



Agenda Item 5

Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	14 December 2022
Location	MS Teams
Title of Paper	Digital Forensics, Next Steps, Accreditation and Timeline for Progression
Presented By	Chief Superintendent Conrad Trickett
Recommendation to Members	For Discussion
Appendix Attached	Appendix A- ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline Year 1 Appendix B – ISO 17025 Draft Project timeline Year 1-3

PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to provide SPA Forensic Services Committee members with an update on Police Scotland’s progress towards obtaining ISO 17025 within Digital Forensics.

This paper will specifically provide an update in respect of:

- Agenda item 5 – Digital Forensics, Next Steps, Accreditation and Timeline for Progression

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this paper.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) is the largest publisher of quality standards in the world. ISO develop and publish standards across multiple industries. Adherence to these standards ensures that organisations around the world conform to the same management techniques, processes, controls, quality, products and services.
- 1.2 ISO 17025 is the international standard for testing and calibration in forensic science labs. Essentially it is a set of requirements used to demonstrate that labs are operating a robust quality management system/framework and are competent to conduct the work that they are required to do.

Specifically, the accreditation covers a variety of areas:

- Qualifications, training and experience of staff
 - Equipment – is it properly calibrated and maintained
 - Adequate quality assurance procedures are in place
 - Sampling and testing procedures
 - Measurements can be traced
 - Accurate recording and reporting
 - Suitable test facilities
- 1.3 Similarly to SPA Forensics, ISO 17025 has been deemed as the most appropriate and internationally recognised framework under which Digital Forensics can be assessed. It is used by police services in England and Wales and has now been formalised as a project within Police Scotland. Achieving ISO accreditation will build trust and confidence in our provision of evidential products and services to victims and witnesses.

2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC

- 2.1 The ISO Project will take a staged approach to both the scope of accreditation and implementation across the 5 existing Digital Forensic Hubs in Aberdeen, Inverness, Dundee, Glasgow and Newbridge.

In terms of scope of accreditation Digital Forensics can be split in to two distinct areas when considering examinations and extractions, these being:

- Mobile Phones
- Computers

- 2.2 The Project has now formally commenced and is anticipated to conclude in 2026 (Please see attached Appendix A - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline Year 1, Appendix B - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline Year 1-3). These timelines have been extended following discussions with a range of Law Enforcement Agencies and partner organisations. The aforementioned timelines are awaiting formal approval through Police Scotland Change Process however are indicative of projections. These timelines may be affected by availability of external training and availability of Hardware from external suppliers.
- 2.3 In terms of the current progress of the project the decision was taken to initially limit the scope of accreditation to Mobile Phones. This decision was taken through consultation with a number of forces whom are already accredited and also through liaison with SPA Forensics and their extensive experience of the ISO process. Mobile Phones also account for the vast majority of examinations within Digital Forensics with this trend increasing year on year.

Progress to Date

- 2.4 The Quality Team for ISO including Quality Manager, Technical Officer and Audit Officer are now in place and have been working together with other members of the project team since June 2022 towards ISO 17025 accreditation.
- 2.5 The team have visited and engaged with officers and staff in all five Digital Forensic Hubs, with preparation work with the first Hub to be accredited (Muggiemoss, Aberdeen) being well underway. This has included consultation with staff at the Hub on ISO relevant documentation such as a Quality Manual and Standard Operating Procedures, drafted by the dedicated ISO Quality team.
- 2.6 External Stakeholder engagement with partners including building relationships with the Forensic Capability Network (FCN) and NPCC has been undertaken in order to assist with understanding around the accreditation process. This is in addition to discussions with various UK LEAs to facilitate benchmarking and sharing of best practice. Colleagues within SPA Forensics also have provided valuable knowledge and insight from their ISO 17025 accreditation experience.
- 2.7 Work is ongoing to provide relevant training required for officers and staff, in addition to procurement of hardware for validation purposes. Delays have been incurred for training due to vetting considerations

with a critical supplier which is still ongoing however there is a high confidence that this will be resolved.

- 2.8 Ongoing assessment of the current Digital Forensic Hub estate footprint is underway, which requires consideration around suitability for ISO 17025 compliance. All options will require to be considered for this purpose including the possible need for re-location to new premises. If new premises are required this would result in a delay to the current timeline.

Next Steps

- 2.9 The attached timelines (Appendix A - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline Year 1, Appendix B - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline Year 1-3) detail the sequence of accreditation by Hub location. At the conclusion of this cycle, on the assumption that re-accreditation will be achieved at already accredited locations, the scope of accreditation would then as previously planned be expanded to include computers as the Project moved from Programme activity to BAU.
- 2.10 Work will continue to develop and finalise ISO 17025 specific documentation and processes. On completion, these will be uploaded to the Quality Assurance module of our Digital Forensics Case Management system, with work being scheduled to implement this on the system.
- 2.11 Scheduling and delivery of training will be conducted to broaden understanding ISO 17025 accreditation. Planning towards data validation of mobile devices will also be progressed which will contribute towards timelined activity and preparations for pre-assessment.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no new financial implications associated with this paper. Costs relating to the ISO 17025 Project will be reported separately through established governance, when defined.

4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications associated with this paper.

6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The introduction of ISO 17025 accreditation will demonstrate that Police Scotland are achieving a high standards of service delivery in relation to Digital Forensics, in support of wider Criminal Justice service needs and to better meet the expectations of victims and witnesses. Reputational risks exist if this accreditation is not achieved and criminal justice processes are negatively affected.

7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

8. COMMUNITY IMPACT

8.1 There are no community implications associated with this paper.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equality implications associated with this paper.

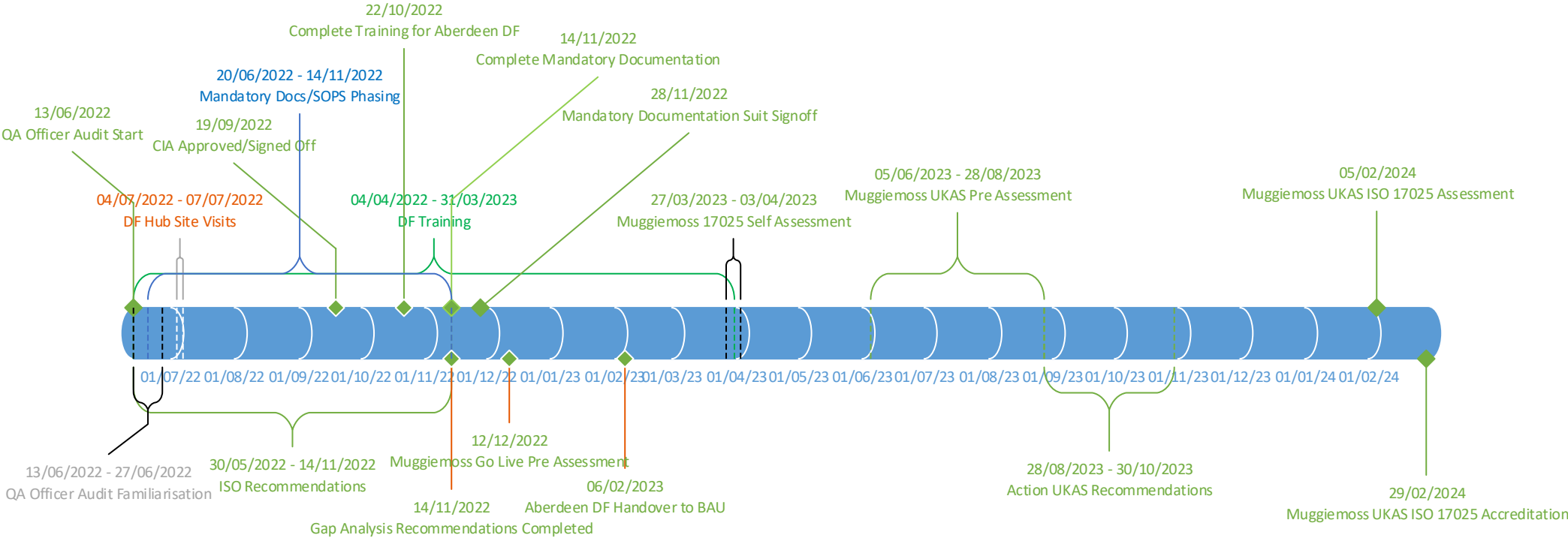
10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no environmental implications associated with this paper.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are invited to discuss the content of this report.

DRAFT - ISO 17025 Accreditation – Enhanced Digital Forensics Project
Muggiemoss Aberdeen DF Hub

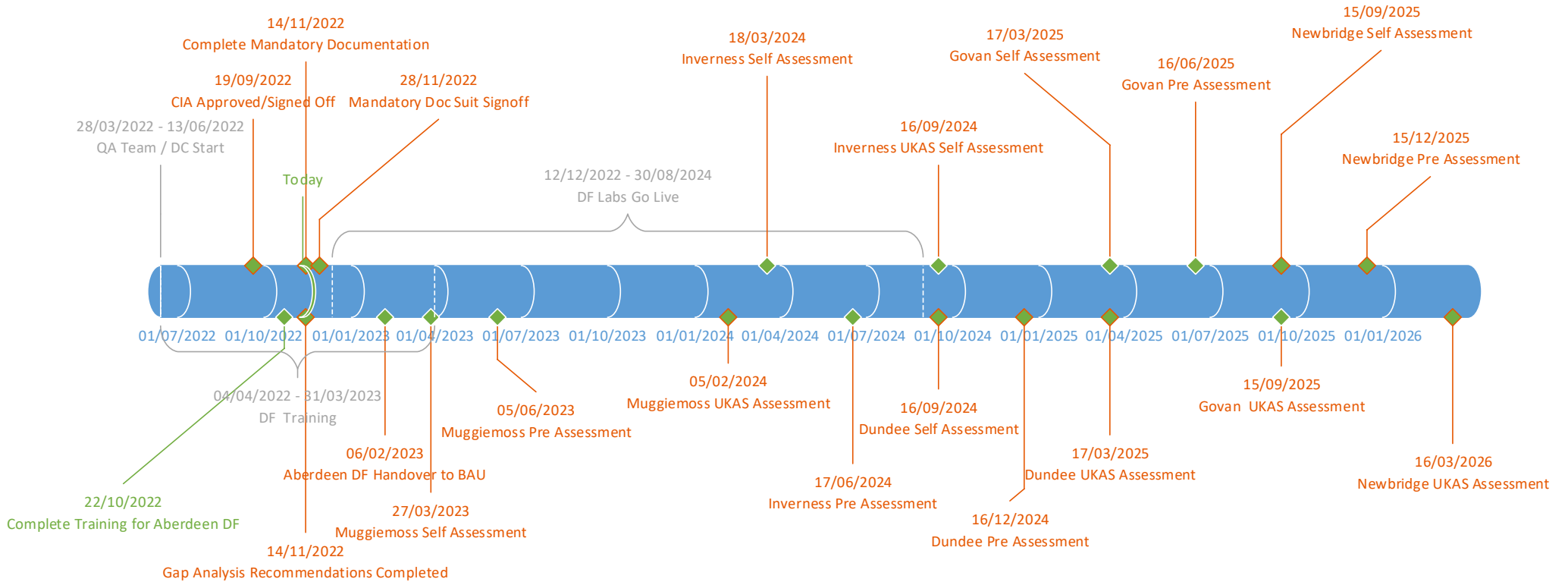


Project Milestones

Milestones at Risk – Unknown target predicated by full compliment of Resources to develop Documentation and complete Recommendations

Project Red Line without Resources / Milestone Missed

Draft - ISO 17025 Accreditation – Enhanced Digital Forensics All DF Hubs



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