



Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	4 May 2023
Location	Video Conference
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 – SPA Forensic Services Committee ISO 17025 December 2022 Appendix B - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline All Hubs

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 8 – Digital Forensics Next Steps, Accreditation and Timeline for Progression

Members are invited to discuss this report.

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 Further detail on the ISO 17025 Project can be found in the briefing paper presented by CS Conrad Trickett (Business Lead, Policing in a Digital World Programme) at the SPA Forensics Services Committee on 14 December 2022 (**Appendix A - SPA Forensics Service Committee ISO 17025 December 2022**).
- 2.2 In addition to the background of ISO 17025 Project, the briefing paper outlined the following:
- The staged approach to both the scope of accreditation and implementation across the 5 existing Digital Forensic Hubs in

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Aberdeen, Inverness, Dundee, Glasgow and Newbridge by 2026 (originally 2024).

- Update in respect of commencement of the Project, the associated timeline and introduction (June 2022) of the Quality Team within the project to collectively work towards ISO 17025 accreditation.
- Scheduling and delivery of training has been completed to broaden understanding of ISO 17025 accreditation. Planning towards data validation of mobile devices to be progressed which will contribute towards timelined activity and preparations for pre-assessment.

Progress since date of last reporting (Dec 2022)

- 2.3 In terms of Governance for the ISO Project 17025, On 22 February 2023, the Change Request for the delivery of the final lab to achieve accreditation (Edinburgh) in 2026, was approved at Change Board.
- 2.4 The Change Request also approved the delay in spend and an additional £47,000 to cover additional accreditation costs that have been identified as the project as developed.
- 2.5 The new reporting baseline is a project completion date of June 2026.
- 2.6 **Appendix B - ISO 17025 Draft Project Timeline All Hubs** – this details 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 business as a usual (BAU).
- 2.7 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 continuing to implement this on the system.
- 2.8 Contract Negotiations between Police Scotland and UKAS are progressing with a view to moving toward agreement in the following areas:-
- Completion by UKAS of appropriate Vetting documentation.
 - UKAS Application Forms by Police Scotland – Ongoing.
 - Contract Terms and Conditions mutually agreed between UKAS and Police Scotland Legal team and Procurement business areas.

- UKAS Accreditation timescales confirmed upon contract agreement / Sign off and Police Scotland Application submission accepted and approved.
- Finalisation of Police Scotland UKAS Procurement Strategy.

2.9 The Policing in a Digital World Programme (PDWP) continue to ensure that the ISO 17025 Project and the wider Programme activity is aligned, where applicable with the NPCC Digital Forensic Portfolio. This is to ensure Police Scotland's strategy is underpinned by standards, accreditation, Ethical and Legal governance consistent with the UK approach.

2.10 In addition PDWP will keep oversight of developments associated to the Forensic Science Regulator and the regime of scientific quality standards and good practice that are set to encompass all forensic science services In England and Wales.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Costs relating to the ISO 17025 Project are reform funded, and the small additional costs have been approved in the change request, ie all funding is within the approvals of business case and subsequent change request.

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 standard 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. UNSOCIAL 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 this report.



Meeting	Forensic Services Committee
Date	14 December 2022
Location	Video Conference
Title of Paper	Digital Forensics
Presented By	CS 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

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
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 - 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:

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- 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.

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7.1 There are no social implications associated with this paper.

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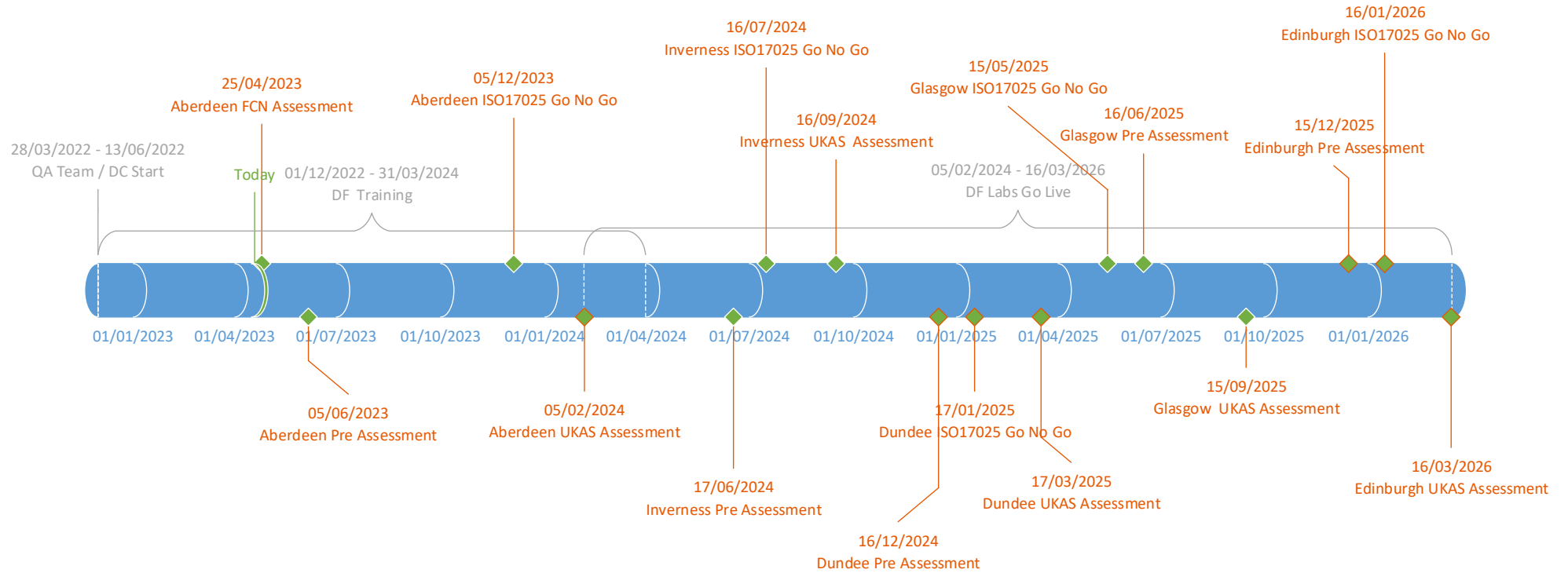
9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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.

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



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