <http://horizon/reward> and <http://www.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk/reward>. We have launched a thank you voucher scheme across the whole department. An awards ceremony took place in March 2009 for our headquarters, complementing similar events in IPS and UKBA.

Board members have developed plans to address the issues raised in the 2008 staff survey. For example, feedback from UKBA has led to additional training for experienced managers at all levels. Monitoring of progress against these plans is underway. Key actions will be communicated to staff throughout the coming months so they know how their views have been acted on.

We know we should be making good use of the staff survey results. Representative groups of staff will discuss whether their views in the 2008 staff survey have been acted on, to generate ideas to make our response in future years faster, clearer and more effective and to improve the communication of follow up actions.

From 2009 the Home Office Staff Survey will be replaced by the Civil Service-wide Employee Engagement survey. This will allow us to compare ourselves with other organisations. The detailed analysis of results generated from this type of survey will also provide better opportunities for clear plans of action to be developed for each part of the department.

Our staff say that they want to do more to improve the way the department works. In response, we are providing encouragement by promoting, publicising and celebrating examples of how we can all make a difference. We have developed tools to help all staff to understand how they can reduce bureaucracy and be more innovative. And we have made links to teams in other government departments working on similar techniques.

We are **building capability** by delivering our people and skills strategies, making changes to our HR policies and introducing an annual self assessment of capability.

Our People Strategy, published in May 2008, sets out how we will create an environment in which all our staff can contribute their best to the Home Office. The People Strategy sets out six priorities:

- an engaged and committed workforce;
- effective and motivating leadership and management;
- ensuring that our people have the skills they need to deliver effectively, to ensure talent is nurtured and underperformance is challenged and managed;
- working openly and in partnership with others;
- being an organisation that is flexible and responsive to the challenges it faces.

We are updating our Skills Strategy to more clearly set out the skills needs of the main parts of the Home Office. Our Skills Strategy sets out three strategic priorities:

- We will create a dynamic and systematic approach to skills development so that it continuously results in business improvement;
- We will identify and develop specific interventions and actions to address skills gaps and build future capability;
- We will foster a culture in which people take responsibility for improving their work through learning and development and for helping others to do the same.

UKBA has implemented its Leadership Development Strategy which provides skills training for managers as they reach different levels of management.

We have completed a review of the new performance management arrangements introduced in April 2007. The review listened carefully to what staff and managers had to say. We concluded that targets and collective discussions on bonuses should be kept, but that there should be more flexibility in identifying people of every grade who need targeted development.

We have changed our employee policies within headquarters and the UK Border Agency. Many existing policies are now more straightforward to understand and use, and we are now working on the policies where more fundamental change is needed.

A new employee dispute resolution policy, reducing the number of stages to the staff grievance process and consolidating separate policies on staff grievances and bullying, harassment and discrimination, was introduced in January 2009. We are now working on simplifying policies on attendance management and misconduct and discipline investigations.

From this year we will introduce an annual self-assessment of capability, based on the Cabinet Office model. We will use this to involve our leaders in the development of capability and to assess our progress between Capability Reviews.

Strategy

“The strategic direction for the Department is now clear and focused on defined outcomes. It provides a clear line between departmental priorities, business units and personal objectives, and delivery for the public. In order to support the delivery of the strategy, the Home Office needs to ensure that it has the right level of analytical capability and that it is engaging stakeholders in the development of policy in a thorough and consistent way.”

Home Office Capability Review, 2008

We are developing the way we use **evidence and analysis** across the department to improve our policies.

We have refreshed our 3-year Science and Innovation Strategy. This sets the framework for development of a research programme for 2009-10 and subsequent years that covers both the immediate and strategic needs of the Home Office.

We are continuing to improve the way we handle data. A reassessment of the quality of our data completed at the end of 2008 has shown further significant improvements in many of our data work streams. This finding has been confirmed by an internal audit. We are making sure that the best examples of data handling are shared across the Home Office, ensuring that the right procedures are applied consistently, with realistic standards and consistent monitoring.

We are trialling a whole system model to highlight links and feedbacks between different areas of Home Office business. This will allow us to explore possible impacts and unintended consequences of policies on each other.

We have begun work on regular horizon scanning following an established model used by a respected futures programme. This will ensure we maintain awareness of new developments, understanding what drives change and exploring the implications for the Home Office. We will produce and maintain a Home Office strategic futures product so we can develop our understanding of future issues across the business.

We are developing stronger analytical narratives to underpin our current and future policies. Staff from across the department will be informed of these narratives so that we can improve policy making. They will set out the evidence base for the context in which policies are operating and their effectiveness. They will also set out stronger links between spending and performance as well as provide an overall assessment of the strength of the evidence base and areas for development.

We are committed to improving our policy development. We have recently appointed a Head of Policy Profession who will work with colleagues both inside the Home Office and

across government to drive up the quality of policy making and delivery - by setting clear standards, shaping training provision and growing a community of policy professionals.

Following the publication of the Home Office Strategy – with its emphasis on putting the public first – we are focussing on what it means for each of us, in our teams, to deliver in a way that will really build public trust and confidence in our work. There are no easy, obvious answers for how this applies. We are building stronger links between policy functions and our experts on public insight and communications. We are talking to our staff about this challenge and identifying examples of good practice that can be shared widely. And we are about to launch internally a toolkit based on good practices identified so far.

We are **building common purpose** by continuing to improve how we work with our partners and stakeholders.

We are continuing our programme to build trust and confidence in our relationships with stakeholders. We have conducted qualitative research with 15 of our most influential partner organisations and quantitative research with more than 1000 stakeholders.

We have established account leads for more than 50 cross-cutting stakeholder relationships to promote strong, collaborative and professional stakeholder relationships across the Home Office. These relationships are assessed through a scorecard and reported through our Quarterly Performance Report. We continue to develop tools and training to support colleagues in more effective stakeholder engagement.

We are developing a corporate improvement plan, identifying actions to progress stakeholder engagement across the Home Office.

Delivery

“Very good progress has been made on developing corporate functions and corporate discipline so that it supports and underpins the business, in particular in putting right previous problems with accounts and financial controls. The delivery model is now clear. The Home Office now needs to address the challenges of embedding financial capability throughout the organisation, and of ensuring that it has the ability to be flexible in matching resources to priorities.”

Home Office Capability Review, 2008

We are improving our ability to **plan, resource and prioritise** by ensuring the whole organisation fully commits to business planning and by building the financial capability of our people at all levels.

The effects of the recession and the Government’s commitment to make £5 billion of efficiency savings in 2010/11 means that the Home Office will need to take tough decisions about how we use resources in the future. We will need to build on our ability to plan, resource and prioritise to take these decisions without compromising our performance and the level of service provided by our partners in fulfilling the vital task of protecting the public.

We are already using a single planning process throughout the Home Office and developing the capability of staff to plan at all levels of the organisation through new training and guidance.

We will go further by:

- building our knowledge and evidence base for how effectively resources are used in delivering priorities;
- setting expectations for how planning will improve across the Department including strengthening business area and Senior Civil Service understanding of how effectively resources are being used and where savings can be made;
- strengthening links with our executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies in planning and prioritising;
- identifying the options that will enable the Home Office Board to prioritise and provide the leadership and direction for the rest of the Department; and
- ensuring decisions lead to earlier delegation of budgets and certainty for our stakeholders and delivery partners about their own finances.

The Home Office, including the Police Service, has an agreed public value for money target worth £1694m by 2010-11. This has increased by £130m to reflect the Department’s contribution to the Government’s objective of reducing public expenditure by £5bn in 2010-11. The target for the Police Service has increased from 3% to 4% per annum in 2010-11.

By the end of 2007-08 we reduced our central staffing by almost £90m per year through shrinking our headquarters headcount by more than 2,400 posts.

We can demonstrate that risk management is now actively applied across the department. We are continuing to improve our risk management and will bring all parts of the department up to the same level of risk management maturity by summer 2009.

We are **developing clear roles, responsibilities and delivery models** by improving our operating model and putting in place a sponsorship function for our main agencies.

As the Capability Review says, “the delivery model is now clear”. We are continuing to improve the departmental operating model. UKBA achieved full executive agency status on 1st April 2009. Under new legislation, the transfer of detection functions from HM Revenue & Customs to the Home Office will be complete. We are working with IPS on a review of its Framework Document, which is due to be completed by summer 2009.

We have in place a new sponsorship function that promotes and facilitates improved relationships between our headquarters and the UKBA and IPS, and better coordinates information and views within headquarters.

We will develop more of a focus on ‘place’ across the department, working collaboratively with Ministry of Justice to strengthen our support for regional and local delivery. By October 2009 we will have reviewed the Home Office and Ministry of Justice indicators in the [National Indicator Set](#) to ensure they reflect our strategic priorities and will be effective in driving local delivery. We will increasingly build staff capability to work more effectively with Government Offices and the local government sector.

The first version of the Home Office Information, Systems and Technology (IST) Strategy was published in Spring 2007 and was subsequently revised in 2008 and 2009. A further refresh is planned for 2010. The improved 2009 Strategy emphasises the role of the Chief Information Officer and, in particular, strengthens information management and architecture development.

The IST strategy has 4 principal objectives which are:

- joining up the organisation effectively;
- ensuring that assets (information, processes, systems and technology) are shared and re-used as much as possible;
- ensuring that the Home Office uses information as effectively as possible;
- ensuring the whole organisation complies with guidelines in order to reduce risks.

Over time, IST shared services will be provided across the Home Office for corporate applications, desktop/client devices and telecoms/networking. Other activities will be supported by agreed principles, common standards and supporting compliance regimes. This approach provides opportunities for economies of scale and common direction whilst

maintaining the flexibility for the delivery groups and partners to ensure delivery of their business objectives.

The Next Generation IST Transformation Programme has been established to design and deliver a new electronic working environment to the Department, based on common infrastructure services. This will provide a cost-effective, resilient and secure platform on which we can introduce better, more flexible ways of working. Moving to a common infrastructure is complex, and is planned over the period to 2015 and beyond.

May 2009	October 2009	April 2010	April 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched 360° feedback tool for SCS • Delivered 20 G6/7 leadership events • Held the first HQ awards ceremony • Full Reducing Bureaucracy website up and running • Agreed action plans for addressing the findings of the 2008 staff survey • Assessed demand for in house coaching and developed training package • Tested the whole system model • Launched the 3-year Science Strategy • Begun a best practice initiative to embed customer insight into policy making • Put in place account leads for all corporate partners • Begun Home Office and Ministry of Justice Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships • Implemented new business planning training courses • Completed annual business planning at directorate level • Advanced drafts of the policy/analytical narratives • Final Draft of Refreshed Strategy 09 to GIST & agreed for publication – end April 09 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of regional networking events for G6/7s completed • New Learning Management System implemented • Common actions framework to ensure joint commissioning of Learning & Development across government implemented • Corporate partner scorecards in Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) • Corporate stakeholder action plan produced • Stakeholder research in QPR • Home Office Board to have considered refresh of Home Office Strategy • Review of revised performance management and moderation arrangements • People Strategy updated and forward plan published • Annual capability self assessment completed • Publication and launch of Refreshed IST Strategy • Develop IST Strategy Implementation Plan • Risk management- consolidate work done so far, and get all of the department to level 3, including raising the bar with some of the Hannigan requirements • Extend & Blend Full Business Case to Group Investment Board • Programme Outline Business Case to Group Investment Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate partner scorecards in QPR • Transfer of detection functions from HMRC complete • Begin work on 10/11 IST Strategy update – end Jan 10 • Risk management – get the department to meet levels 1 to 6 of the newly enhanced level 4 by end of financial year 2009/10. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95% of Home Office and Agency staff will have attained Level 2 skills qualifications