

Business Benefits – Digital Interview Recording

Background

West Yorkshire Police previously had an analogue recording system in place by which police interviews were recorded, this system was approaching obsolescence and required modernisation. An updated business case was submitted in March 2015 setting out the proposal for a replacement recording system for Police interviews, moving from an audio/ video tape system to a DIR (Digital Interview Recording) System. The scope of the project is shown in the table below.

Scope	Date Realised
Replace the existing interview recording equipment with digital recording capability.	November 2015
Provide audio and video interview recording facilities in every Custody Suite	September 2015
Provide audio recording facilities for voluntary attendance interviews at every operational police station.	August 2015
Provide video interview facilities at every vulnerable victim's suite.	July 2015
Provide video recording facilities at the Force Viper suites	November 2015
Provide portable interview recording devices for Districts, PSD and Protective Services Crime.	Ongoing, supplier is working on an issue which needs resolving before deployment.

Outcomes Sought in the Business Case

1. In respect of detainee interviews, provision of a modernised criminal justice process which allows the organisation to move to cloud or server based storage thereby allowing 'remote access' to listen or review interviews against a current system that requires working tapes to be copied. (Copies are made often numerous times for the CPS, Court and the defence.)
2. Officers, Evidential Review Officers and other supervisors will be able to immediately review (via Niche) the exact content of the interview after its completion, to assist in raising standards, improved decision making and in cases, further tasking.
3. Remote access to interviews brings organisational efficiencies for the future. There are opportunities to transform the way 'tape summarisers work', potentially expanding their role to agile working as there is a minimised risk of lost tapes when accessing the interviews remotely. Transcribers can access the required data from any work based PC.
4. In consideration of the proposed custody review plans, it was anticipated officers would deal with prisoners away from their home division. Digital recording and

easy access would allow a more efficient process and increased 'smart working' for officers to prepare summaries, review the investigation, in conjunction with the current paperless file system, whilst a colleague could be freed to deal with other matters.

5. A digital networked storage solution will save time, physical storage and disposal costs, releasing premium space within the current estate. The storage of cassette tapes was an issue with over 280,000 held at districts and 93,000 at central stores. The disposal of the tapes involves a shredding process, a recent batch of disposal cost £1400 for 84,000 tapes. The weeding process is time consuming due to a lack of a filing system where interviews for serious crime are not separate. This practice increases a potential for serious cases to be weeded before the due date.
6. For the financial year up until 28th February 2014, we had spent £66,265 force wide on interview tapes. We had also spent over £5000 printing seals and labels.

Conclusions

1. This benefit is realised with all the requisite business areas equipped with DIR. Although interviews are still being copied to CD for CPS, Court and the defence, a second and complimentary project (DAM- Digital Asset Management) is progressing to provide an on-line portal solution during winter 2016.
2. This benefit is realised with full on-line access to interview recordings and full Niche integration.
3. This benefit has been realised and the Tape Summarisers have been agile working since early in 2016. There has been no loss of evidential recordings.
4. Following the reorganisation of WYP custody facilities, officers are able to interview at any custody suite and access their recordings from any force PC.
5. This benefit is realised. Although estates storage space is still required, no further growth in space is needed and in line with the business case, an ever diminishing return is being produced in saved, storage, shredding and weeding.
6. £71,265 is being saved annually in no longer purchasing tapes, seals and labels.